

SECTION X

The most notorious prisoners are kept isolated from the outside world on a heavily guarded island in the Atlantic Ocean, just off the coast of the United States. Those sentenced to life are kept in the most secure part of the prison: Section X. It is extremely difficult to escape from that part of the prison, but the prisoners have a plan. Will they succeed or are the strict guards too clever for them?

Aim of the game

The aim of the game is to keep the prisoners in your cell block out of the reach of the guards and be the first to get five prisoners to the free zone(s). You can reach these free zones via one of the six green marked areas at the corners of the board.

Materials for the game

- 1 board
- 54 tunnel tiles
- 4 master keys
- 32 prisoners
- 8 doors

Preparation

The prison island with the prison and the heavily guarded Section X is at the centre of the board. Section X is divided into four cell blocks. Each player chooses his own colour and puts his eight prisoners into one of the four cell blocks. Each player gets two doors that he places in front of himself. The tunnel tiles are shuffled and laid face-down in three piles. The four master key cards are placed in a pile next to the board. Lots are drawn to see who is to be the first player.

Summary of the game

Rounds

Section X lasts for several rounds. A round ends when one of the players has got three prisoners (or two prisoners if there are only two players) to freedom or if all the tunnel tiles have been used up.

Phases of the game

Each player works through the following three phases at each turn:

1. taking a tunnel tile
2. placing, exchanging, moving or turning a tunnel tile
3. moving prisoners through the tunnels or placing or moving a door in a tunnel

Example of the beginning phase of the game

When a tile has been laid on the island so that there is an opening to the tunnel the prisoners can flee into the tunnel. By placing a door in front of a tunnel a player ensures that only his prisoners have access to that particular tunnel. The prisoners try to escape from the island to the free zones by digging tunnels and creeping through them. Prisoners from different cell blocks can move from any position on the island to any tunnel entrance provided the entrance is not blocked by a door belonging to another player.

Example of Section X at the start of the game



Nog vertalen:

Alles wat je nodig hebt staat in deze spelregels, maar als je meer informatie wilt of vragen hebt, bezoek dan onze website:

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In the illustration shown above the blue player is blocking the entrance to 'his' tunnel with his door. In contrast red is in a tunnel with free access, so that prisoners from different cell blocks may also enter. The purple door at the top right blocks this entrance to the tunnel for other cell blocks, but it is possible to enter this tunnel from the right with prisoners of another colour. This example also shows how the tunnels can be connected to the central island at various places.

Rounds

The first player begins his turn by working through the three phases of the game in this fixed order:

Phase 1:

Taking a tile

The player chooses the top tile from one of the three piles of tiles. However, if a player already has three tiles in stock he must bypass phase 1 and go direct to phase 2. A player can keep tiles in stock by choosing not to place a tile in phase 2, but instead to move tiles, to exchange tiles or to turn a tile round. A player may never have more than three tiles in stock.

Phase 2:

Placing, exchanging, moving or turning a tunnel tile

In this phase of the game a player may place, exchange, move or turn a tile. The rule here is that the tunnel(s) on the tile must connect with the surrounding tunnels. Tunnels can be connected to the central island from different sides. Tunnels can also run to the edge of the board. No tiles may be placed on the areas marked in green.

An explanation of the four possible actions from which a player may choose one is given below:

A. Placing:

A tile can be placed at any position on the board. A tile may be placed that connects to a tunnel belonging to another player. A tile can be placed at any position on the board. A tile may be placed that connects to a tunnel belonging to another player.

B. Exchanging:

Exchanging two tiles on the board.

The tiles may also be turned round when doing this. It is not allowed to exchange tiles if they form part of a tunnel belonging to another player. A player takes a tunnel into his possession by placing a door in it. It is not allowed to exchange tiles on which prisoners are standing unless this is a tile with only own prisoners in a hiding place. However, the distance rule then applies: the tile with the hiding place must remain at least at the same minimum distance from a green marked area. See also the paragraph *Distance rule*.

C. Moving:

Moving a tile to another position on the board. The tile may also be turned round when doing this. It is not allowed to move a tile if it forms part of a tunnel belonging to another player. A player takes a tunnel into his possession by placing a door in it. It is also not allowed to move a tile if one or more prisoners are standing on it unless this is a tile with only own prisoners in a hiding place. However, the distance rule then applies: the tile with the hiding place must remain at least at the same minimum distance from a green marked area. See also the paragraph *Distance rule*.

D. Turning:

Turning a tile round on the board.

This is not allowed if the tile forms part of a tunnel belonging to another player or if prisoners are standing on this tile.

Phase 3:

Moving prisoners or placing or moving a door

The player may choose one of the following two actions in this phase:

A. Moving prisoners

The player may allow his prisoners to make a total of five steps with a maximum of two steps per prisoner during one turn. The prisoners move through the tunnels, starting from their cell block on the central island. They can escape to any directly connecting tile around the island, provided there is a connection

that they can reach that is not blocked by a door from another player. Each move to a new tile counts as one step. Prisoners may move both forwards and backwards. This can be handy if prisoners have to be taken to a place of safety just before the end of a round if they run the risk of the escape being detected. They can then move back to their own cell block.

There is a restriction of only one prisoner per tunnel section. Only in a hiding place are two prisoners allowed at the same time. It is possible for two or three prisoners to be standing on the same tile, but this is only allowed if the tile forms part of different tunnels.

B. Placing or moving a door

By placing or moving one of your two doors you can block access to a particular tunnel for prisoners of other players and you have control over the whole tunnel. You may place or move a maximum of one door on a particular tile during your turn, but it is not allowed to place a door in a tunnel that already belongs to another player. It is also not allowed to place a door at a junction because the door must be in a tunnel. After the first player has finished the third phase the turn passes clockwise to the other players who must all start at phase 1. Play continues until the round has ended. See *New round*.

New round

End of a round

As soon as a player has succeeded in getting three prisoners (two prisoners if there are only two players) out of his cell block to the green areas of one or more free zones the escape is detected! The guards find the tunnels and destroy them using explosives. Only the hiding places with prisoners are still safe. The prisoners who are in a tunnel at that moment are buried under the ground as the tunnel collapses. These prisoners are taken out of the game immediately and do not return. All prisoners in the green areas now move to the free zone(s), so that all the green areas are now empty again. The doors are also removed from the board, but these are given back to the players for use in the next round. A round also ends when a player takes the last tile. In that case the player may complete his turn after which the round ends.

Special situations: not enough prisoners

- If none of the players have enough prisoners to be able to get five prisoners to freedom the game ends immediately.
- If it is not possible for one or more of the players to get five prisoners to freedom a last round is played.

Start of new round

The new round starts after all the remaining tiles, including hiding places without prisoners and the stock of tiles are collected together with the unused tiles. The tiles are shuffled and three new piles formed. The turn now moves to the next player who starts with phase 1.

Example

The next illustration shows how the players can get to the free zones. The top illustration shows that the round has ended because the purple cell block has got three prisoners to the free zone. After that all the tiles (and any prisoners on them) are removed. The doors are also removed, but the players may use these again in the next round. The illustration below shows that the prisoners who had got to the green zone can now move to the free land. Only the hiding places with prisoners in them remain for the start of the next round.

End of the round



Start of the next round



Terms

(in alphabetical order)

Distance rule

The distance rule must always be applied when moving or exchanging hiding places with prisoners. This means that the tile with the hiding place must remain at least at the same distance relative to a green marked area. An example is given below to make this clear.



In the example shown above the tile with the hiding place and a yellow prisoner on it may be moved by the yellow player to A, B, C or D, but not to positions E or F, because these are nearer to the free zone. Moving the tile to B or C makes a connection between the hiding place and the tunnel and complies with the distance rule. D is not favourable, because it is not possible to leave the hiding place from there.

Master key

If a player no longer has any prisoners in his cell block and the prisoners that have not yet escaped to freedom are in a maximum of two hiding places, then this player is given a master key. At that moment there may also not be any of his prisoners in tunnels. The master key allows the player to go through any door. Only prisoners of a player with a master key may pass through any door. The player gets a master key but at the same time he has to give in a door. A player loses his master key when he reaches a free zone with one of his prisoners or if he goes back to his cell block, but he then gets his door back though. If the player gets back into the situation described above then he again gets a master key (and surrenders a door). There are four master keys. A player may only have one master key at any one time.



Hiding place

A hiding place is a safe space in which to hide in a tunnel. There may only be two prisoners on any one hiding place. These may also be two prisoners from different players.



Tunnel door

If a player places a door in a tunnel he blocks this for prisoners of other players and the tunnel becomes the 'possession' of this player. It is not allowed to place a door in a tunnel that belongs to another player. Players may not interfere with tunnel tiles that form part of a tunnel in which there is a door belonging to another player. Prisoners may move freely through a tunnel belonging to another player if they are already beyond the door. It is also possible to get round a door by getting prisoners in through a different, free entrance. At the end of a round when all the tunnels collapse the players get their doors back and can use these again.



Struggle for a tunnel

It is possible that two or more tunnels from different players (blocked by doors from different players) eventually connect with each other. In this situation the player with the longest tunnel is allowed to leave his door in place and the player with the shorter tunnel must remove his door. The number of tiles in place before the connection was made count when deciding who has the longest tunnel. If the tunnels were the same length before the connection was made the player making the connection may decide which door is allowed to remain in place.



Laying a tunnel tile forms a connection between the two tunnels and to the removal of the tunnel door belonging to the purple player (right) who only had one tile in comparison to the three tiles of the red player.

Stock of tunnel tiles

Each player may have a maximum of three tiles in stock. The tiles are kept face down so that the players do not know what possibilities the others have. If a player has three tiles in stock he bypasses phase 1 because he may not take any more tiles. At the end of a round the players hand in all their stock of tiles. It is never allowed to place more than one tunnel tile per turn.

Free zone

When a prisoner has gone through a tunnel and arrived at one of the six green zones then this zone becomes his own and he does not allow any prisoners from other players on it. Only his own cellmates are welcome on this land! The free zones are separated by green borders (see illustration).



A player may allow his prisoners to escape to more than one free zone, but there must be at least one free zone available for each player. If a player takes over a free zone in a round this zone remains his for the whole of the game.

End of the game and the winner

The game is over when one of the players succeeds in getting five prisoners to freedom by allowing them to escape to the free zone(s) or if none of the players can achieve this any more because they have do not sufficient prisoners left over. In that case the player with most prisoners in the free zone(s) wins. If there is a draw the free prisoners and the prisoners in hiding places are added together to decide the winner. If this is also the same, the number of available prisoners is counted and the player with the most prisoners left over is the winner. If a compulsory last round is played, because one or more players does not have enough prisoners left over to get to safety, then the player with the most prisoners left over at the end is also declared the winner here.

For 2 players and advanced players

Rules for 2 players

When the game is played by 2 players only, a round is over as soon as one of the players has succeeded in getting two instead of three prisoners to the green marked areas. Otherwise the game is played with the same rules as when there are three or four players.

Variation of the game for advanced players

Section X is even better if a number of changes are made to the rules that increase the tactical factors and the level of difficulty and make the game last somewhat longer:

- The aim of the game is to get seven, instead of five, prisoners to freedom.
- Instead of three face-down piles three open piles are made, with the player always being able to choose in phase 1 from which pile of tiles he wishes to take a tile.
- Phases two and three can be changed around in each turn. This makes it possible, for example, to first move a number of prisoners, then to exchange or move a tile and then to move a number of prisoners again. Naturally, the rule that only one exchange, placing, moving or turning of tiles still applies to the tiles and a maximum of five steps is allowed for the prisoners with a maximum of two steps per prisoner.

Tactical tips from The Game Master

- Be careful that you do not have all your prisoners in tunnels because that could cost you dear. So be clever and use the hiding places.
- Turning tiles around can be handy when you want to move your prisoners out of a hiding place. Try exchanging tiles also in order to shorten the length of your tunnel.
- Lay a tunnel tile to make it awkward for your fellow players sometimes and position a door or a prisoner on this tile so that it cannot be moved easily.

The Game Master

Colophon

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Voor vragen of opmerkingen over dit spel kunt u mailen naar: info@thegamemaster.nl

If you want more hints from The Game Master. Check out his website with mulit-langual hints and FAQ lists:

www.thegamemaster.nl

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