



Board Games in Academia IV
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Classification of board games an easily adaptable system to classify board games

The department of Teachers Education of the Catholic College Brugge – Oostende (KHBO) in Belgium uses board games in their Teachers Education. The College works in association with the non-profit organization 'Flemish Games Archives', well known within the gaming community. It has at its disposal the largest collection of board games, books and magazines in the Benelux.

One of the objectives of the Flemish Games Archives is to find a system to easily classify the thousands of different board games, so that students, teachers and researchers can use those games that have one or several similarities.

After research in several Archives, study of many books and drawing a comparison between many web sites, the "KHBO Games Archive" came up with a system that offers them an easy access to equivalent board games.

The question many researchers ask is very simple:

"I know that particular game and I would like to know what other games are similar. Can you give me a list of equivalent games?"

Piet Notebaert will demonstrate the way games are classified in their database. This system proved to be very successful and is set up to be easily adapted to new game systems.

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A. EXISTING SYSTEMS TO CLASSIFY BOARD GAMES

1. The Game Companies

This would be the first place to study classifications systems.
But this inquiry is rather disappointing.
Many game companies develop very simple classifications.

A few examples:

- **Hasbro**
 - Get Together Games
 - Family Game Night
 - My First Games
 - Adult Games

- **Jumbo**
 - Lotto
 - Child games
 - Learning games
 - Society games
 - Language games
 - Word games
 - Special features

- **Ravensburger**
 - Child games
 - Pocket games
 - Card games
 - Play and learn games
 - Games for the family
 - Games for adults

- **Amigo Spiele**
 - Card games
 - Family games
 - Child card games
 - Child games
 - Tactical games
 - Collection card games
 - Pokémon and Diskwars
 - Role-playing games

and so on...

It's obvious that game companies are not the place to find a clever classification system.

2. Deutsches Spiele-Archiv, Marburg, Deutschland

The staff members responsible for this archives are the first to set up a systematic classification of board games. One can read their rich experience (Spiel des Jahres, Deutschland) in their system. Whoever studies this classification finds a very strong insight into the different systems of board games.

1. Classification of board- en table games

1.1. *The group of dice and be lucky games*

- 1.1.1. Pure dice games (Yahtzee)
- 1.1.2. Start and target games (Ludo)
- 1.1.3. Find and catch games (Catch the hat)
- 1.1.4. Tactical dice games (Can't Stop)

1.2. *The group of lay down games*

- 1.2.1. Symbol lay down games (Domino)
- 1.2.2. Letter lay down games (Scrabble)
- 1.2.3. Number lay down games (Rummikub)
- 1.2.4. Tactical lay down games (Café International)
- 1.2.5. Lotto games (Lotto)
- 1.2.6. Figure lay down games (Tangram)
- 1.2.7. Image lay down games (Puzzles)

1.3. *The group of thinking games*

- 1.3.1. Strategic thinking games (Chess)
- 1.3.2. Tactical topologic thinking games (Halma)
- 1.3.3. Combination and decoding games (Mastermind)
- 1.3.4. Memory games (Memory)
- 1.3.5. Solitude games (Solitaire)

1.4. *The group of role-playing games*

- 1.4.1. Society games (The Game of Life)
- 1.4.2. Trading games (Monopoly)
- 1.4.3. Detective and policeman games (Scotland Yard)
- 1.4.4. War and conflict simulation games (Risk)
- 1.4.5. Fantasy and SF role-playing games (Het Oog des Meesters)
- 1.4.6. Sports and race games (Jockey)
- 1.4.7. Traffic games (Stop & Go)
- 1.4.8. Travel games (Trip around the world)

1.5. *The group of dexterity and action games*

- 1.5.1. Dexterity games (Mikado, Jenga)
- 1.5.2. Action games
- 1.5.3. Reaction games
- 1.5.4. Sports games

1.6. *The group of remaining games*

- 1.6.1. Quiz and guess games (Trivial Pursuit, Barbarossa)
- 1.6.2. Psychological and conversation games (Sympathie, Therapy)
- 1.6.3. Others

2. Classification of card games

2.1. Abstract card games

- 2.1.1. Card possessions games (Whist, Bridge)
- 2.1.2. Value of the card games (Skat)
- 2.1.3. Lay down games (Uno)
- 2.1.4. Card combination games (Canasta)

2.2. Role playing card games

- 2.2.1. Society card games (Koalition)
- 2.2.2. Trade card games (Koehandel)
- 2.2.3. Detective and policeman card games (Sherlock Holmes)
- 2.2.4. Adventure card games (Digging)
- 2.2.5. War and conflict simulation card games (Armour Supremacy)
- 2.2.6. Fantasy and SF role-playing card games (Magic The Gathering)
- 2.2.7. Sports and race card games (Der Ausreisser)
- 2.2.8. Traffic card games (1.000 Bornes)

2.3. Communication card games

- 2.3.1. Ask and answer card games
- 2.3.2. Quiz card games
- 2.3.3. Astrology card games
- 2.3.4. Creative card games

This system proves to be sufficient for those who want to know how to classify games. But if you want to find a game system you prefer you would have to look into several categories at the same time.

Suppose you like the bluff system in the game called 'Condottiere'. This game presents itself also as a war-game. Where would you search? Will you take a look in the list of war-games? Or should you study the list of combination and decoding games?

We find that this classification does not work for those researchers who want to find similar games systems.

3. Web sites dedicated to Board Games

Searching the internet is a work of frustration and happiness.

Most of the web sites dedicated to board games do not classify the games into different categories, but list the games in alphabetical or reviewing order.

But a few exceptions make the search successful.



<http://www.boardgamegeek.com/>

18xx Series	Abstract Strategy	Action/Dexterity
Adventure	American Civil War	Ancient
Arabian	Ballooning	Bluffing
Card Game	Children's Game	City Building
Civilization	Collectable Sets	Computer/Internet
Deduction	Dice	Economic
Expansion for Base-game	Exploration	Fantasy
Farming	Fighting	Horror
Mafia	Medieval	Memory
Miniatures	Murder/Mystery	Music
Napoleonic	Nautical	Negotiation
Party Game	Political	Prehistoric
Puzzle	Racing	Real-time
Science Fiction	Sports	Trains
Transportation	Trivia	Wargame
Western	Word	World War II

This classification offers the researcher an easy way to look up similar game systems into the database of this organization.

The problem with this method is that a particular game must be dedicated to one of the given categories. And this is not so easy. Many games could be listed into different categories at the same time.

An example:

Take a look at the 'war-games' to find 'Condottiere'. You'll find out that this game is not listed in the 'Bluffing' section (and Condottiere has a very good bluffing mechanism).

Harald Schrapers uses this classification:

1. [Das besondere Spiel](#)
2. [Das Brettspiel](#)
3. [Das taktische Denkspiel](#)
4. [Das Verhandlungsspiel](#)
5. [Das Aktionsspiel](#)
6. [Das Karten-Brettspiel](#)
7. [Das Kartenspiel](#)
8. [Das Würfelspiel](#)
9. [Das Zwei-Personen-Spiel](#)
10. [Das Kommunikationsspiel](#)

This easy system is used by many web sites. Not very useful indeed.

PlayMe

<http://www.playme.de/>

This post order company lets the buyer browse in a database to find games that match certain needs.

Geben Sie einen oder mehrere Suchbegriffe ein:

Spieltitle	Verlag	Autor
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Altersgruppe	Spielart	Sonstiges
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Auktion"/>	<input type="text"/>
		<input type="button" value="Suchen"/>

Clicking on the section 'Spielart' gives you some choices:

- Action
- Auktion
- Bau
- Bluff
- Brett
- CoSim
- Deduktion
- Denk
- Fantasy
- Gaudi
- Gedächtnis
- Geschick
- Handel
- Kommunikation
- Lege
- Memory
- Quiz
- Reaktion
- Renn
- Rollenspiel
- Sammel
- Sport
- Strategie
- Taktik
- Umwelt
- Wirtschaft
- Wort
- Würfel

This post order company offers many systems to find games.
 You can search by 'game genre' or by 'game theme':

Game Genres

Abstract Strategy
 Action & Dexterity
 Auction & Bidding
 Beer & Pretzels
 Betting
 Bluffing
 Civilization Building
 Connection
 Cooperative
 Educational
 Gambling
 Lateral Thinking
 Logic & Deduction
 Maze Games
 Memory
 Negotiation & Diplomacy
 Observation
 Racing
 Rail & Network
 Role-playing
 Set Collection
 Speculation
 Television Game Show
 Trading
 Trick Taking
 Trivia
 Voting & Election
 War & Combat
 Word Games

Game Themes

101 Dalmatians
 Adventure
 African
 American Civil War
 American Revolution
 Ancient Greece
 Ancient Rome
 Arabian
 Archaeology
 Arctic
 Art Collecting
 Asterix
 Automobile Racing
 Aviation
 Baby Sitters Club
 Babylon 5
 Ballooning

Barbie
 Barney
 Baseball
 Basketball
 Batman
 Bionic
 Bowling
 Business
 Cabbage Patch Kids
 Care Bears
 Carmen Sandiego
 Castles & Knights
 Cow
 Cowboy / Western
 Crime
 Cycling
 Dinosaur
 Disney
 Egyptian
 Ellery Queen
 Exploration
 Fantasy
 Farming / Ranching
 Fighting
 Fish
 Food & Beverage
 Football
 French & Indian War
 French Revolution
 G.I. Joe
 Garden
 Garfield
 Geography
 Golf
 Goosebumps
 Government
 Guinness Book of World Records
 Hagar
 History
 Hockey
 Home Alone
 Horror / Spooky
 Horse Racing
 Humorous
 Hunckback of Notre Dame
 James Bond
 Jungle
 Lord of the Rings
 Lunch Money
 Mad Magazine
 Madeline
 Maisy

Medical
 Medieval
 Mork & Mindy
 Movies & Television
 Murder, She Wrote
 Music
 Mystery
 Napoleonic Wars
 Native American
 Nature & Ecology
 Nautical
 Oil
 Oriental
 Pac-Man
 Pez
 Pig
 Pirate
 Pocahontas
 Pokemon
 Political
 Postage Stamp
 Power Rangers
 Raggedy Ann
 Real Estate
 Religious
 Ripley's Believe it or Not
 Robotech
 Science Fiction
 Seven Years War
 Sherlock Holmes
 Simpsons
 Smoking
 Soccer
 Spanish-American War
 Sports
 Spy
 Star Trek
 Star Wars
 Strawberry Shortcake
 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
 Tennis
 Train
 Vietnam War
 War of 1812
 Wayne's World
 Where's Waldo
 World War 1
 World War 2
 Wrestling
 X-Men

This method gives you many possibilities to find certain specific games.



CD-rom (<http://www.pointest.com/game> site)

This encyclopedia reviews more than 10000 games and offers the user a variety of search mechanisms.

You can search by game genre:

- Abstract
- Board (Family Games)
- Card Games
- Collectible Card games
- Dice only Games
- Memory
- Party Games
- Role Play Games
- Skill
- Trivia Games
- War-games
- War-games 3D
- Word Games

But you could also search the database on a keyword index:

007	Air	Airplane	Animals	Art	Astrology
Baseball	Basket	Battletech	Bet	Bird	Block
Blugrey	Book	Building	Business	Capture	Car
Cartoon	Cat	City	Classic	Colour	Comics
Computer	Crime	Cube	Curious	Cycling	Dccomics
Desert	Detective	Diplomacy	Dog	Dragon	Educational
Egypt	Elephant	Explore	F1	Fantasy	Farwest
Fight	Fish	Food	Football	Forest	Getrid
Golf	Goside	Gotmore	Hex	History	Horror
Horse	House	Hyppo	Ice	Investigate	Island
King	Knight	Line	Link	Lovecraft	Magazine
Magic	Makerow	Manager	Marble	Marvel	Match
Math	Medieval	Money	Monster	Motorbike	Mountain
Mouse	Movie	Music	Mythology	Napoleon	Nature
News	Orient	People	Petrol	Planet	Politic
Prize	Pyramid	Queen	Race	Religion	River
Robot	Romans	Romantic	Scorehigh	Sea	Sex
Sf	Shape	Sherlock	Ship	Soccer	Space
Spaceship	Sphere	Sport	Spy	Square	Stack
Star	Startrek	Starwars	Stockmarket	Superhero	Tie
Tiles	Tolkien	Trade	Train	Travel	Triangle
Tv	Videogame	War	Water	Worldwar	

It looks as if the combination of categories and keywords works very successful in order to find certain specific games.

B. KHBO-SPELLENARCHIEF, BRUGGE, BELGIË

(KHBO = Catholic High School Brugge Oostende)

The classification method in this archives is the result of dealing with board games for many years. The organization organizes a lot of meetings where people learn about the different available games. The integration of the archives within an academic teachers education results also in a specific didactic classification system.

1. Large Subcategories

A first efficient grouping was developed to show the rich diversity of games to a broad public that attends lectures and speeches. The present offer in the world of board games was divided into several larger subcategories:

- to play alone
- cocktail games
- bluffing games
- construction and dexterity games
- deduction and detective games
- educational games
- fantasy and role-playing games
- financial games
- memory games
- card games
- young child games
- child games
- war-games
- circuit games
- ambiance games
- human relation games
- play-in-a-row games
- tactical games (abstract)
- tactical games (theme)
- adult games
- mathematical games
- word and quiz games

However, the games are so different that one single, unambiguous, systematical classification of each game into one pure category seems to be impossible.

Every author of games studies the large amount of existing games and tries to select a brand new system based upon numerous game systems. Then he often created a new category.

As the Flemish Games Archives were expanding through the Flemish countries (Belgium and the Netherlands), and more and more people, clubs, reporters and researchers were visiting the Archives, the colleagues of the organization were being confronted more and more with questions as:

"I know that particular game and I would like to know what other games are similar. Can you give me a list of equivalent games?"

The systematic classification of the Deutsches Spiele-Archiv in Marburg was not sufficient anymore to give researchers a clear answer.

There are more aspects that could characterize a certain game: playing time, level of difficulty, number of players, age to learn to play the game, a balance between luck and skill, and many more.

More and more we were convinced that an unambiguous classification was no longer preferable. A system of selection lists showed up.

2. Selection lists

We created 35 selection lists.

Each game can be assigned to six of those lists. This system gives the advantage that several aspects of a game can be respected. One certain game can hold clear bluffing aspects, but could also be easily considered to be a trade game (Adel Verpflichtet) or a war-game (Condottiere). Assigning the game to one category (bluff, trade or war) would hide other relevant characteristics of the game.

Here are the 35 lists we use (with two typical examples and the numbers of the other selection lists that have been assigned to the same game):

1. Action Games

sports and dexterity, you don't sit calmly on a chair, in fact the chair might be unnecessary

- Karambolage, Haba, 1995 (29, 32, 1)
- Twister, MB, 1996 (32, 29, 1)

2. Cocktail Games

funny, simple, attractive, short game as an in between game or as a starter for a new activity - advisable as a warming up for a games evening

- Tik... Tak... Boem!, Jumbo, 1999 (35, 2, 26, 29, 32, 11)
- Halli Galli Junior, Amigo Spiele, 1998 (1, 32, 29)

3. Bluffing Games

pretending, not immediately revealing your intentions

- Adel verpflichtet, Alea, 2000 (9, 21, 29, 7, 3)
- Koehandel, Ravensburger, 1997 (3, 34, 20, 29)

4. Board Games

mostly abstract games on a board with figures that can be placed, moved or hit

- Othello, Dujardin, 1980 (21, 31, 24, 4, 8)
- Go Original, Jumbo, 1990 (4, 8, 21, 31)

5. Conflict and Simulation Games (COSIM)

they simulate historical, economic or military conflicts

- Axis & Allies, MB, GameMaster Serie, 1984 (25, 33, 5, 14, 21)
- Hannibal, Descartes, 1996 (5, 33, 14, 25)

6. Cooperation Games

working together is necessary to win: we win or we lose

- Scotland Yard (uitgave 1996), Ravensburger, 1996 (21, 10, 6, 7, 9, 12)
- Obstgarten (Boomgaard, Haba, 1986 (6, 22, 21)

7. Deduction Games

by logical thinking, combining and eliminating the possibilities finding the answer

- Mastermind Challenge, Parker, 1995 (7, 8, 21)
- Cluedo, Parker, 1949 (10, 7, 21)

8. Thinking Games for two players

tactics and strategy for two players (little or no chance factors)

- Havannah, Ravensburger, 1979 (31, 8, 24)
- Zèrtz, Schmidt Spiele, 1999 (8, 4, 24)

9. Thinking Games for three or more players

tactics and strategy for three or more players (little or no chance factors)

- Eufraat & Tigris, 999 Games, 1997 (9, 21, 33)
- Torres, FX, 1999 (9, 24)

10. Detective Games

mob, thieves, detectives and policeman are involved

- Cluedo, Parker, 1949 (10, 7, 21)
- Een avondje moord (bruiloft), Hodin, 1995 (10, 33)

11. Didactical Games

games with an extra didactical value

- Multiplication Bingo, Trend enterprises, 1995 (11, 17)
- Een reis door Europa, Ravensburger, 1995 (28, 11, 21)

12. Diplomatic Games

collaborate in your own interest

- Chinatown, Alea, 1999 (19, 12, 14)
- Diplomacy, Jumbo, 1956 (21, 25, 12, 33, 3)

13. Dice Games

dices determine the winner or are an important game mechanism

- Last Chance, Ravensburger, 1994 (13, 29, 34, 18)
- Tempo, kleine Schnecke!, Ravensburger, 1985 (28, 13, 22, 23)

14. Experience Games

the theme of the game interrelates very close to the game experience; one identifies himself with the events, you feel as you are one of the pawns

- Civilization, Compendium Games, 1980 (5, 19, 33, 14)
- Formula Dé, 999 Games, 1997 (28, 14, 21, 29)

15. Fantasy and Role-playing Games

they take place in a (mythical, futuristic) fantasy world and have often a written adventure as a basis

- Dungeons & Dragons, TSR, Inc., 1974 (21, 14, 15, 33)
- Magic, the Gathering, Wizards of the Coast, 1990 (20, 15, 21)

16. Memory Games

being able to memorize is very important

- Coco Crazy!, Ravensburger, 1998 (16, 2, 29, 23, 13)
- Zicke Zacke Hühnerkacke, Zoch-Verlag, 1998 (22, 16, 11)

17. Number Games

combine numbers, calculate, put in order,...

- Multiplication Bingo, Trend enterprises, 1995 (11, 17)
- Rummikub XP, Goliath, 1997 (21, 17, 31, 24, 9)

18. Gambling Games

accept well calculated risks, accept the challenge of a gamble

- Can't Stop, Franjos, 1981 (21, 13, 18)
- Gambler, FX, 1998 (13, 18)

19. Trade Games

earn money, play on the options market, buy or sell

- Acquire, Schmidt Spiele, 1988 (21, 19, 9)
- Modern Art, Hans im Glück, 1992 (3, 34, 19)

20. Card Games

a deck of cards in your hand form the base of the game

- Labyrinthe - le jeu de cartes, Ravensburger, 2000 (9, 24, 20)
- Der Große Dalmuti, Amigo Spiele, 1993 (20, 2, 26, 29, 18, 21)

21. The Classics

exist for a long time, belong in every game library, international best sellers

- Haas en schildpad, Ravensburger, 1978 (28, 9, 21, 3)
- Trivial Pursuit (Genus), Parker, 1995 (21, 27, 26)

22. Games for Small Children

reading and/or calculating are not a necessary skill

- Glückspilz (Geluks-Paddestoel), Selecta, 1999 (16, 22)
- Würfelzwerge (Kabouters zoeken), Selecta, 1999 (11, 13, 22)

23. Short Time Games

they last at most half an hour

- Quarto!, Gigamic, 1992 (21, 31, 24, 4, 8, 23)
- Simon (Senso), MB, 1996 (16, 30, 23)

24. Lay Down Games

you place playing pieces to create a row, a path, a combination on a game board or on the table

- Othello, Dujardin, 1980 (21, 31, 24, 4, 8)
- Tantrix, Mind Games Ltd., 1987 (31, 24, 30)

25. War-games

wars and battles are fought upon a game board

- Targui, Jumbo, 1998 (21, 25, 33)
- Shògun, MB, GameMaster Serie, 1986 (25, 33)

26. Party Games

for a lot of people, often divided into several groups

- Brainstorm!, MB, 1998 (35, 26, 29, 27)
- Strijd der seksen, Jumbo, 1998 (26, 14, 27)

27. Quiz Games

solve questions or unriddle brainteasers

- StripStrop, Deshker Productions, 1996 (27, 20)
- Mindtrap, Spear's Games, 1993 (27, 26, 11, 30)

28. Race Games

a track must be finished as soon as possible

- Mens erger je niet!, Jumbo, 1917 (21, 28)
- Demarrage!, Jumbo, 1991 (28, 9, 14)

29. Ambiance Games

they present a lot of enjoyment, fun or suspense while playing

- 1000 Bornes (km), Dujardin, 1960 (20, 12, 21, 29, 17)
- Maffiosi, Parker, 1999 (10, 29)

30. Solitude Games

to play (also) alone

- Katamino, Jeux PBM, 1992 (8, 30, 11)
- Take it Easy, FX, 1998 (24, 31, 30, 9, 23)

31. Play in a Row Games

playing pieces must form a row, series or a pattern

- Twixt (1962), 3M Bookcase Game, 1962 (31, 24, 8, 23, 21)
- Pente, Clipper, 1973 (21, 31, 24, 4, 8, 23)

32. Skill Games

you must perform an act correctly (build, place, mold, express, narrate,...)

- Carabistouille, Hibou, 1990 (35, 26, 32, 29)
- Pisa, Jumbo, 1985 (32, 22, 23, 30)

33. Demanding Games

difficult to complex game rules to be studied and sometimes a very long playing time

- Axis & Allies, MB, GameMaster Serie, 1984 (25, 33, 5, 14, 21)
- 1835, Hans im Glück, 1990 (34, 33, 19, 14, 21, 9)

34. Auction Games

to buy or sell by auction

- Giganten, Kosmos, 1999 (19, 34, 14)
- Modern Art, Hans im Glück, 1992 (3, 34, 19)

35. Word Games

to form, guess or recognize letters or words

- Scrabble, Spear's Games, 1949 (21, 35, 30)
- Taboo Junior, MB, 1994 (35, 26, 29, 11)

3. Thesaurus

Keywords are also used to classify the games in our archives. Any combination of keywords can be assigned to each game.

Here's the list we use (at present):

- Aardrijkskunde (geography)
- Actie (action)
- Antiek (antique)
- Aperitief (cocktail)
- Astronomie (astronomy)
- Autoracen (car races)
- Avontuur (adventure)
- Behendigheid (dexterity)
- Bekende personen (famous people)
- Beroep (occupation)
- Beurs (options market)
- Bijbel en geloof (Bible en faith)
- Bluffen en gokken (bluff, gamble)
- Bouwen en wonen (building & living)
- Cassette or CD
- Combinatie (combination)
- Communication
- Computer
- Concentration
- Construction
- Cooperation
- Cosim
- Creativiteit (creativity)
- Criminaliteit (crime)
- Deductie (deduction)
- Denken (thinking)
- Derde wereld (third world)
- Detective
- Dieren (animal)
- Dinosaur
- Diplomacy
- Dobbelsteen (die)
- Domino
- Ecology
- Educatief (educational)
- Electronic
- Energy
- Erotiek (eroticism)
- Eten en drinken (food and drinks)
- Fabels en sprookjes (fable)
- Family
- Fantasy
- Fietsen (bicycle)
- Film & TV
- Financial
- Fotografie (photography)
- Geduld (patience)
- Geheugen (memory)
- Geluid (sound)
- Geluk (good luck)
- Gemotoriseerd (with engine)
- Geneeskunde (medicine)
- Gerecht (court of justice)
- Geschiedenis (history)
- Getalspellen (numbers)
- Gezellige sfeer (atmosphere)
- Golf
- Handel (trade)
- Heksen en Tovenaars (witch, magician)
- Horror
- Kaarten (cards)
- Kansspel (game of chance)
- Kennis (knowledge)
- Klassieke Oudheid (classical antiquity)
- Klassieker (classics)
- Klimaat (climate)
- Kunst (art)
- Kwartet (quartet)
- Landbouw (agriculture)
- Legspellen (lay down)
- Letters and words
- Literatuur (literature)
- Lotto
- Luchtvaart (aviation)
- Magic
- Magnetism
- Markten (market)
- Media
- Meerderheid (majority)
- Middeleeuwen (Middle Ages)
- Moderne tijd (Modern Times)
- Muziek (music)
- Nature
- Oorlog en vrede (war and peace)

- Oriëntaal (oriental)
- Oude Egypte (Ancient Egypt)
- Paardenrennen (horse races)
- Partyspellen (partygames)
- Piraten (pirates)
- Politiek (politics)
- Psychology
- Puzzle
- Quiz
- Reaction
- Reclame (advertisement)
- Reizen (travel)
- Rekenen (calculate)
- Renspellen (race games)
- Ridders (knights)
- Rollenspel (role-playing)
- Ruimtelijk inzicht (spatial insight)
- Satire
- Schrijfspellen (writing)
- Science Fiction
- Simulation
- Solitaire
- Speel op een rij (play in a row)
- Speelkaarten (playing cards)
- Spelling
- Spelverzameling (collection of games)
- Spoorwegen (railways)
- Sport
- Start-doel-spellen (start - target)
- Steden (city)
- Strategy
- Tactiek (tactics)
- Techniek (technology)
- Tekenen (drawing)
- Uitbeelden (represent)
- Vaardigheid (skill)
- Veiling (auction)
- Verbaal (verbal)
- Verkeer (traffic)
- Video
- Voetbal (soccer)
- Volkeren (people)
- Vrije tijd (leisure)
- Wetenschap (science)
- Wild West
- Wiskunde (maths)
- Woordenboek (dictionary)
- Zeevaart (seamen)
- Zeilen (sail)

4. Projects

As the Flemish Games Archives work together with the Department of Teachers Education in Brugge (KHBO), we organize a lot of lectures for students and teachers.

In order to select the appropriate games for each lecture, we organized the database with a few extra options.

Each game can be assigned to one or more projects:

- A trip around the world in 80 games
- A journey through history
- Social education
- Family Games
- Educational games for small children
- Language games (primary education)
- Language games (secondary education)
- Math games (primary education)
- Math games (secondary education)
- Motion education
- Relations
- Environment
- ...

5. An Example

Suppose you are asked to search for games similar to '**Adel Verpflichtet**' (F.X. Schmid, 1990, Klaus Teuber).

1. If you still have a **CATALOGUE** of the game company F.X. Schmid - a company that no longer exists - you'll find that the game is listed between games for adults.
This classification doesn't help you to find other games with a similar system.
2. If you study the classification of the '**DEUTSCHES SPIELE-ARCHIV**' in Marburg, Germany, you will have a hard time to find out in which category the game would be listed.
Is this a 'combination and decoding game' (in the group of thinking games) or a 'strategic thinking game' (within the same group)?
Or would this be rather a 'detective and policeman game' (in the group of role-playing games)?
If you have more doubts, you will certainly find more categories where this game would fit.
3. At '**BOARD GAME GEEK**' the game 'Adel verpflichtet' is reviewed as a 'bluffing' game.
This means that we can now browse the 'bluffing' category to find similar games.
This is the result:
Adel Verpflichtet, Aladdin's Dragons, Asterix das Kartenspiel, Autoscooter, Balderdash, BattleGrid, Burp, Caesar and Cleopatra, Call my Bluff, Casablanca, Chrononauts, Ciao Ciao..., Conspiracy, Corruption, Cut and Run, Darkover, Der Schattendieb, Doolittle & Waite, Drunter und Drüber, Dune, Erben von Hoax, die, FIB-OR-NOT?, Fishy, Fliegende Holländer, der, Football Strategy, Glücksritter, die, Heimlich & Co., Hera & Zeus, Hoax, Hols der Geier, In Teufels Küche, Keydom, Kings and Things, Kuhhandel, Liar's Dice, Mauer, die, Orcz, Perudo, Raj, Razzia, Save Doctor Lucky, Shanghai, Smuggle, Sternen Himmel, Tabloid Teasers, Tal der Könige, Twilight, Verbotene Stadt, die, Wrott und Swindlers, Zankapfel.
Not bad for a start.
4. The website '**GAMES WE PLAY**' puts our game in the list 'Das Brettspiel'.
That means that they consider this game to have the same qualities as Acquire, Barbarossa, Café International, Entdecker, Linie 1, Hexentanz, Manhattan, RoboRally and Zatre.
This is not good at all. The games on the same list are so different that this is not the place to look for equivalent game systems.
5. The post order company '**PLAY ME**' tells us that our game can be assigned to the following game systems: Bluff, Taktik, Auktion.
If we could search the database they are using for those three words at the same time, the result would be a list of games that are equivalent to 'Adel Verpflichtet'.
Unfortunately this can't be done on line. If you would like to perform such a query, you would have to search for each item one at a time, print the list(s) and compare the titles.
But the system they are using is adequate. Multiple game mechanisms can be assigned to one game. This method works very well.
6. The post order company '**FUNAGAIN GAMES**' works the same way.
They describe our subject as:
Categories: Board Games format, Bluffing genre, Set Collection genre, Art Collecting theme and special Adel Verpflichtet edition.
But they go a step further. At the bottom of the web page you can search their database for the same categories at the same time.
Unfortunately this query gives the same game as a result. Only searching the 'bluffing' systems gives you a list of 24 other games.
7. The '**CLASSIC GAMES ENCYCLOPEDIA**' lists our game as a typical board game (Family game, usually have a board with a track, and some cards. Monopoly is a good example of this kind of game).
Not very useful to start another search.

8. When we look at the classification system used by the 'FLEMISH GAMES ARCHIVES' we see that the game 'Adel Verplichtet' is linked to several selection lists:

- 3 bluffing games
- 7 deduction games
- 9 thinking games for three or more players
- 21 the Classics
- 29 ambiance games

The lists #3 and #29 show the most characteristic elements of the game. Whoever plays the game, experiences the ambiance throughout the bluffing system.

When you search the database by lists #3 and #29 you'll find 17 games with similar game systems:

• Adel verplichtet	FX Schmid	1990	(9, 21, 29, 7, 3)
• Adel verplichtet	Alea	2000	(9, 21, 29, 7, 3)
• Capone	Amigo Spiele	1994	(10, 3, 14, 19, 29)
• Ciao, Ciao...	Drei Magiër Spiele	1997	(3, 28, 29)
• Familie Poen	Ravensburger	1994	(20, 3, 29)
• Flusspiraten	Walter Müllers	1990	(3, 28, 29, 12)
• Heimlich & Co	Ravensburger	1986	(3, 28, 29, 9)
• Karavaan	Ravensburger	1990	(3, 28, 29, 19, 9)
• Koehandel	Ravensburger	1997	(3, 34, 20, 29)
• Kohle, Kies & Knete	Schmidt Spiele	1994	(3, 34, 19, 29, 12, 18)
• Kuhhandel	Ravensburger	1985	(3, 34, 20, 29)
• Pfus	Heidelberger Spielever.	1992	(3, 10, 29, 14, 32)
• Quartier Latin	Daggit	1997	(20, 29, 3)
• Rette sich wer kann	Walter Müllers	1993	(18, 29, 14, 28, 3)
• Safe & Partners	Ravensburger	1986	(3, 28, 29, 9)
• Sponsor	Jumbo	1986	(3, 29, 28, 13)
• Zum Kuckuck!	FX Schmid	1997	(29, 20, 3, 18)

Anyone familiar with board games, will agree that this list gives you games with a similar game system as in 'Adel Verplichtet'.

6. Conclusion

The classification system we use in our database is one of the many ways to classify games. It's not the system used by many researchers, but it proved to be very successful for whoever visits our archives in Brugge.

The advantages are:

- Each game is no longer limited to one well defined category. It can be assigned up to 6 different lists.
- The 35 selection lists are clear defined. They give a very good survey of the different game mechanisms used in board games.
- It's easy to introduce another list.
- One can easily find similar games. And that's the most asked question we must answer.
- Searching the thesaurus and linking different lists gives us the opportunity to create new projects on demand.

The disadvantages are:

- You must know the different selection lists in order to be able to do some research on your own. You need a little support in the beginning.
- The search system is not yet available on the internet. The program we use (FileMaker Pro 5) can be used to publish the database as an online instrument, but we did not have the time yet to set things up. This should be done in the near future.