

MAZE

A strategy game of heroes, magic and treasure for 2-4 players.
An average game takes between 45-60 minutes.

Goal

2 or 3 player game: The game ends as soon as the last treasure is picked up off the board. The player that has collected the most treasures at that time wins the game!

4-player game: The two players seated opposite of each other are on the same team. When the last treasure is picked up the team with the highest combined number of treasures wins.

Components

The Maze

49 tiles in a 7 x 7 grid. 16 tiles are mounted to the board and cannot be moved. The remaining 33 tiles can slide in rows, both horizontally and vertically.

Cards

- 38 spell cards.
- 9 character cards.
- 1 Spells/Curses reference card.

Pieces

- 1 dragon.
- 9 character tokens.
- 9 treasures.
- 30 second timer for the Witch.

Setup

1) Place Tiles

Randomly place the 33 movable tiles in the maze. If you are playing a series of games then start the new game with the tiles in the last position from the previous game.

2) Character Selection

Each player selects one of the 9 characters. If this is your first game you should select the character with the portrait that appeals to you. Don't worry about the special abilities at this point.

Take both the token and the matching card for your character. The rest of the tokens and character cards won't be needed during this game.

3) Place Characters

Place your token in the corner of the maze nearest you. This corner tile is called your **home corner**.

4) Spell Cards

Mix up the spell cards and place them near the board where everyone can reach them.

Note: The spell cards won't shuffle like real playing cards. To prevent the cards from bending you should deal the cards face down into a small number of piles, then stack the piles together.

4) Place Treasures

Place 9 treasures, one in each of the 9 central squares. If there are cobwebs in a square do not place the treasure on the cobweb. Instead, make sure that the treasure is clearly on one side or the other.

5) Place Dragon



Put the dragon in the center of the board.

6) Determine who will go first

Mix up the character cards and draw one at random. The player whose character is chosen goes first.

All players put their character card in front of them for reference.

Basic Gameplay

Action Points

Each player gets 2 action points (AP) per turn. Most actions cost 1 AP. However, some actions are free, while other actions cost 2 AP. Refer to your character's card or look at the bottom of a spell card to find out how many AP an action will take.

Resolve each action completely before choosing your next. Sometimes you may attempt to take an action and have it canceled by another player. This is likely to affect the choice you will make for your second action.

You cannot save action points from one turn to another. If you have extra action points at the end of your turn and have no other actions to take, you must take the "Pass" action until all of your AP have been used.

The Undo Rule

You cannot undo the previous player's last action.

For example, Bill draws a spell for 1 AP, and then uses his second AP to move the Dragon one space to the left. He announces his turn is over. Now it is Cindy's turn. During her turn she can take any action except moving the Dragon one space back to the right. However, she could move the Dragon to the left, since that would not undo Bill's last move.

Suppose Bill had first moved the Dragon to the left, and then drawn a spell. In this case Cindy could move the Dragon back to the right, since Bill's Dragon move was his first action, not his last.

Extra Actions

There are two common ways to take more than 2 actions per turn. These extra actions can be taken at any time during your turn.

Free actions

Many characters have a special ability that lets you perform an action without spending an AP. For instance, the Barbarian may move one square for free each turn.

Haste actions

You may cast any number of Haste spells at any time during your turn. Playing the spell is free (as noted on the bottom of the card) and it gives you 1 AP. You can use this bonus AP at any time during your current turn; you do not need to use it immediately.

Losing Action Points

You may end up with fewer than 2 AP on your turn.

Witch's Curse

The Witch's Freeze Curse causes the cursed player to have only 1 AP on his or her next turn.

Freeze Spell

The target of a Freeze spell will lose his or her entire turn. You cannot take any actions, including free or Haste actions.

Dragon Attack

If the Dragon moves into your space you lose your next two turns and are sent back to your home corner. Always keep a respectful distance from the Dragon! Losing two turns can be devastating.

Ending your turn

After you have finished taking all your actions, announce that your turn is over. Play then proceeds to the player on your left.

Ending the game

The game immediately ends when the last treasure is picked up. In a 2 or 3-player game the person with the most treasures wins the game. In a 4-player game the team with the most combined treasures wins.

Ties

In a 3-player game it is possible for players to tie. If this occurs the victory goes to the player who picked up the last treasure.

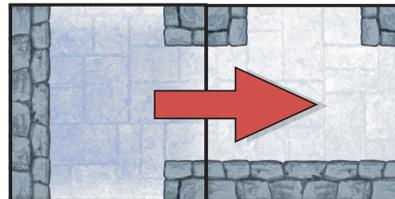
Actions

Here are the details of each Action. A quick reference list of all the actions is printed on the back of each player's character card.

1) Move 1 Space

Costs 1 AP.

Move your character from the current space into an adjacent space.



You may move onto a space with another character.

You may move into the same square as the Dragon. However, if you end your turn in the Dragon's square you are attacked. (See *Dragon Attacks* below).

Moving treasures

When you move you may drag one treasure along with you. This treasure is not considered yours (other players may pick it up before you get a chance to).

Why would you want to drag a treasure instead of picking it up? At times you will find that spending an action to pick up a treasure will end your turn and leave you in a vulnerable spot (i.e., near the Dragon). Instead, you can use your second action to drag the treasure to a safer spot.

Special Moves

Normally, a move is from one square into a connected square. However, there are a few exceptions.

Cobwebs



A square that contains cobwebs is treated as two spaces. You can never stand on a cobweb; instead place your marker to one side. It costs 1 AP to move from one side of a cobweb to the other.

Tunnel



There are two tunnel squares in the Maze. If you are on a tunnel square you may move directly to the other tunnel square for 1 AP.

2) Draw a Spell

Costs 1 AP. You may only draw one spell per turn.



Take the top spell from the spell deck and place it in your hand (also called your **spellbook**). Do not show it to the other players until you are ready to cast it.

You may not draw a spell if you already have 6 spells in your hand.

If you need to draw a spell and the deck is empty, shuffle the discarded spells and start a new deck.

3) Cast a Spell

Costs vary. Refer to the bottom of the spell card.

You may play any number of spells in one turn, as long as you have enough action points. Some of the most powerful moves you can make in *Maze* are to chain spells together for combination effects.

To cast a spell you remove the spell card from your hand and place it face up in the discard pile.

Targeting

Most of the spells need a target. For instance, Telekinesis requires a target treasure, while Freeze needs a target player.

When you play a spell specify the target (if required).

The target must be within the spell's targeting range. Look in the top right corner of the spell to determine the range. (Anti-Magic, Protect and Haste are not targeted spells, so do not have the range icon). There are three types of spell ranges:

Connect



The target must be connected to your character. You are connected if you can draw a path from your character to the target without touching a wall or going off the board.

You can connect through the tunnel.

You can also connect through cobwebs, the Dragon and other characters.

Line



The target must be in a straight line, either horizontally or vertically, with your character.

You can target a Line spell through walls.

Cobwebs, the Dragon and other characters do not block the spell.

Super



No restrictions. The target can be anywhere in the Maze.

Non-targeted Spells

There are 3 non-targeted spells: Anti-Magic, Protect and Haste. Anti-Magic and Protect are both played in response to other spells, while Haste is always played on the casting player. See the *Spells* section below for further details.

Counter Spells

After you cast a spell the other players have a chance to stop it before it takes effect. Anti-Magic can be played to stop any spell (even a Protect or another Anti-Magic). Protect can only be played by the person who is the target.

For example, if you are the target of a Freeze spell you can either play an Anti-Magic or a Protect spell to stop the spell. However, you could not use a Protect spell to stop a Teleport, since the Teleport does not target a player. (If you wanted to stop the Teleport you would need to play an Anti-Magic spell).

If a spell is countered then it is discarded with no effect. The casting player loses the action.

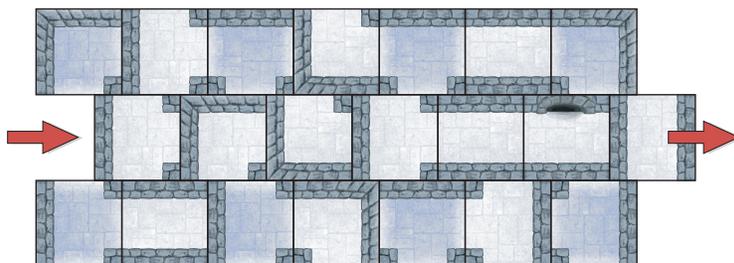
Applying the Spell

If your spell was not countered then you immediately apply the effects. Refer to the Spell section below for details on the effects of the individual spells.

4) Slide a row of tiles 1 square

Costs 1 AP. You may slide as many times as you like, provided you have enough action points.

If the previous player's last action was to slide a row, you may not undo that slide (see *The Undo Rule*, above). However, you may



keep sliding the row in the same direction.

Whenever you slide a row of tiles one tile will be pushed out of the Maze. Pick up that tile, rotate it anyway you choose, and put it back in the Maze in the empty square.

If there happens to be a Dragon, treasure or character on that square then it will go along for the ride.

Be on the lookout when the Dragon is on the edge of the Maze. Although he may appear to be far away from you, he can be pushed off the edge and wrap around to your side.

Only every other row of tiles will slide. If a square has a dark floor then it cannot move.

Stuck tiles

I attempted to make the board as easy to slide as possible, but due to slight imperfections the tiles will occasionally stick. In general, do not force a stuck row or the tiles may pop out of the Maze and go flying in all directions. Instead, place one hand on each end of the row and try to "rock" the tiles back and forth.

If the pieces still do not slide you will need to move them one by one until you find the problem tile.

You may wish to practice sliding rows before you begin your first game. The most important trick is to make sure that both ends of the row are smoothly aligned along the outside edge after each slide.

Sliding the Dragon

No matter how many actions you have, you may never slide the Dragon more than once per turn.

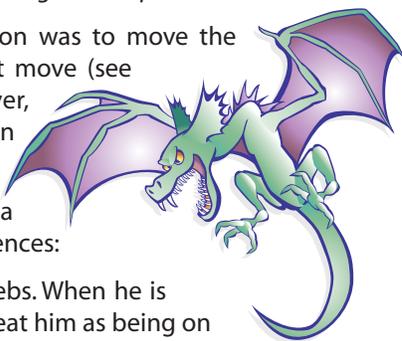
5) Move the Dragon

Costs 1 AP. You may only move the Dragon once per turn.

If the previous player's last action was to move the Dragon, you may not undo that move (see *The Undo Rule*, above). However, you may keep moving the Dragon in the same direction.

A Dragon move is similar to a character move with a few differences:

- The Dragon ignores cobwebs. When he is in a square with cobwebs treat him as being on both sides of the web simultaneously.
- The Dragon cannot move through the tunnel. He is too big.
- The Dragon cannot move into the home corners (the 4 starting squares).
- If there are treasures in the Dragon's square you may move any number of them along with the Dragon as he moves.



Dragon Attacks

When a player's turn ends the Dragon automatically attacks any character in his square.

If you are attacked by the Dragon you must skip your next 2 turns. You may not take any actions, including using special powers or playing spells of any type.

To keep track of the 2 skipped turns use the following procedure. When the Dragon attacks immediately remove your character off the board. On your first skipped turn you move your character back into your home corner, but tip the character token face down.

On your second skipped turn stand your character token back up.

Caution

Beginning players often overlook the power of the Dragon and end up sitting in the corner recovering from Dragon attacks. Don't make this mistake! Always keep a safe distance between you and the Dragon.

6) Pick up a Treasure

Costs 1 AP for each treasure. You may pick up any number of treasures in a turn, provided you have enough actions.



If you are on the same space as a treasure then you may pick it up off the board. Place it next to your home corner for all players to see.

You must be on the same side of a cobweb as a treasure to pick it up. You cannot pick up a treasure "through the webs".

When the last treasure is picked up off the board the game ends (see *Ending the Game* above).

If you are feeling bold, you may move into the square with the Dragon and pick up treasure. Just make sure you can get back out again before the



end of your turn!

7) Using a Special Power

Cost varies. See your character card for more information.

Most characters have 3 primary abilities:

Free ability

Listed at the top of the character card. These abilities do not take action points to perform, but usually can be done for free once a turn.

2-point ability

Listed in the middle of the character card with a "2:": These are high-powered effects that can give your character the edge at a critical moment.

Defensive ability

At the bottom of your character card are the character's defensive abilities. These are free abilities that can take effect on other player's turns.

Many of the defensive abilities have line of sight targeting. **Line of sight** is defined as a straight line of hallways connecting your character directly to the target. You are not in line of sight if your character would have to look around a corner or through a wall or tunnel.

8) Pass

Costs 1 AP. You may pass any number of times in one turn.

You must use all your AP each turn. If you have nothing else to do during a turn you must Pass until you have used up your remaining AP.

Spells

Most of the spells are self-explanatory. Just follow the directions on the card. Here are more detailed explanations to help answer some common questions. A few strategy hints have also been provided.

Anti-Magic

1 card in the deck.

You may play Anti-Magic in response to any spell, even if it is not your turn.

Use Anti-Magic to cancel any spell, including a Protect or another Anti-Magic (this can happen if the Warlock is in the game).

Be careful about playing Anti-Magic too early. It is best to play it at the last possible moment in an attempt to stop another player from winning the game.

Protect

4 cards in the deck.

A Protect can be used to negate any spell targeted at you.

Specifically, you can Protect against these three spells: Freeze, Switch and Theft.

You cannot play a Protect spell to help your partner in a team game. You can only play Protect spells on yourself.

Haste

8 cards in the deck.

Play a Haste to gain an action point. You do not need to spend the bonus AP right away. You can save it and spend it any time during the current turn.

Even though Haste costs 0 AP to play, you cannot play it during another player's turn.

Don't overlook the power of a Haste spell. Beginner players often throw the Haste for a small gain. Instead, think about saving 2 or more and chaining them together for a larger effect (like picking up several treasures in one turn and winning the game).

I have heard this comment from the losers in many games, "I would have won, if only I had a Haste!"

Freeze

5 spells in the deck. 1 super, 2 connect and 2 line.

Target player is frozen for his or her next turn.

While frozen, a player may not cast spells or use any special powers.

When a character is frozen, tip the character's token over as a reminder. Skip the next turn and stand the character back up.

Don't Freeze a player without a reason. Make sure you can follow through with something big on your next turn. Freeze works well on a player near the Dragon.

A simple combo is to play a Freeze, followed by a Theft. If the target player doesn't Protect the Freeze spell then he will be frozen and cannot play a Protect against the Theft. If he chooses to Protect the Freeze spell then he won't have that Protect to use against the Theft. Either way you end up stealing a treasure from him!

Switch

5 spells in the deck. 1 super, 2 connect and 2 line.

Switch places with target player.

This spell comes in handy when another player ends his or her turn on a treasure, but doesn't have enough AP left to pick it up. Switch with them and take the treasure for yourself.

You cannot switch places with the Dragon, but you can try this risky trick: Move your character onto the Dragon's square and then play the Switch spell. You will survive, but the Dragon will attack the switched player. (Make sure he is all out of Protects before you try this one).

Telekinesis

5 spells in the deck. 1 super, 2 connect and 2 line.

Use this spell to pull treasures down the hallways towards you and away from your opponents.

Treat this spell as 3 "mini-spells". First select a target treasure and move it 1 space (use the movement rules for characters).

After the first treasure has moved you may target the same treasure again or move another treasure. Repeat this a third time.

Teleport

5 spells in the deck. 1 super, 2 connect and 2 line.

Instantly jump your character to any space within the spell's range.

The Super Teleport is a game-winning spell. Use it when it will allow you to teleport onto the last treasure and pick it up.

Theft

5 spells in the deck. 1 super, 2 connect and 2 line.

Steal a treasure or a spell of your choice from target player.

Most of the time you will use the Theft spell to take a treasure, since that will not only give you one point, but it will also take away one point from your target. However, don't overlook the power of stealing a spell. Not only do you get a spell of your choice, but you also get to see the remaining cards in your target's spellbook.

Characters

All of a character's powers are listed on the character card. Refer to the card before starting the game and make sure you understand all of the special abilities. You may find it helpful to take turns reading the character cards out loud before starting the game.

As mentioned in the *Using a Special Power* section (see above) each character card lists 3 primary sections: free abilities, a 2-point power, and defensive abilities.

Here are some clarifications and strategy hints to help you master the characters.

Barbarian

A good character for beginner players. He doesn't get much opportunity to draw spells since he spends most of the game racing into and out of trouble.

You can prevent other players from moving into your square (using the "Walking Wall" ability) but you cannot stop a player from teleporting directly into your square.

The Barbarian can win if he gets treasures quickly. If he takes too long then he usually gets stomped with spell combinations from the magic users.

Druid

One common tactic for the Druid is to use the Dragon to "vacuum" up all the treasures. Meanwhile, she stays in the corner collecting spells for the late game.

Try to make long passage ways through the Maze. Other players will often overlook your "Rampage!" ability until it is too late.

Even though you have the "Dragon Master" skill (which lets you

stand in the same square as the Dragon) don't go near the Dragon until you have a Protect spell. The other characters will try to Freeze you whenever you are near the Dragon.

Mind Reaper

The Mind Reaper is one of the more powerful characters in the game. His ability to constantly keep the Maze moving will slow down and confuse all the other players.

Try to get the Dragon on the edge of board and on top of a non-moving square. Once in that position he is a threat to all other players moving near the edges because of your "Dimensional Portal" ability.

Sorceress

This character is not recommended for beginners, since you need to know all the spells in the deck. Use the "Spells" reference card as a guide while you are learning.

Get in the habit of asking for a spell as soon as your turn starts. Pay attention to who is drawing spells and not playing them.

The best Sorceress dirty trick is to play a Theft spell on another player and then look at his spellbook. Take one spell for the Theft and immediately take another by naming it. Your opponent will then try to dump as many spells as he can before you steal them all from him. This is also a win for you.

About the only time the "Psychic Command" comes in to play is near the end of the 4-player team game. Use this as a stall maneuver, keeping your opponents from getting to the last treasure while your teammate saves the day. If you save two Haste spells you have a good chance of forcing someone into the Dragon.

Actively try to get near other characters. The "Hypnotic Eyes" spell can mess up another player's game.

Thief

Keep the Thief near the tunnels at all times. Stay in place, while sliding the treasures and other players to the outside edges. You can leap out of hiding and grab a treasure before anyone can do anything about it. With a bit of luck you might also grab a treasure off of another player.

Warlock

Make sure to draw a spell every turn when playing the Warlock. Don't stoop to the lowly task walking to the treasure, either teleport onto to or use telekinesis to move it to you. Your ability to change Line spells into Connect spells and vice-versa means you won't have to waste time pushing the tiles into position.

Witch

You will need the "Curse" reference card when you play the Witch.

Hide in the corner and throw curses every turn while drawing spells for your own use. Don't come out until you have a good combo or two ready to go.

Remember to use the Scavenge ability frequently (unless you are playing against the Sorceress). It is important to grab a Protect spell early and make sure all the players know you have it. Most

players will avoid throwing spells at you at that point.

Wizard

The majority of all *Maze* games are won by using combinations of spells. Therefore, it is no surprise that the Wizard consistently wins.

Stay in the corner and draw spells. Don't worry about the fast characters racing out and grabbing the early treasures. Hold your ground until you can start punishing them with an endless spell barrage.

Wraith

This is another good character for beginner players. He doesn't draw many spells and is quickly moving from treasure to treasure.

You cannot use your power to pull treasure chests through walls.

The Wraith is usually the first character to get a treasure and the first character to get attacked by the Dragon. Don't let your "Shadow Walk" power make you cocky. Stay away from the Dragon!

Strategy Tips

Beginning players usually cast spells on a whim. Often drawing a Freeze for the first action and then playing it for their second action. This doesn't really accomplish anything except waste the Freeze spell. Think of Freeze as a spell that takes 2 AP away from your opponent. It costs you 1 AP to draw the spell, and another 1 AP to play it. You just spent 2 AP to take 2 AP away from your opponent. And you lost a Freeze spell, which could have been used when it mattered.

Advanced players know that *Maze* is not about the tiles, but about the spells. Don't spend too much time thinking about the maze itself, since it is constantly moving and hard to predict from turn to turn. Instead, concentrate on your spells, which are more constant. Use the maze as a way to target your spells, not as a way to race through the hallways towards the nearest treasure. (Unless you're the Barbarian. Then go for it!)

Designer's Notes

The original inspiration for *Maze* came from the children's game, *The A-maze-ing Labyrinth*. I loved the sliding tile board and wanted to design my own game on the same type of board. I began working on several versions of the game, first using a cardboard prototype, then moving up to wood and eventually making the final game out of hand-painted ceramic tiles.

Over the last 10 years I have forced friends, family and co-workers to play *Maze* with me and have constantly been changing the rules (often in the middle of a game, much to their dismay). After countless iterations the changes started to slow down, and then stop. I ended up with the game you have now. (Well, there's always the opportunity for "just one more" change.)

Enjoy the game!

-Steve Librande, May 12, 2003