

# Volcano

an [Icehouse](#) game designed by [Kristin Looney](#)



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## STANDARD RULES

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### WHAT YOU NEED

- 5 [Treehouse](#) sets and a set of [Volcano Caps](#)
- Number of players: 1-4
- Playing time: 20-30 minutes

### OVERVIEW

Volcano is a clever, puzzle-style game in which players move "caps" around on top of a group of volcanoes, triggering eruptions which cause colored streams of lava to flow out across the playing field. The object of the game is to capture as many pieces as possible, with bonus points awarded for special combinations. Each player attempts to accumulate the highest score and then bring the game to a close before another player has a chance to steal the lead away. Multi-player Volcano supports any number of players, though between 2 and 6 is best. It can be also played by a single player as a solitaire challenge.

## SETUP

Using all of the pieces except the black ones, create 25 solid-color nests, and arrange them into a 5x5 square. (A "nest" consists of a large piece on top of a medium piece on top of a small piece.) Set aside the medium and large black pieces - they will not be used during the game. Place the five small black pieces on top of five nests, using one of the configurations shown here. (After a few games, you may want to try creating your own opening patterns.)



## THE PLAY

Each stack of pieces within the 5x5 grid represents a volcano, and the five small black pieces represent "caps" which keep the volcanoes beneath them from erupting.

On your turn, you may move any one of the five caps in any direction (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally) for a distance of one space. You may not place a cap on top of another cap, and you may not move a cap outside of the 5x5 square. Any other move is legal.

Moving a cap *may* cause the underlying volcano (if there is one) to erupt. If a move does *not* cause a volcano to erupt, you are allowed to make another move with one of the caps. You may continue to move caps in this fashion until an eruption does occur, at which point your turn ends and play passes to the player on your left.

## ERUPTIONS

Whenever you move a cap off of a volcano, that volcano erupts outward in the same direction in which you moved the cap. To execute the eruption, take the top piece of the uncovered volcano, move it directly *toward and over* the cap which you just moved, and then place the erupting piece on the volcano (or empty space) which is just beyond the cap. Then take the next piece off of the erupting volcano, move it over the cap *and* the volcano beyond it, and place it on top of the volcano (or empty space) which is beyond both of those. Continue erupting pieces outward in this fashion until one of the following occurs:

- The erupting volcano is completely spent, leaving an empty space in its place. Remember that this empty space is still part of the playing area. Black caps may be moved into it, and erupting pieces may land in it as normal.
- The eruption runs up to the edge of the 5x5 playing field. Since pieces cannot be placed outside the bounds of the original 5x5 square, an eruption must stop when it reaches this limit.
- The eruption runs up against another black cap. Since you cannot put any other pieces on top of black caps, they block the flow of eruptions in much the same way that the edges of the playing field do.

After you've finished executing the eruption, you may capture any erupting piece which has landed directly on top of a piece *of the same size*. Keep all of your captured pieces in front of you, to be tallied at the end of the game for your final score.

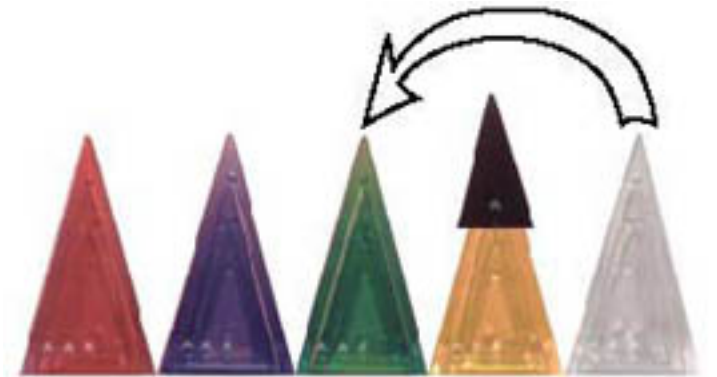
## NON-ERUPTIONS

It is possible to move a black cap without causing an eruption. For instance, if you move a cap from

### An Example Eruption



Stage 1: A black cap is moved off of a clear volcano, causing it to erupt.



Stage 2: The top piece from the erupting volcano sails over the black cap to land on the green volcano beyond.

the middle ring of the board to the outer edge, the uncovered volcano will not erupt, because its pieces are not allowed to flow off the edge of the board. Similarly, other black caps may block eruptions before they even start. Finally, a cap sitting in an empty space may be moved without causing an eruption, because there is nothing beneath it which can erupt.

During your turn, you may continue to move black caps until you cause a volcano to erupt. With practice, you can learn how to position the caps *just so*, in order to capture the exact piece you're hoping for.

## SCORING

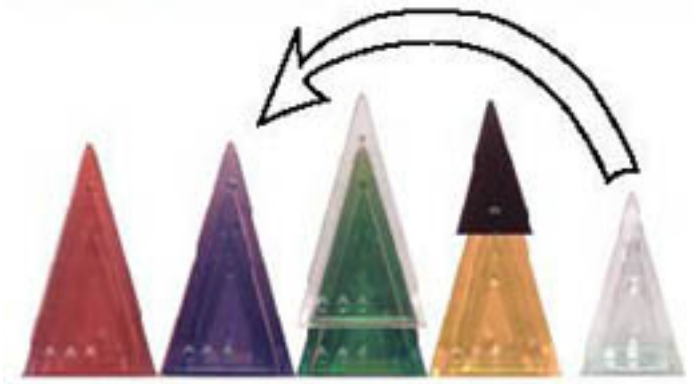
As the game progresses, you should attempt to arrange your captured pieces into as many solid-color trees as possible. (A "tree" consists of a small piece on a medium piece on a large piece.) These trees are worth extra points when you tally your score at the end of the game. You should arrange the rest of your captured pieces into as many *mixed-color* trees as possible; they'll be worth extra points as well. At the end of the game, your total score will be tallied as follows:

- 7 points for each solid-color tree
- 5 points for each mixed-color tree
- 1 point for each of the rest of your pieces

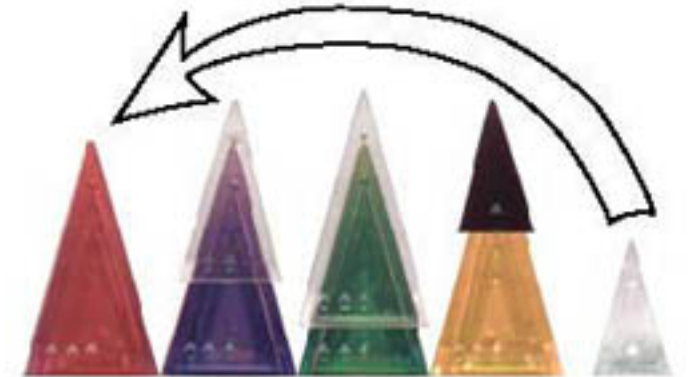
You're free to rearrange your captured pieces at any time during or after the game, in order to create the best possible score.

## ENDING THE GAME

The game ends as soon as any single player has captured one or more pieces of each color. After the game ends, make sure you've arranged your captured pieces into as many solid-color and mixed-color trees as possible. Then tally up your final



Stage 3: The next piece from the erupting volcano sails over *two* volcanoes to land on the blue one.



Stage 4: The next and final erupting piece sails even further to land on the distant red volcano.

score. The player with the highest score wins.



Stage 5: One of the erupting pieces has landed on a piece of the same size. You get to capture it!

## SOLITAIRE CHALLENGES

Volcano also makes for great fun as a solitaire activity. (In fact, Kristin initially envisioned it as a solitaire game.) Solitaire Volcano is more like a puzzle than a typical solitaire game; the trick to these solitaire challenges lies in developing your ability to move the black caps around, so that you'll be able to take the specific piece(s) you desire. It may take a few games, but once you get a perfect score you'll probably want to tackle a new challenge (or find other players) rather than solve the same puzzle again. These challenges make excellent training for multi-player Volcano.

- Try to capture all of the red pieces with a minimum of other colors. You get one point for each piece you take that isn't red. Assuming you begin with a black cap on a red piece, you should be able to get a perfect score of 0.
- Try to capture all of the large pieces with a minimum of other sizes.
- Try to capture exactly one complete tree of each color.

## CREDITS

Designed by Kristin Looney

Playtested by Andrew Looney, Alison Frane, Gina Mai Denn, and Kory Heath

Rules documented by Kory Heath

Pictures by Andrew Looney

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## VARIANTS

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# Mini-Volcano

*A Volcano Variant for 4 Icehouse Colors*

## Intro

Volcano has become many people's favorite Icehouse game, but the fact that it requires 6 stashes has kept some players from being able to try it.

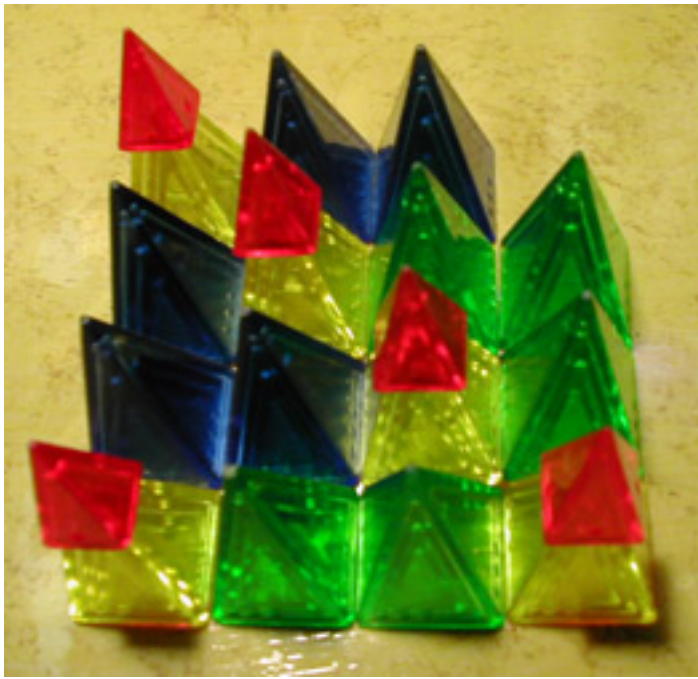
A couple of weeks ago on the Icehouse list, Derek Hohls asked if there was any way to play Volcano with just the basic 4 colors of a standard Icehouse set, and [Ryan McGuire](#) said: "Hey, I know, how about Mini Volcano? Play with the four basic colors on a 4x4 board."

Good idea, Ryan! We've been playtesting variations on this theme for the last couple of weeks, and while full-size Volcano is definitely better, Mini-Volcano is really pretty good. In fact, it makes for a shorter game, which may even be preferable.

## Setup

Here's what you do. Make 15 nests using the Green, Blue, and Yellow pyramids, and set aside the medium and large Reds. Small Reds will do the job of the Black caps used in the full game. (This can be a little confusing for seasoned Volcano players, but one quickly gets used to it.)

Then you must decide what type of setup to use. As in full Volcano, many arrangements of the colors within the board are possible, but you can also choose to play on an almost-full 4x4 grid or on a largely empty 5x5 board, as shown. Both setups yield enjoyable games... try 'em both to see which you fancy.



4x4 setup, no board



5x5 setup, with board

## Ending

The movement, capture, and scoring mechanisms in Mini-Volcano are all the same as in the full game. Only the end condition is different. With only 3 colors to capture, it would end far too abruptly if you stopped when someone has one of each color, so we've been playing until a player is unable to make a move that results in the capture of a piece.

The only problem with this ending condition is that you might sometimes conclude that the game is over when it really isn't, just because no one is able to discover a piece-taking move. If you think no such moves exist, say so... but don't be surprised if the other player says "No, wait... you could take a piece this way." Needless to say, it would be highly Uncool to pretend you don't see a move just because you want the game to end...

Note that it's always legal to make a move without making a capture; the game ends only when no piece can be captured, not when a move is made without capturing something.

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## Mega-Volcano

*A Volcano Variant for 9 Icehouse Colors*

If you dig Volcano and you happen to have a full set of 9 Icehouse stashes, here's an advanced version of the game you can try. It's played just like regular Volcano, but with the following differences. First, it uses a 6x6 board-space, instead of the 5x5. Put the 7 translucent colors together in nests, and arrange them however you wish within the 6x6 space, leaving one hole open in one of the centermost squares.

Fill in this last space with a single nest from the white stash, then place the 5 small blacks onto the red pieces just as you would in the standard game. (Set aside the rest of the black and white pieces... they will not be used.)

The game then plays as before, except that now you need all 7 colors to trigger the end. The white pieces are not counted towards this total, because they are treated as wildcards. During score-counting, a white piece can be considered any other color you wish, thus making them very useful for completing monochrome trees. More importantly, any player who captures all 3 of the white pieces automatically wins the game.

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## HOUSE RULES

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### Random Layouts

While the [Standard Rules](#) call for arranging the pyramids in one of various patterns, many players enjoy a totally random setup.

### Who Goes First?

[Andy](#) likes to say that the player who's been closest to [actual molten lava](#) goes first.

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## VOLCANO BOARDS

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### Fancy Plastic Boards

We now stock really cool [plastic Volcano boards](#) are now being made for us by the friendly folks at [Kadon](#).

### Nifty Paper Boards

A lovely paper Volcano board was included in the centerfold of Hypothermia in [Issue #15](#).



# Freely Downloadable Boards

Several fans have created Volcano gameboard art you can download and print yourself:

- Karl J. von Laudermann's [Volcano board](#)
  - Kenneth Leyhe's [Volcano and Mega-Volcano](#) boards
  - Vitas Povilaitis was also inspired to create a [Volcano board design](#)
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also see [Blockade](#) - another [Icehouse](#) game designed by [Kristin](#)

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