

TABLETOP DEVELOPMENT & KICKSTARTER CHECKLIST

Game development

- ☐ Read advice, such as James Mathe's brief advice to [here](#) and more detailed advice [here](#).
- ☐ Have an overall idea of the game rules and components. Read [these tips](#) for game design. There's also teaching materials for game design [here](#).
- ☐ Develop rough drafts of the rules and components.
- ☐ Design the look and layout of the game board, tiles, and/or cards.
- ☐ Make a medium quality prototype of the game.
- ☐ Playtest and revise the game. Change the rules and components based on feedback and the impression you get. You need to revise the game several times.
- ☐ Optional advice: Repeat this process to develop two or three significantly different versions of the game, such as with different levels of ability power.
- ☐ If you use cards, tiles, or a game board, you will have to have extra room around the image files. You can find information about a Poker card template [here](#). [This Panda Design book](#) has most of the info you need.
- ☐ Manufacture high quality prototypes, such as with [The Game Crafter](#).
- ☐ Make good rules material—a booklet, document, and/or card. Test it by having players try the game using the rules material. You can mail out at least two prototype copies of the game to playtesters from elsewhere for more feedback, especially to make sure the rules are clear and sufficient.
- ☐ You need art for the game and will probably have to hire someone for the final game. [The Art & Graphics Design for Tabletop Games](#) group on Facebook is a great way to find an artist.
- ☐ Facebook groups even more helpful to game design and promotion than I previously thought. Some Facebook Groups I find important are the following:
 - One for your game(s).
 - [Protospiel \(for game developers\)](#)
 - [Tabletop Publishers](#) (for production and marketing questions)
 - [Tabletop Publisher Announcements](#) (for promoting to stores)
 - [Tabletop Design Guild](#) (for design and theoretical questions)
 - [Tabletop Kickstarter Advice](#)
 - [Kickstarter Tabletop Launch Calendar](#)
 - [Tabletop Art Design](#) (for art and layout questions)
 - [Art & Graphics Design for Tabletop Games](#)
 - [Board Game Giveaways](#)
 - [Boardgame Reviewers](#)
 - [BoardGameGeek](#) (a general tabletop discussion group)
 - [The BoardGame Group](#) (a general tabletop discussion group)

Promotion & preparation

- ❑ Produce ten to twenty high quality prototypes of the game for reviewers, prizes, and distributors. (Two to three months prior to the Kickstarter campaign.)
- ❑ Advice: Schedule events at conventions months ahead of time, before, during, and after the game's publication. Try to get people to sign up for a newsletter there. Email subscribers for confirmation.
- ❑ Go to smaller local board game events. Look for them at [Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com). Protospiel events (for playtesting) are probably the best. The Facebook page for Protospiel is [here](#).
- ❑ Read advice about running Kickstarter campaigns. James Mathe's brief advice can be found [here](#), and has links to more detailed advice [here](#). Collections of hundreds of links to Jamey Stegmaier's advice can be found in links found [here](#).
- ❑ Make a newsletter sign up sheet, and write emails for an email newsletter. Consider using [Mail Chimp](#) for the newsletter because sending hundreds of emails with Gmail could be marked as spam, especially when some people aren't opening your emails.
- ❑ Develop a Facebook page for the game.
- ❑ Promote a Facebook group for the game.
- ❑ Offer high quality prototypes of the game (or previously released games) as a prize "giveaway" for people who sign up for the newsletter and facebook group. For example, a random person can win a copy the first of the next month. You can assign each person a number and use a random number generator, such as [random.org](https://www.random.org). This is a legally regulated competition, so you will need to develop the [terms and conditions](#). Do not charge money for it—not only is that ungenerous, but it can violate lottery regulation laws. Mention your giveaway at the [Board Game Giveaways](#) group on Facebook, but don't post there more than once every other week.
- ❑ Look for reviewers. Request reviews on the Facebook group, [Boardgame Reviewer](#). You can post one request there each month. Send high quality prototypes to them. I advise at least two reviewers, but ten of them is also a good amount. Consider paying for a review or preview from a well known reviewer who has quality work.
- ❑ Invite people to a Facebook launch party event for the start of of your Kickstarter campaign at least a week in advance. This event will help notify people about your campaign, but you should not have an in person event at that point. Perhaps have an in person launch party the day after you start the campaign if you have time to work on online promotion for at least a day ahead of time.
- ❑ Schedule demo events at brick and mortar stores. Events during other events that already draws people there can help, but developing fliers for the store to advertise the event can help, and the store adding the event to their schedule and mentioning it on their Facebook page can also help.
- ❑ Contact manufacturers & get quotes. Go [here](#) for more information.
- ❑ Contact distributors, who could get your game to stores. They are unlikely to be willing to take your game, but it's worth a shot. They are likely to want to pay you after the game sells (by taking your game on "consignment." They are interested in your ability to promote your game, such as with a newsletter, Facebook presence, and high quality videos. They might also be

interested in your previous store sales and plans for multiple game releases. Many are likely to ignore you, but you can remind them of your interest a week later. Go [here](#) for more information.

- ☐ Develop a [print & play](#) version of the game for a Kickstarter reward, but also consider giving out a free version (perhaps in black and white) for those who join your newsletter. You can also consider having a link to your print & play version and use it to request feedback from playtesters on the Board Game Geek Forum [here](#).
- ☐ If you add the print & play files to your Board Game Geek product page, you can add the game to the Free Print & Play forum post [here](#).
- ☐ Make Promotional material, such as photos of the game box.
- ☐ Get contact information from stores—emails, addresses, and phone numbers. Contact them about your game.
- ☐ Get a business [fictional name](#) and checking account. You need the checking account to get funds from Kickstarter.
- ☐ About a month in advance, film for the Kickstarter promotional video.
- ☐ Add the game to Board Game Geek, the most popular tabletop site similar to the Internet Movie Data Base, but for tabletop games. More information [here](#) and [here](#).
- ☐ Add the Kickstarter information to Board Game Geek. Go [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) (or look for the thread of the current year). Keep updating your post there.
- ☐ Add your Kickstarter launch information to the [Kickstarter Tabletop Launch Calendar](#) Facebook group, and [this Google Doc](#).
- ☐ Develop a press release. You can send it out early. Go [here](#) for more information.
- ☐ Work on your Kickstarter page, and get feedback from the Facebook group, [Tabletop Game Kickstarter Advice](#). (A good place to look for advice in general!)
- ☐ Consider advertising at Board Game Geek.

During crowdfunding

- ☐ Launch your Kickstarter campaign.
- ☐ Mention your game and Kickstarter at the Facebook groups for Tabletop Announcements [here](#) and at Kickstarter Board Games [here](#). You should do the same at the Facebook group for [BoardGameGeek](#) and [The BoardGame Group](#). I advise you to only post one of these each day because a lot of people are members of multiple groups.
- ☐ Contact everyone in your newsletter, and contact family and friends separately in more individualized emails.
- ☐ One hour before the campaign ends, update with a link to preorders & develop a page to take preorders. [Trycelery](#) is good for pre-orders. PayPal isn't supposed to be used unless you can ship the product out in a month or less.
- ☐ After the campaign ends, allow Kickstarter supporters to buy additional copies of the game and add ons using [Backerkit](#) or [Trycelery](#).

After

- ❑ Get a barcode for the game (such as from [Nationwide Barcode](#)).
 - ❑ The manufacturer might need you to convert your image files to CMYK. PNG files won't work. TIFF and JPG files will. Photoshop is probably the best way to convert files from RGB to CMYK.
 - ❑ Know what type of files the manufacturer needs and how to format them. [This Panda Design book](#) has most of the info you need. The manufacturer might require you to put all the files into PDFs, and make sure they're using CMYK colors (if applicable). For example, each card might have to be on a single page of a PDF with the card front and back rotating every other card.
 - ❑ Ship out the final product. If you sell to hundreds of people, you might want to use fulfillment. You can find links to information about fulfillment [here](#). Fulfillment from China looks promising for many projects manufactured there, and information about that can be found [here](#).
 - ❑ Send Kickstarter reviewers the final version of the game.
 - ❑ Make the pre-order page a regular order page.
 - ❑ Ask for more reviews of the final product.
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- This was originally published [here](#).
 - Contact me with suggestions or corrections [here](#).
 - I am currently publishing [Crazier Eights: Camelot](#) after being funded on Kickstarter.