

Game Design Challenge #1: Race-to-the-End Board Game

First, draw some kind of path. It can be straight or curved. All it takes is drawing a line. Now divide the path into spaces. You have now completed the first step out of four. See how easy this is?

Second, come up with a theme or objective. The players need to get from one end of the path to the other because you are either running towards something or running away from something. What are the players represented as in the game? What is their goal? In the design of many games, it is often helpful to start by asking what the objective is, and a lot of rules will fall into place just from that. You should be able to come up with something (even if it is extremely silly) in just a few minutes. You're now half way done!

Third, you need a set of rules to allow the players to travel from space to space. How do you move? The simplest way, which you're probably familiar with, is to roll a die on your turn and move that many spaces forward. You also need to decide exactly how the game ends: do you have to land on the final space by exact count, or does the game end as soon as a player reaches or passes it?

Fourth, you're missing one element common to many games: conflict. Games tend to be more interesting if you can affect your opponents, either by helping them or harming them. Think of ways to interact with your opponents. Does something happen when you land on the same space as them? Are there spaces you land on that let you do things to your opponents, such as move them forward or back? Can you move your opponents through other means on your turn (such as if you roll a certain result on the die)? Add at least one way to modify the standing of your opponents when it is your turn.

Deliverable: *By the end of class, your group should have a playable prototype of a board game that satisfies all four criteria. You should have written instructions so another group can play your game even if you are not present. You will test your prototype tomorrow.*