

Mizuage

a geisha game by Gary Boyd

1+ Players
15 Minutes

Mizuage is a solo game in which the player takes on the role of an 18th century Geisha. Players start their life as little girls and spend their life perfecting their art and freeing themselves of the debt they have accrued to perfect that art.

Components

5 Dice
1 Player Mat
3 Skill Tokens
1 Age Token
1 Coin Token
This Rulebook

Game Overview

The game takes place over 2 main phases: ages 6-15 and ages 16 and up. During the first phase the player will accrue a great deal of debt as she tries to increase her skills of: music, dance, and conversation. Once she undergoes the ritual of Mizuage she pays off some of her debt and starts her life as a Geisha in the second phase. The player wins if she can end her life with just 1 coin or by mastering all 3 skills (having a skill level of 10 or greater). The player loses the game if she does not have at least 1 skill at level 5 after her Mizuage, if her debt is ever greater than 20, or if she ends her life in debt.

Skill Increase Summary

Maiko

1 of each skill symbol: Increase any 1 skill by 1.
3 of 1 skill symbol: Increase that skill by 2.
4 of 1 skill symbol: Increase that skill by 3.
5 of 1 skill symbol: Increase that skill by 4.

Geisha

1 of each skill symbol: Increase any 1 skill by 2.
3 of 1 skill symbol: Increase that skill by 3.
4 of 1 skill symbol: Increase that skill by 4.
5 of 1 skill symbol: Increase that skill by 5.

As a Geisha you may instead use your skills to earn money. Geisha's earn 1 coin per die face for every 5 skill level of a skill. So a Geisha with a level 10 dance would earn 2 coin per dance face.

Setup

Take the Player Mat and place the Age Marker on 6. Place the Coin and Skill Markers on 0. You are ready to play the game. The player should roll all 5 dice to begin.

Turn Summary

First Phase: The player may only repay debt through service until after her Mizuage.

Once a player has rolled her dice she may decide to keep any number of the faces rolled and reroll any number of dice as long as they do not have the expense face. The expense face may never be rerolled.

If a player is able to roll: 1 of each skill face or 3, 4, or 5 of any 1 skill face she may improve those skills. The player moves the skill marker for the corresponding skill up the appropriate number of levels.

Once a player is satisfied with their current roll or wishes to stop rolling she calculates any debt or earnings and advances her age marker. A player may keep any unused dice faces for use in the coming year. All other dice are rerolled.

Note: A player may not keep a result that would allow her to gain skill from year to year. If she ends up with a result that will allow her to gain skill she must either use it or reroll it.

Mizuage

If no skill is at least level 5 before reaching mizuage the player loses the game. If at least one skill at level 5, between the normal phases of the game is the mizuage. During this phase the young woman becomes a Geisha. Through this ritual 5 coin of debt is forgiven and she may advance 1 skill by 1. Then, advance the age track to 16. Players do not roll during mizuage.

Second Phase: The player may now make money by using your skills to entertain her patrons. A die that is used to entertain patrons may not be used to advance skill.

Besides the ability to make money from your skills instead of advancing them and how much they advance when advancing, the geisha phase is the same. Each space now represents more time in the Geisha's life. After the player takes her turn at age 60 her life as a Geisha is over.

Game End

The player loses the game if: the player does not attain level 5 on any skill before mizuage, the player ever accrues more than 20 coins in debt, or the player ends her life in debt. The player wins the game if she ends her life with at least 1 coin.

Multiplayer Rules

Competitive:

In multiplayer play, players may choose to swap dice with another player during each age. Players may swap any number of dice per round but must return dice at the end of each round until they have only 5 dice. The player with the most money wins. If there is a tie, the most skilled player wins.

Cooperative:

As an alternative, players may play with the same rules described in the competitive rules with different win conditions. All players must reach either: Mastery (level 10) in all Skills or 20+ coin.