

Amazing Monkey Adventures, by Jared A. Sorensen

About the Game

Amazing Monkey Adventures (aka "AMA") is a game about a group of adventurous monkeys that escape from their cage at the City Zoo. The goal of the game is to have fun, monkey style! Cause mischief, explore a strange city and maybe help someone along the way...but be sure to get back in your cage before the zookeeper notices that you're missing!

Pals, Pencils, Paper, Peanuts & Polyhedra

Hopefully you know some people who will sit down and play AMA with you. Besides a few friends, you'll need some paper and pencils, a bag of unshelled peanuts (true!) and a few ten-sided dice. You should play somewhere comfortable where it's okay to act a little strange. Also, empty the bag of peanuts into a bowl and place them in the center of the table.

Unleash your Inner Monkey

The person who brought the sack of peanuts should host the game. This person is called the GM, or Game Moderator. The GM is responsible for declaring difficulties, describing disasters and other such things. For the rest of the players, it's time for some monkey madness.

On your piece of paper, write down the following things:

MY NAME _____

MY MONKEY NAME _____

WHAT MY MONKEY LOOKS LIKE _____

MY MONKEY'S PERSONALITY IS _____

And fill in the blank for each thing.

Next draw three pictures:

A Mad Monkey Face

A Curious Monkey Face

A Friendly Monkey Face

If you're completely terrified of drawing a picture, you can replace the faces with symbols (exclamation point, a question mark and a smiley).

Now, pick a number between 2 and 9. Write that number down next to the Friendly Monkey Face. This is your Magic Monkey Number. Sounds ominous, eh? It's not. Whenever you want to do something in the game, roll a ten-sided die and take a peanut from the center of the table.

If you roll above your Magic Monkey Number, you must roleplay your monkey as curious. If you roll below your Magic Monkey Number, you must roleplay your monkey as mad (ie: crazy and wild). If you roll exactly your Magic Monkey Number, you must roleplay your monkey as friendly.* As you can see, a Mild-Mannered Monkey will have a Magic Monkey Number of 5 or 6. Meek Monkeys have a lower number. Manic Monkeys will have a higher number.

*You can also just decide to play your monkey as friendly without rolling the die. In this case, don't take a peanut.

Mad Monkey Challenge

If you've chosen to act friendly, the other players can veto your decision! This is called a Mad Monkey Challenge and like all monkey challenges, must be precipitated with much hooting, screeching and howling. Each player wishing to participate in the Mad Monkey Challenge must take a peanut from the center and give it to the person being vetoed.

All participating players (including the vetoed player) must stand up, turn around and shout, "MAD MONKEY CHALLENGE!" really loud. When the word "CHALLENGE!" is yelled, everyone participating turns back around to face the other players and puts on their craziest, most curious or friendliest monkey face (I recommend the following expressions: teeth bared, a surprised expression or a happy face. Each face is a "vote" for that type of behavior and the most votes wins. On a tie, everyone throws in another peanut and starts over until a winning behavior has been chosen.

You can also call for a Mad Monkey Challenge if you disagree with anything said or done during the game (including disputes with the GM!). If the challenge involves the GM, peanuts must be spent from the players' stashes (see stashes in the Playing for Peanuts section). Now it's time to act!

Monkey Business

Decide what you want your monkey to do and then roll another ten-sided die. If the result is even, explain what happens (and bear in mind that you must roleplay your monkey's behavior according to the previous Magic Monkey Number roll). If the result is odd, the GM gets to tell you what happens. Again, you must still roleplay your monkey's behavior. After the GM narrates the action, he or she takes a peanut from the center pile. The GM can assign a penalty to your action based upon the difficulty of the task. Usually, the difficulty will be 1, meaning you'll roll one die, needing an even result. For a difficulty of 2, you'll roll two dice, needing two even results. For the exceptionally hard tasks, roll 3 dice and try for three even results.

Playing for Peanuts

If you want to call for a re-roll, spend a peanut from the pile you've accumulated (this is called your Peanut Stash). If you want to lower the difficulty, take a peanut from the center pile. You can never lower the difficulty to zero. You can take a peanut from the pile AND spend them immediately from your stash. This has the dual advantage of reducing the difficulty and allowing a re-roll.

Back in the Cages!

As stated earlier, the goal of the game is to cause a lot of mischief, explore the city and have fun before the zookeeper catches on. The trick is to return to the zoo before the pile of peanuts in the center of the table run out. If all the monkeys are back in the cages before the peanuts are all gone, you win! As a reward, you may keep your peanuts for the next game of AMA. If the peanuts are all gone and you're not back at the zoo, the zookeeper finds out and must go after you. You lose the game and all of the peanuts in your stashes.

The End

And that's Amazing Monkey Adventures. Have fun! And for more outrageous monkey adventures, check out Zak Arntson's game, "Monkeywrench." It's available at <http://www.harlekin-maus.com>