

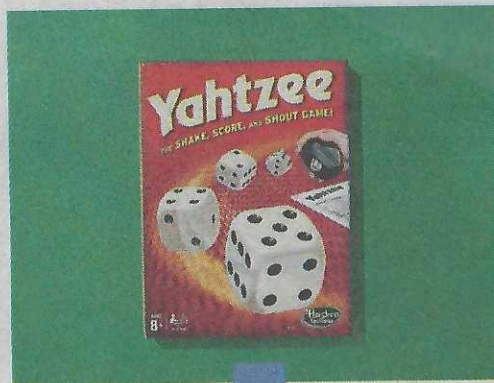
“Deadly Bored by Board Games? Level Up”

Some people assume that games like ‘Monopoly’ and ‘Catan’ are the only shows in town. Actually, we’re in the midst of a board game renaissance, with major and indie publishers racing to create new contenders that are entertaining, unique and mechanically complex.

Here, souped-up alternatives to classics you might have tried:

If you like ‘Yahtzee’...

“Yahtzee” is a classic dice game from 1956 that’s honestly still fun today. Each round, you get up to three chances to roll five dice. The goal is to build something like a poker hand (e.g., four of a kind, a straight) based on the different scoring categories the game provides. The player with the highest score at game’s end wins. It’s a simple premise, but has ample strategic depth. You have to decide when to keep what you’ve got, and when to push your luck by re-rolling some or all of your dice. \$9, Shop.Hasbro.com

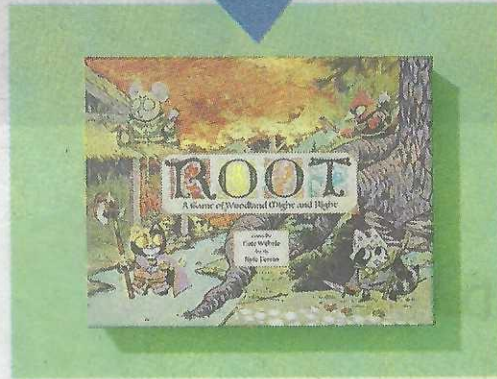
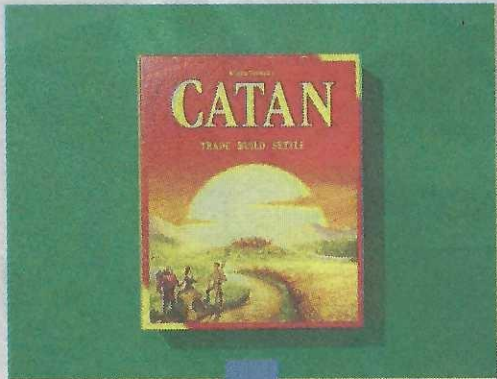


Try ‘Deep Sea Adventure’

Oink Games, a Japanese company, introduced “Deep Sea Adventure” in 2014. Up to 6 people play as divers looking for deep-sea treasure. The wrinkle: Your submarine is old, so you have to share oxygen. Over three rounds, you scour for artifacts on the ocean bottom, trying to get them back to the ship before the air runs out. Don’t make it? You must drop them. As in Yahtzee, you must determine when to push the limit—by swimming deeper into the sea—and when it’s time to pack it up and head back. \$22, Walmart.com



F. MARTIN RAMWIN/ THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



If you like ‘Catan’...

“Catan” is about building civilizations in the wilderness. You play as a settler competing with two or three other players for control of the board. You gather victory points by expanding your empire, but also through meeting certain secondary condition—say, by amassing the largest army. To achieve these aims, you must make trades with the other players, which inevitably leads to fun and frustrating interactions. Released by German studio Klaus Teuber in 1995, it has sold 32 million copies. \$60, Catan.com

Try ‘Root’

Like “Catan,” but more cutthroat, “Root” also requires you to shift your strategy, depending on your position, to win. But here, each player has a different set of skills and objectives. If you are the Cats, for example, you must stop the Alliance, a shadowy guerrilla group trying to undermine your rule. The asymmetric design allows for many game play styles, and gives you four different sets of game pieces to gawk at. The art style could be best described as kindercore meets “Robin Hood.” \$60, LederGames.com —Bijan Stephen