

RULES

In Game Mechanics

On Game Identity

"Every game HAS its rules"

"Every game IS its rules"

~David Parlett, The Oxford History of Board Games

Rule Characteristics

- Limit Player Action
- Explicit & Unambiguous
- Shared by all Players
- Fixed
- Binding
- Repeatable

Rules on Three Levels

Operational: Rules on the Box

Constitutive: Logic & Anatomy

Implicit: Etiquette & Social Contracts

Operational Rules: Rules on the Box

Operational rules are the "rules of play" of a game. They are what we normally think of as rules: the guidelines players require in order to play.

Constitutive Rules: Logic & Anatomy

The constitutive rules of a game are the underlying formal structures that exist "below the surface" of the rules presented to players.

These formal structures are logical and mathematical.

Implicit Rules: Etiquette + Social Contracts

Implicit rules are the "unwritten rules" of a game. These rules concern etiquette, good sportsmanship, and other implied rules of game behavior.

Creating Meaningful Play

"There is no magic formula to meaningful play. There are as many approaches to creating games as there are game designers."

~Katie Salen & Eric Zimmerman, Rules of Play

Creating Meaningful Play

"As a game designer you might be driven by a desire to explore storytelling, visual aesthetics, social interaction, new technologies--or even new kinds of formal rules."

~Katie Salen & Eric Zimmerman, Rules of Play