

Boxed In — Rules Version Summary

Version 1 – Initial Concept

Each player had their own 1–12 tray. A roll allowed claiming either die result or the sum, and all three if they were all unclaimed. No interaction between players, no penalties, and no locked tiles. The goal was simply to claim 10 tiles first.

Version 2 – Shared Interaction Experiment

This version tried allowing players to unclaim each other's tiles based on rolls. It added tension but became hard to manage and didn't feel balanced.

Version 3 – Doubles as Events

Doubles started generating special effects—bonuses and penalties. These early ideas eventually led to drains, locks, and other disruptive mechanics.

Version 4 – Two-Tray Combat Focus

The design returned to each player having their own tray, but kept the idea of interaction. The game centered on advancing your own board while throwing small obstacles onto your opponent's. Doubles effects became the core of the pacing.

Version 5 – Fixed Doubles Penalties

Each doubles roll was assigned a single, consistent penalty. This version included early forms of drains, cursed tiles, and the 6–6 “destroy tiles” effect, though balance was still uneven.

Version 6 – Catch-Up and Locked Tiles

A catch-up rule was added, allowing a player to choose between claiming a die face or the sum. Locked tiles were introduced as permanent blockers, which added structure and tension.

Version 7 – Stalemate Release

To prevent long periods where nothing happened, a rule was added that forced a player to unclaim one of their own tiles if a roll produced no possible action. This kept the endgame from freezing and made late decisions more engaging.

Version 8 – Final Experimental Version

The game featured:

- individual trays

- a flexible claim-or-sum rule
- cursed and locked tiles
- drain effects
- forced exchanges
- the 6–6 devastator
- and the Stalemate Release rule

This version played more smoothly but still had balance issues, leading to the conclusion that the system was better as a stepping stone toward Reactor 21.