Gizmos Solo Variant

[UNOFFICIAL]
Solo Variant Design:
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Year:
2018

Original Game Design:
Phil Walker-Harding
Publisher:
CMON
Year:
2018

Introduction:

It's Solo Player vs Bot in this variant, using D6 dice and optional gizmos! The Bot set up and rules (p. 1-3) follow a Basic Mode for new players. Refer to the Variable mode (p. 4-6), to customize your gaming experience with ways to make the game more challenging, play with Multiple Bots, or try out new Optional Chain Reaction Gizmos. **Note:** Players should be familiar with original multiplayer rules before trying this Solo Variant.

Set Up:

General Set Up

- Same set up as the multiplayer game (dispenser, marbles, VP Tokens, Level 1-3 cards in display area, and removing 20 Level 3 cards).

Solo Player Set Up

- Same set up as the multiplayer game (Starting Gizmo card, energy storage ring).
- Solo Player gets the First Player Dashboard.
- *Optional: The Solo Player may also start the game with Chain Reaction gizmo(s), placed under Upgrades area of Dashboard. (See Player Aids section (p. 8) to print out optional gizmos. Also see p. 5 for more information on new gizmo cards' effects.)*

Single Bot Opponent Set Up

- Energy Storage Ring
- Starting Gizmo Card *(Note: This starts the Bot's collected cards stack and counts toward its collected cards total.)*
- No Dashboard. *Cards collected by the Bot are placed in a stack where you see card total.*
- Two differently colored D6 dice (not included):
  - One colored die represents the Build action and whether the Bot takes this action.
  - A Selection Die of a different color determines which marble and gizmo card (or VP Token) the Bot collects on its turn during a Pick or Build action.

(Note: In these instructions and examples, the Build action = green die and The Selection Die = wooden die, but you may assign whichever color you like for these dice.

Clarification:
- The Bot doesn't take File or Research Actions.
- Gizmo effects are not triggered on the Bot's collected cards, even when the Bot performs a corresponding Pick or Build action. The Bot also doesn't use converter effects on its collected Converter gizmos.

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Goal of Game:

- Same goal as the multiplayer game, except the Solo Player competes against the Bot to get the most victory points (player's VP Tokens plus total victory points on player's gizmo cards).

End Conditions:

- The end conditions of the solo variant vary slightly from the multiplayer game and have different options, depending on the difficulty level of solo variant you choose.

Basic End Condition

- Game ends when either condition is met:
  - The Bot or the Solo Player has **16 gizmos**, or
  - The Solo Player builds **four Level 3 gizmos**.
- *Note: In the Basic End Condition, the end of the game is not triggered by Bot collecting Level 3 gizmos.*

Variable Mode End Condition

- *Note: See Variable Mode section on p. 4-6 for more information on options to make the game harder or easier, including changing the end condition.*

Turn Overview:

Solo Player

- Take your turn as you normally would in a multiplayer game.
- Then take a turn for your Bot opponent (see next section).

Bot Opponent

The Bot's turn consists of three steps *(see Bot's Turn Breakdown section for details)*:

1. Take a Pick action by rolling The Selection die to see which marble the Bot will pick.
2. Roll the Build die to see if the Bot will take this action. If so, then roll The Selection die to determine which card (or VP Token) to take for the Bot.
3. Empty the Bot's energy storage ring when completely full (about 11 marbles), and return marbles to the energy dispenser (if applicable).

Bot's Turn Breakdown (also see Player Aids on p. 8-9):

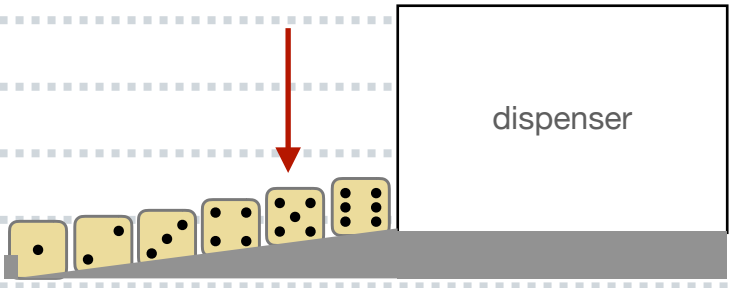
Note: Choose two differently colored D6 dice and assign each one a role: Build and The Selection Die.

Step 1: Roll "The Selection" Die for Pick Action

- *Note: The Selection die tells which marble the Bot picks from the energy row.*
- After you roll the die, find the corresponding die number on the illustration below, and pick the marble from that location to put in the Bot's energy storage ring.
- **Then go to Step 2a/Build.**

Example:

- The Bot rolls a 5 with The Selection die.
- The Bot picks the 5th marble in the energy row.



Bot's Turn Breakdown (continued):

Step 2a: Roll "Build" Die

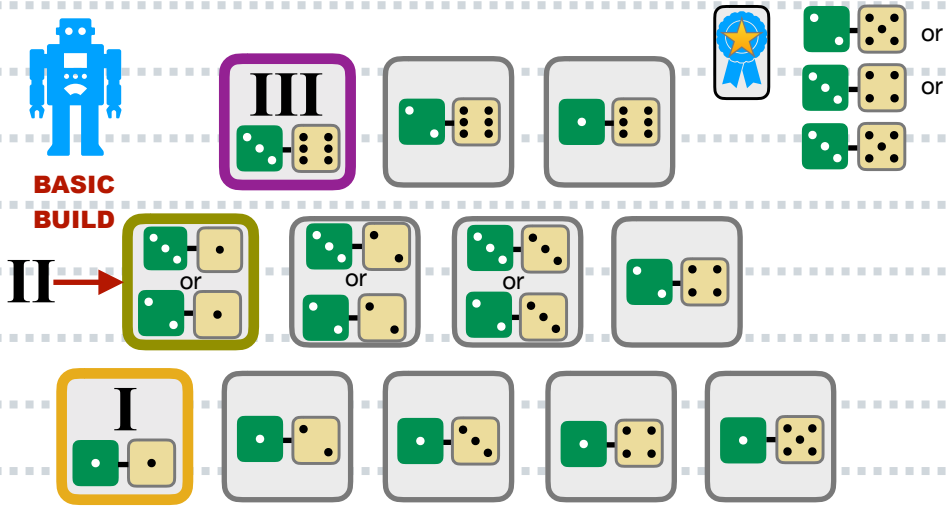
- If you roll a **1, 2, or 3**, then **go to Step 2b** to see which gizmo card (or VP token) the Bot will collect.
- If you roll a **4, 5, or 6**, then the Bot will **not do a Build action** on this turn. **(Go to Step 3.)**

Step 2b: Roll "The Selection" Die (for Build die rolls of 1, 2, or 3 only)

- *Note: The Selection die tells which gizmo card to collect from the gizmo display or if it collects a VP Token.*
- After you roll the die, find the corresponding dice pair on the illustration below. The left die of the pair represents the Build die roll of Step 2a, and the right die of the pair represents The Selection die roll of Step 2b.
- Collect the corresponding gizmo card or VP Token and add it to the stack in the Bot player area. (Go to **Step 3**.)
- *Note: If the dice pair matches one of the pairs in the VP Token icon area on the illustration, collect a VP Token for the Bot instead of a gizmo card.*
- *Note: For the cards in the Level II row that have two pairs of dice, the Bot would collect that card for either dice pair.*

Example 1:
- The Bot rolls a 3 in Step 2a with the Build die.
- In Step 2b, the Bot rolls a 6 with The Selection die.
- The Bot collects the top card of the Level III deck in the display.

Example 2:
- The Bot rolls a 3 with the Build die and 4 with The Selection die.
- The Bot collects a VP Token.



Step 3: Empty Energy Storage Ring (if applicable)

- If the Bot's energy storage ring is completely full (about 11), return the marbles to dispenser.

End of Game Scoring:

- Follow Solo Variant Basic End Condition (p. 2). *Note: See Variable Mode for other options (p. 4).*
- Tally each player's (Solo Player and Bot's) VP Tokens plus total victory points on each player's gizmo cards. The player with the most points is the winner!
  - Solo Player has opportunities for more VP Tokens if starting game with optional Chain Reaction gizmo(s) (see p. 5 and p. 8).
  - Follow original multiplayer rules to see what happens after the end of the game is triggered and how to resolve ties between players.

Variable Mode:

The rules outlined so far in these instructions feature the Basic Mode. If you want to make aspects of the game easier or harder, review the sections below and the Variable Mode Difficulty Table on p. 6. These aspects can be mixed and matched to offer a custom gaming experience.

In the Variable Mode, there are 4 major aspects of the game for the Solo Player to decide on before starting a game:

1. End Condition
2. Build Action
3. Whether to use optional Chain Reaction Gizmos (and whether you will count the optional gizmos toward the 16-card total that would trigger the end of the game)
4. Number of Bot Opponents

Advanced End Condition

Same end condition as the multiplayer game:

- A player (Solo Player or Bot) has **16 gizmos** or builds **four Level 3 gizmos**.

Build-a-Rama Build Action (Bot)

Note: The Build action outlined in Step 2a and 2b on p. 3 in the rules follows a Basic Build. The following shows an alternate Build-a-Rama Build for Step 2a and 2b for a more challenging game experience:

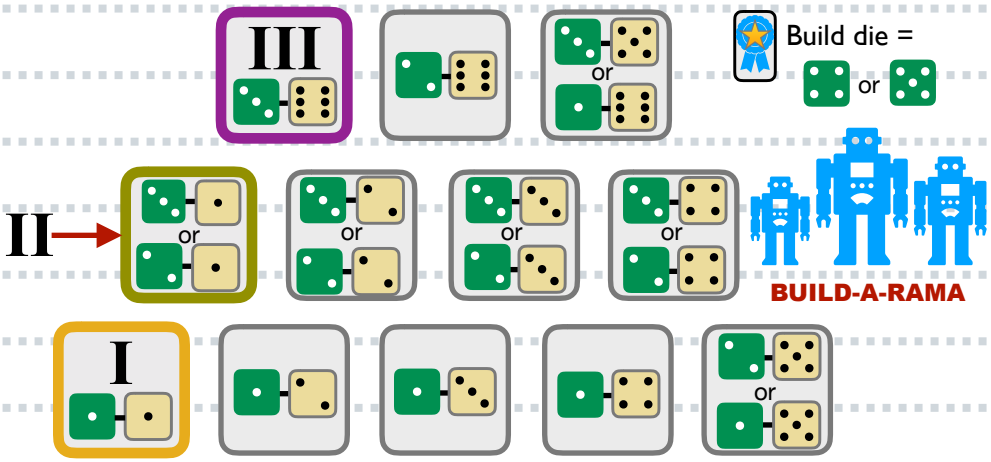
Step 2a: Roll "Build" Die

- If you roll a **1, 2, or 3**, then **go to Step 2b below.**
- If you roll a **4 or 5**, collect a **VP Token** for the Bot . **(Go to Step 3, p. 3)**
- If you roll a **6**, then the Bot will **not do a Build action** on this turn. **(Go to Step 3, p. 3)**

Step 2b: Roll "The Selection" Die (for Build die rolls of 1, 2, or 3 only)

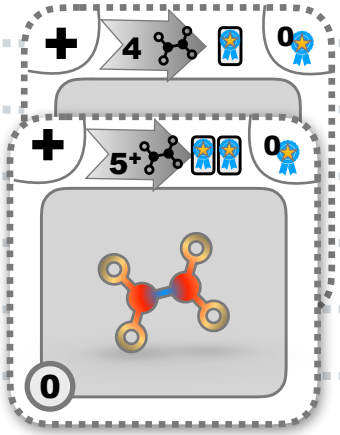
- Use the **Build-a-Rama** illustration below to determine which corresponding gizmo card the Bot collects on its turn (or VP Token from Step 2a) (also see Build-a-Rama player aid on p. 9.)
- Go to **Step 3** to empty ring (p. 3).

Note: With Build-a-Rama Build, VP Token dice pairs from the Basic Build have moved to the face-up Level I-III rows as new opportunities to build more often. Another change in Build-a-Rama is that a roll of 4 of 5 on the Build die also triggers a VP Token, so the Bot will have more opportunities to collect tokens.



Variable Mode (continued):

Optional Chain Reaction Gizmo Cards (Solo Player)



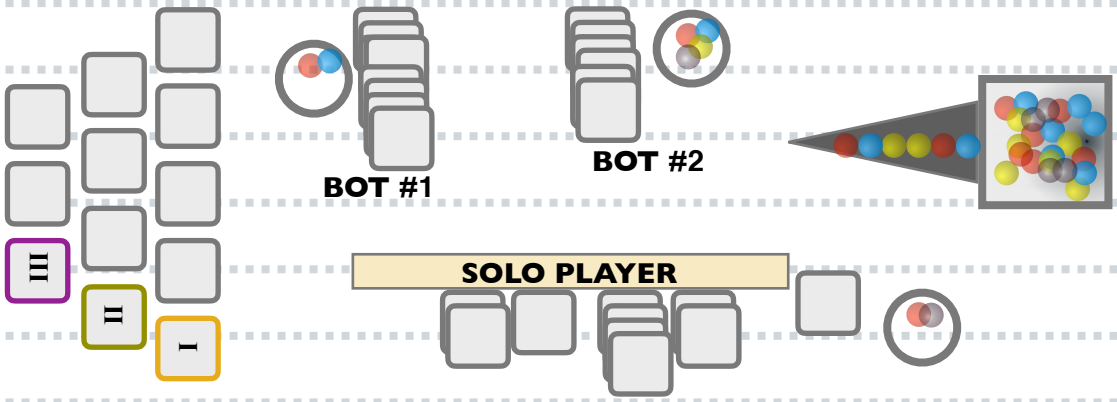
Start the game with one or both optional Chain Reaction gizmo card(s) under the Upgrades area of the Solo Player's Dashboard *(see Player Aids on p. 8 for printable gizmo cards)*.

- **Note:** Effects from the Chain Reaction gizmo cards can trigger each turn, and the Solo Player earns any VP Tokens immediately.
- The Chain Reaction gizmos trigger when a certain amount of chain reactions have triggered on other Converter, File, Build, and Pick cards under the Solo Player's Dashboard.
- Important: The Chain Reaction gizmos and the other Upgrades gizmos do not count toward the chain reaction card total.
- **4 Chain Reaction Gizmo:** If chain reactions on **4 cards** are triggered, Solo Player gets 1 VP Token. Remember: An effect on a card can only be triggered once per turn.
- **5+ Chain Reaction Gizmo:** If chain reactions on **5 or more** cards are triggered, Solo Player gets 2 VP Tokens. Remember: An effect on a card can only be triggered once per turn.
- At the beginning of the game, Solo Player decides if optional Gizmo cards count toward 16-card total that would trigger the end of the game (see Variable Mode Difficulty Table p. 6)

Multiple Bot Opponents

Gameplay: Start the game with Multiple Bot Opponents (two Bots suggested). Except for the clarifications and modified parameters below, the turns follow the same structure and actions as with a Single Bot (see p. 2-3):

- Turn Order: After the Solo Player's turn, the first Bot turn is followed by another Bot turn, where the second Bot represents another separate opponent.
- First Player: The Solo Player still gets the First Player Dashboard.
- Gizmo Cards: Solo Player keeps track of two stacks of Bot gizmos cards (one for each Bot).
- Energy Rings: Each Bot has its own energy ring. The energy ring is emptied when it reaches a storage limit of 9 marbles during Step 3 of the Bot's turn.
- End Game Condition: Each Bot's card stack is evaluated separately to check if that particular Bot has triggered the chosen end game condition.
- Scoring: Each Bot's card stack is scored separately.
- Recommendations: The Basic End condition and Basic Build are recommended with Multiple Bot Opponents. Solo Players should wait to try Multiple Bot Opponents until playing at least one game with a Single Bot Opponent.



Variable Mode (continued):

Variable Mode Difficulty Table

See table below for aspects that can be mixed and matched to offer a custom gaming experience. Solo Players can also use the following suggested combos:

- Basic Mode combo: Basic End Condition, Basic Build, No Optional Gizmos, Single Bot
- "Hey, You Took My Stuff" combo: Basic End Condition, Basic Build, No Optional Gizmos, Multiple Bot Opponents
- Chain Reaction combo: Basic End Condition, Build-a-Rama Build, Use Optional Gizmos (don't count toward 16-card total), Single Bot

	Make More Difficult	Make Easier
End Condition	Use **Advanced End Condition**, which is the same as multiplayer game (see p. 4).	Use **Basic End Condition**, where Bot's Level 3 gizmos don't trigger end of game (see p. 2).
Build Action	Use **Build-a-Rama** Build Action that gives Bot more opportunities to build and collect VP Tokens, which may trigger end of game faster and give Bot more points (see p. 4 and Build-a-Rama player aid on p. 9).	Use **Basic Build** Action where Bot has less opportunities to collect gizmos cards, but might collect VP Tokens (see p. 3 and Basic Build player aid on p. 9).
Optional Chain Reaction Gizmos	• Option 1: **Don't play** with **Chain Reaction Gizmos.** • Option 2: Play with one or both Chain Reaction Gizmos **and count** these cards toward the 16-card total that would trigger end of game (see p. 5 and printable gizmos on p. 8). *Suggested if you want to play with these gizmos while using the Basic End Condition or Basic Build Action.*	**Play** with one or both **Chain Reaction Gizmos and don't count** these cards toward the 16-card total that would trigger end of game (see p. 5 and printable gizmos on p. 9). *Suggested if you want to play with the Advanced End Condition or Build-a-Rama Build Action.*
# of Bot Opponents	Use **Multiple Bot Opponents** (see p. 5) to more closely mimic the competition that you would get in a multiplayer game for gizmos and marbles in the energy row. (Wait to play with Multiple Bots until you have played at least one solo game with a Single Bot.)	Use a **Single Bot Opponent** (as described in the Basic Mode solo variant instructions, see p. 1-3).

First Player Dashboard

Options for choosing who will be the first player in the solo variant may or may not make the game more difficult or easier. See the options below for a variable gaming experience:

- Solo Player always gets the First Player Dashboard.
- Solo Player always gets a non-first player dashboard.
- Select random dashboard for Solo Player in a method of your choosing.

Credits:



- Original Multiplayer Game Design: Phil Walker-Harding; Publisher: CMON; Year: 2018
- Unofficial Solo Variant Design, Graphic Design (edited Pages clipart), Editing: Melissa Jankowski
- Special Thanks: Doug Jankowski, Mike Majors, Shane Atchinson

10/03/18

Design Notes or "TL;DR"

Solo Variant

Guiding Goal of Design

I wanted Bot to represent a really great player. I modeled it after successful players from play testing and Board Game Geek Game Night play through: https://youtu.be/Vsf-B4_fCwU

Solo Variant Principles (M. Pedersen, game designer)

I started by learning about solo game design in August from a podcast interview of Morten Monrad Pedersen (Gabe Barrett. May 3, 2017. "Creating a Great Solo Variant with Morten Monrad Pedersen." Board Game Design Lab. http://www.boardgamedesignlab.com/creating-a-great-solo-variant-with-morten-pedersen/

Here he talks about several guidelines to consider when designing solo games:

- "Critical Interaction Points" (where players are impacted by the other players)
  - *In my solo variant, I identified these points: 1) a player picks the marble/card you want; 2)a player triggers the end of the game with 16 cards or four Level 3 cards.*
  - *A play tester suggested that the Basic Mode with a Single Bot didn't "feel like a multiplayer game," so I added a variation with Multiple Bots to ramp up the "critical interaction points."*
- Try to "mimic" these points, but understand that the Bot player will not simulate exactly a multiplayer's actions. Pedersen suggests to identify these points, but "leave the rest [and] set up a shell action."
  - *This is why I didn't include Bot actions of archiving, converting marbles, researching, and putting built gizmos under the dashboard, which trigger specific chain reactions.*
- "The player can never make decisions on behalf of Bot."
  - *This is why I didn't have the Solo Player choose which card or which marble for the Bot, and I designed The Selection Die mechanism to do the choosing.*

Build Action:

- The idea of Basic Build came down to all possible outcomes a successful Build die roll (1, 2, 3) could make with all possible die rolls from The Selection die (1-6). This gave 18 possible dice pair outcomes.
- Since the gizmo card display only had 11 locations (including decks), I had to double up the die pairs on certain locations. For the Basic Build, I chose the 2nd row to give the Bot a higher likelihood to get more points than a Level 1 card, but not give the Bot too much of an advantage in points (Level 3 cards) or trigger the game end if using Advanced End Condition. I moved the remaining 3 dice pairs to VP Token section. For Build-a-Rama Build, I moved those 3 dice pairs to the end of each level's row and added VP Tokens for rolls of 4 or 5 on Build die.
- A play tester suggested that my original dice pair layout on the gizmo display was hard to follow. I changed it to sequential number pairs going across the rows. Rearranging them was okay because they followed the formula of dice pair outcomes and % I wanted for each level.

Optional Chain Reaction Gizmos:

- I wanted an aspect that celebrated and rewarded the heart and soul of the game: chain reactions. This also proved a way to make play easier with the challenging Build-a-Rama Build.

10/03/18

Player Aids

Turn Overview:

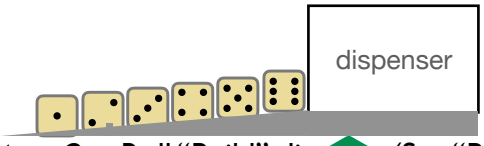
Solo Player

- Take your turn as you normally would in a multiplayer game.
- Then take a turn for your Bot opponent (see next section).

Bot Opponent

(see Bot's Turn Breakdown section on p. 2-3 and "Build" player aids for details):

- **Step 1:** Roll "Selection" die and Pick corresponding marble, see below.

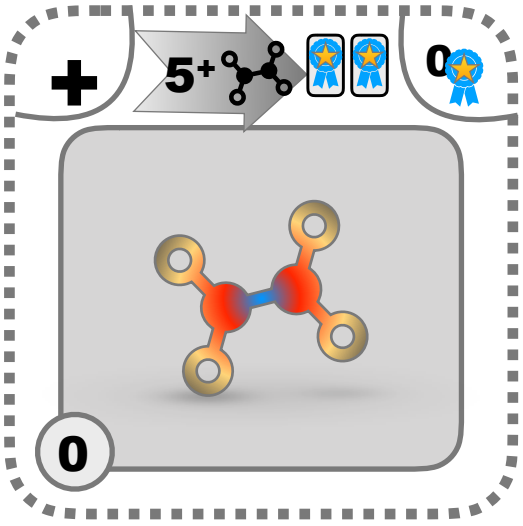


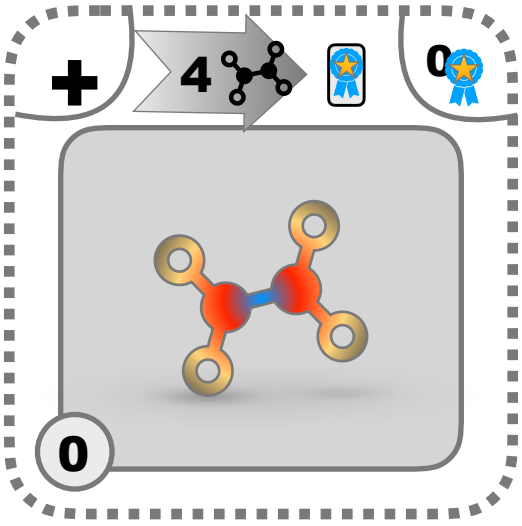
- **Step 2a:** Roll "Build" die . (See "Build" player aid.)
- **Step 2b:** Roll "Selection" die for which card (or VP Token) the Bot collects (if applicable).
- **Step 3:** Empty Bot's energy storage ring if completely full (about 11 marbles).

End of Game/Scoring

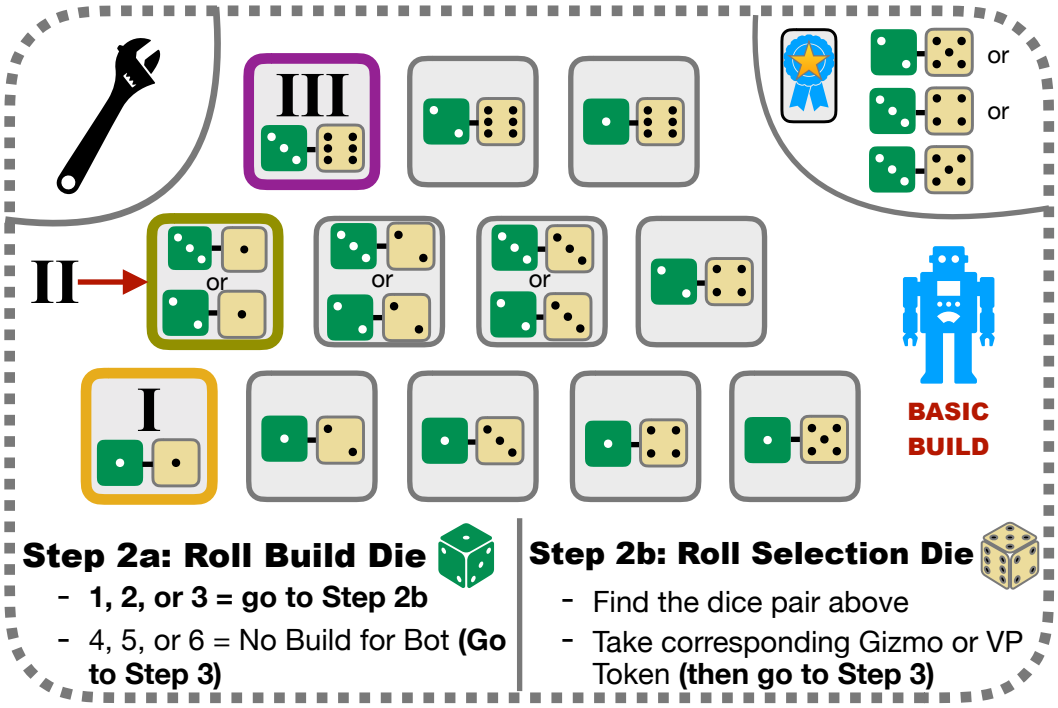
- Follow Solo Variant Basic End Condition (p. 2) or see Variable Mode options (p. 4).
- Tally each player's VP Tokens plus total Victory Points on player's gizmo cards.

Turn Overview Player Aid (Left): Gives overview of turn for Solo Player and Bot. Works with "Build" player aids (see p. 9). For turn breakdown see p. 2-3.

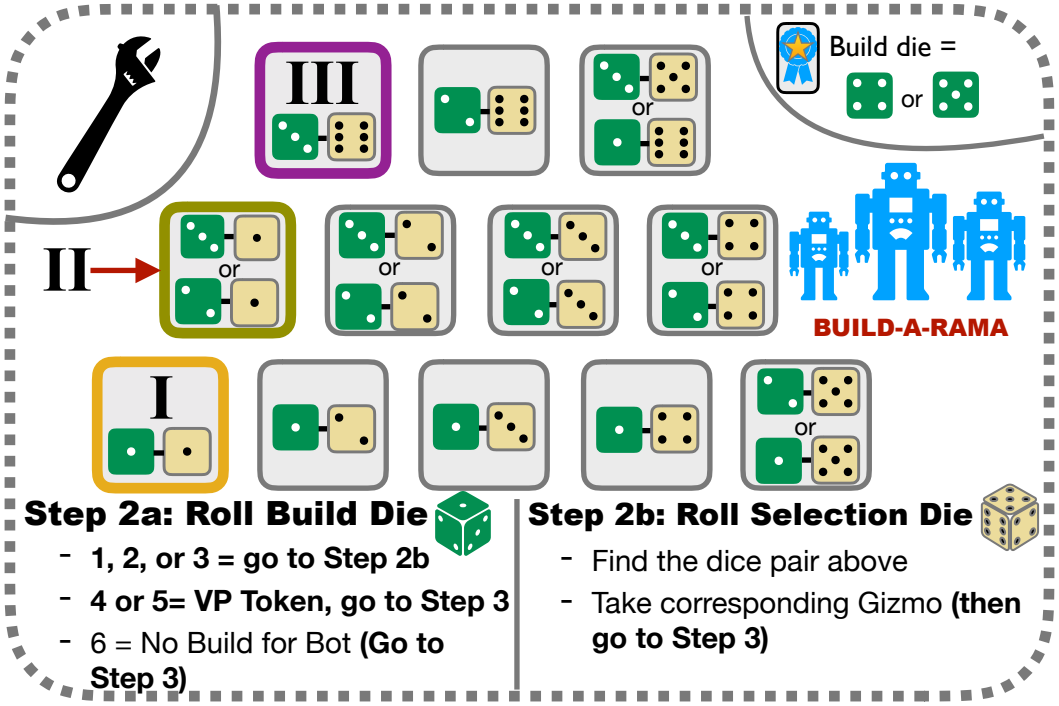




Chain Reaction Gizmos (Above): Optional gizmos to have one or both under Solo Player's Upgrades area of the Dashboard at the start of the game. Gives VP Tokens for 4 or 5+ chain reactions on a turn. For details see p. 5.



"Basic Build" Player Aid (Above): Used if you are new to the game, or if you want more relaxed play. The instructions for Step 2b on p. 3 use this in its example.



"Build-a-Rama" Build Player Aid (Above): Used in Variable Mode as an alternative to the Basic Build to give a more challenging gaming experience. See Variable Mode section on p. 4 and 6 for more details.