



Free Game # 31 from Invisible City Productions, Inc.

**A strategy game for two to eight players.  
Created by Jeremy P. Bushnell**

**The Story:**

Since time can remember, monkeys in the Great Wood have quarrels over who truly rules the trees. Usually these territorial skirmishes led to a lot of ill-mannered screeching, which was very impressive but rarely decisive.

All of this changed when one enterprising monkey learned that a pulled-back tree branch could launch a breadfruit some distance through the forest. This discovery set off a chain reaction of intensified development into offensive and defensive forest technologies. The monkeys quickly learned that catapults worked better than pulled-back tree branches. Research into fortifications became necessary, as a means of defense against the constant rain of deadly breadfruit launched from catapults. All monkeys were issued saws in order to aid them in procuring the raw materials necessary for the war effort.

Today, as the sun rises over the Great Wood, a feeling of determination accompanies it. All the monkeys feel certain that when the sun sets in the evening, the ultimate ruler of the trees will have been determined, once and for all...

**Object:**

To end the game with more platform squares in forts under your monkeys' control than any other player.

## You Need:

- a decent amount of spare change
- a few printouts of the Lumber Sheets
- one printout of the Territory Grid for every player, plus one extra
- one printout of the Monkey Sheet for every player

All of these files are available from the Invisible Bazaar:  
<http://www.invisible-city.com/bazaar/>

## Setting Up:

- Before playing for the first time, print a few copies of the Lumber Sheets, and cut out the various shapes. (Cut along the solid lines, not the dotted ones.) This will leave you with a lot of lumber pieces and several catapult sleeves, which you can assemble as needed during the game.
- Cut the monkeys out of the Monkey Sheet and assemble them. Color them so that each player's monkeys will be distinguishable.
- Give each player the remainder of the Monkey Sheet and a copy of the Territory Grid.
- Take all of your change and divide it into piles of roughly equal composition. There should be one pile for each player, and one extra. If you're a highly competitive group, you may want to count it out to ensure that each player gets precisely the same distributions of coins, but this is not strictly necessary. Remove any half-dollars, dollar coins, or foreign currency, as they are not used in this game.

Note: the more coins you use, and the more players you have, the longer your game will be. The game can be played as a weekend-long epic if you have several players and a lot of coins, or it can be fit into an hour if you have only two players and a few coins. About twelve coins for each player - three of each common denomination - is good for an intermediate-length game of a few hours.

- Players distribute their coins randomly within their Territory Grid, making sure that each coin falls within the boundaries of a square, and that no squares contain more than one coin. One player should distribute the extra pile of coins randomly on the extra grid. (If you play with a competitive

group, you may find that a good-faith effort towards randomness cannot be counted on. In this case, you can either assign the Territory Grids to players at random *after* the coins have been distributed, *or* you can allow people to place their coins strategically. See how it goes.)

- Place the Territory Grids adjacent to one another with the extra one in the center, serving as neutral territory.

Note: the grid layout will differ depending on the number of players. As the number of players increases, the layout of the tiles becomes more complex in order to ensure that no one player begins the game at a strategic disadvantage. We've worked out layout configurations that are reasonably fair for up to eight players, although we encourage you to also feel free to experiment with alternative grid layouts. Games of two through five players require one neutral grid, games of six or eight players require no neutral grid, and a seven-player game requires a whopping *four* neutral grids. All these layouts are provided in the Variants section.

- Players place their four monkeys on their grid. The monkeys can be placed in any square that does not already contain a coin or a monkey.

## Play:

### Some Important Terms

A **ground square** is an empty square on the board.

A **tree** is a coin on the board. The larger the value of the coin, the larger the tree. A ground square with a tree in it is referred to as a **tree square**.

This game comes with some geometric shapes to cut out. Before these are put into play, they're considered **lumber**. Once they're placed on the board, they're **platforms**. The individual squares that constitute a platform are called **platform squares**. Platforms are built in trees, so there's always at least one tree square somewhere under every platform. But as long as a platform covers them, the squares are considered platform squares, not tree squares.

A **fort** is any number of platforms that are adjacent to one another. When at least one monkey is on a platform in a fort, the entire fort is **under the control** of the player whom that monkey belongs to.

We'll define the rest as we go along...

## On Your Turn

On your turn, you can use any two of your monkeys. Each of these monkeys may **move**, and perform one non-movement **action**. Actions include **cutting**, **building**, **demolishing**, or **attacking**. Each of these is described in greater detail below.

A monkey may move and then perform an action, or it may perform an action and then move, but it may not move, perform an action, and then continue moving.

You may always choose to pass any portion of your turn or all of it.

## Moving

To move, declare which monkey you plan to move, and roll the die. You may move the monkey up to that number of squares. If you wish, you may "discard" some of the movement roll by moving fewer squares than the number you rolled. You may discard the entire roll in this fashion, although this does not mean that you may re-roll.

Monkeys are naturally agile, so a monkey can move between ground squares, tree squares, and platform squares freely.

Monkeys riding catapults, however, are less agile. A monkey must dismount its catapult before it can move onto or through a tree square. Similarly, a monkey riding a catapult on the ground must dismount before it can move onto or through a platform square, and a monkey riding a catapult on a platform must dismount before it can move onto or through a ground square.

A dismount does not count as a move or an action. Simply declare that you are dismounting, remove the catapult sleeve from the monkey, and continue to move the monkey as normal. Leave the empty catapult sleeve in the square where you dismounted.

Any monkey may mount an abandoned catapult, regardless of which player built it. Mounting a catapult does not count as a move or an action. Simply declare

that you are mounting the catapult, insert your monkey in the empty sleeve, and continue to move as normal.

Mounting and dismounting do not count as moves, but you can declare that a monkey is mounting or dismounting only while you are moving that monkey.

Being territorial, no monkey can enter a square occupied by another monkey.

A monkey may not move onto or through any platform squares that are part of a fort controlled by an opponent's monkey, although any monkey may move onto an abandoned fort, regardless of which player built it.

Monkeys cannot move diagonally.

## **Actions**

- **Cutting**

A monkey inhabiting a square containing a tree may choose to cut the tree down. Declare that the monkey is cutting down the tree, and remove the coin from the game.

Cutting down a tree yields a certain amount of lumber. The amount of lumber is determined by the size of the tree, which is represented by the value of the coin. Pennies yield one square of lumber; nickels, two squares; dimes, three squares; and quarters, four squares. Upon cutting down a tree, select the appropriate number of lumber squares. Place them in the quadrant of your Monkey Sheet that corresponds to the monkey who cut down the tree.

Do not worry overmuch about the shape of the lumber squares that you take at this point. A monkey can always exchange a lumber piece it carries for a piece that is the same size but a different shape, or for a different combination of piece sizes (provided that the new combination totals the same overall number of squares). These exchanges do not count as actions, and they may be done at any time.

A monkey may carry not more than four squares of lumber at any given time. A monkey may not transfer its lumber to another monkey.

A monkey may choose to "ditch" some or all of the lumber that it is carrying. Simply declare that you are ditching lumber and remove it from your Monkey Sheet. Ditching does not count as an action, and it may be done at any time.

If a monkey is carrying four squares of lumber at the time it cuts down a tree, it must ditch as much lumber as the new tree would yield.

- **Building**

A monkey bearing lumber may build a platform or a catapult.

A catapult costs two lumber squares. Remove two lumber squares from your Monkey Sheet, retrieve a catapult sleeve, and insert your monkey into it. A monkey who builds a catapult automatically mounts it as soon as it is built.

A catapult can be built on a ground square or a platform square. A catapult built on the ground must stay on the ground: it cannot be moved into a platform. A catapult built in a platform must stay in the platform: it cannot be moved to the ground. See the rules on riding catapults, above.

A catapult cannot be built by a monkey in a tree square.

A platform, on the other hand, can only be built by a monkey in a tree square. That tree will bear, or help to bear, the load of that platform.

To build a platform, exchange some or all of the lumber that a monkey is carrying for a platform piece of equivalent size. Place this piece on the board. At least one square must occupy the square with the building monkey. The building monkey remains in this same square, and is transferred to the platform's surface.

Not every tree can bear every load.

- A one-square platform can be supported by any coin.
- A two-square platform can be supported by a nickel, a dime, or a quarter, or by any combination of two coins.
- A three-square platform can be supported by a dime or a quarter or by any combination of two or more coins.
- A four-square platform can only be supported by a quarter or by any combination of two or more coins, except for two pennies.

A platform may not be built over a space that contains a monkey other than the monkey that is building.

A platform may not be built adjacent to a fort under the control of an opponent's monkey.

Trees covered with platforms are not considered to be in play. Any game rules that govern the behavior of monkeys in "squares containing trees" do not govern monkeys in platform squares that may happen to have trees beneath them. The squares become platform squares instead of tree squares.

The lumber pile can "give change" if your monkey builds something smaller

than the lumber piece that it has in its possession.

A monkey can only build one thing per turn.

There is no "scarcity" of catapults, platforms, or specific platform shapes.

If you run out of pieces, print more.

- **Demolishing**

A monkey on a platform square may demolish the platform on which it stands. Remove that platform from the board. The demolishing monkey is simply transferred to the space beneath where the platform stood: it stays in the same square. Any catapults on that platform fall to earth and are also demolished.

Demolishing a platform yields no usable lumber.

A monkey may not demolish a platform on which a second monkey also stands.

- **Attacking**

A monkey in a catapult may attack an opponent's fort, an abandoned platform, or an opponent's monkey that is outside of a fort. A monkey inside a fort cannot be attacked directly.

To attack, first declare your target. If you are attacking an opponent's fort, specify which platform you are aiming at.

There must be a straight line between your attacking monkey and its target. Diagonal lines of attack are permitted.

The further away your monkey is from its target, the harder it is to hit that target. So, first, you must calculate a **distance modifier**. Count the number of squares *between* your attacking monkey and the target. If you are attacking from a platform, this number is your distance modifier. If you are attacking from the ground, your range is reduced due to poor visibility, so your distance modifier is this number *doubled*.

Your distance modifier can never be zero. If you are firing from point-blank range, your distance modifier is one.

If your distance modifier is six or greater, your target is considered out of range, and you may not attack.

You cannot fire on abandoned catapults, or platforms that belong to a fort that you control.

- **Attacking Platforms**

When attacking a platform, calculate the distance modifier, and roll the die. Subtract the distance modifier from your roll. If the result is greater than zero, you have hit your target.

Roll the die a second time. This determines the amount of **damage** your attack has done.

A platform has a certain amount of sturdiness, based on how much lumber was used to construct it. The **sturdiness quotient** of a platform is equal to the number of squares it covers.

Subtract the sturdiness quotient from the damage roll. If the result is greater than zero, the platform is destroyed. The platform is removed from the game. All monkeys or catapults on it fall to their doom and are also removed from the game.

Monkeys that are on a platform have the opportunity to **brace** that platform against impact. The defending player may choose to declare that a monkey on a platform is bracing. For each monkey that is assigned to brace, raise the platform's sturdiness quotient by one. A monkey may only be used to brace once per turn -- if a platform is attacked a second time, and the monkeys on it have already braced, they may not brace again. If a platform is unoccupied, it cannot be braced.

- **Attacking Monkeys**

When attacking a monkey on the ground, calculate the distance modifier to ensure that the shot is within range, and roll the die.

A roll of six, *and only a roll of six*, hits the monkey. Monkeys have only negligible sturdiness, so a successful hit sends the monkey straight to Monkey Heaven. Remove it from the game.

If you are firing on a monkey in a catapult, you have a slightly larger, less agile target, so a roll of five will hit the catapult and destroy it. Remove the catapult sleeve from the game, but leave the monkey in its square, unharmed. A roll of six hits both the catapult and the poor monkey within. Remove both from the game.

You may not fire directly on monkeys that are on a platform square; they are defended by their fort. See "Attacking Platforms" instead.

## Running Out of Monkeys

If you have no monkeys left alive at any given time, you are out of the game.

Before you run out entirely, you can get a new monkey by passing your entire turn. Place this monkey on any non-platform square in your territory.

You can never have more than four monkeys in play.

## Winning:

The game ends when all trees are either beneath platforms or cut down, or when only one player remains in the game.

The player who has the most platform squares in forts under his or her monkeys' control is the winner.

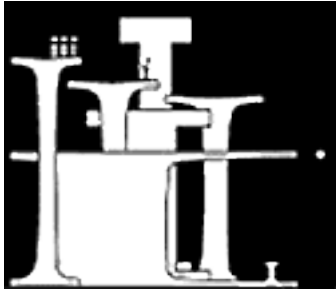
## Origin and Credits:

It took me a full year to complete this game. The notion of a treefort-based strategy game was inspired by a "Treefort Nation" bumper sticker on the car of my friends Thor and April, who I was visiting in New Hampshire after the first . After I left their place, I rode down to Boston on the train and worked out a set of rules and concepts that bears some vague resemblance to the finished product, mainly in that there were monkeys and a board.

An early version was playtested later that summer by Alexander T. and Nicole G., in Philadelphia. The early version wasn't particularly "playable": it seemed to grind to a kind of stasis too early. I made a few basic changes, including the ability to shoot at monkeys and catapults on the ground, but the game seemed marred by many flaws, including a confusing, elaborate movement system, and I shelved it until my next trip to New Hampshire, the following year, once again for Spring.

The Spring conferees were remarkably helpful. We played a game and took careful note of when and how it ground to a halt, and then we discussed, at length, how to make the game more dynamic. We simplified the movement system, replaced the four-sided die that the game originally relied upon with a more traditional six-sided die, and fiddled with the rules for attacks until we had something that we felt would work: we then embarked upon an epic two-day game, hammering out the last flaws and loopholes as we went.

Thor T. came up with a number of the features that the game currently contains, and he went so far as to make me a new four-sided die from Sculpey when I lost mine in a field. Other New Hampshire playtesters included Solon, April, Lyman, Stician, and Heather. They have earned my thanks and my love.



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