

SPIEL Essen: world's largest board game fair expects record visitor numbers once again

- Third extension in a row: Hall 7 is used for the first time
- Premiere for a stage area with comprehensive supporting programme

This year, more than 200,000 visitors are expected at the world's leading trade fair for board games. Around 890 exhibitors from 51 countries will present their new and classic products at SPIEL Essen. With Hall 7 being used for the first time, the exhibition space has grown to an impressive 77,500 m². This sets a new record for the third time in a row. From 23 to 26 October, the international board game community will gather in Essen, in the heart of the Ruhr region.

Helpful hall arrangement

"The world's largest B2C trade fair in the board game sector has outgrown the existing halls in recent years. That's why we've added Hall 7 to our exhibition space this year," explains Florian Hess, Managing Director of SPIEL. The trade fair's established hall arrangement is thus being expanded. The exhibitors are divided thematically across seven exhibition halls and the Galeria. Smooth transitions between the areas allow visitors to discover a wide range of focal points. The current layout of the halls and exhibitors can be viewed online in the [interactive hall plans](#). SPIEL experienced record visitor numbers last year, when for the first time all tickets for were sold out. Merz Verlag is again expecting a large crowd of visitors during this trade fair – more than half of the tickets have already been sold.

New stage area with exciting supporting programme

Visitors to SPIEL can look forward to another new feature in Hall 4: a generously designed stage area. "Our varied supporting programme – consisting of panels, lectures, discussion forums and live shows – enriches the trade fair experience," says Carol Rapp, Managing Director of SPIEL. Of particular note is Educators Day on Friday, which offers exciting insights from German and international speakers into current research on games and teaching. The programme is complemented by the popular Cosplay Show and a live stage show by the American Youtube channel The Dice Tower. Exciting activities are on offer away from the stage, too. For the second time, Games Workshop's renowned

Golden Demon painting competition will be held during the fair, attracting numerous fans of the miniature scene. Another highlight is the world record attempt 'CATAN – Connect': Kosmos is hosting the world's largest CATAN game in the Grugahalle and inviting 1,200 players to set a new record together – with commentary by Smudo, member of the German band Die Fantastischen Vier. The diverse program is rounded off by the appointment once again of a games ambassador. In 2025, Mháire Stritter, presenter of Orkenspalter TV, cosplayer and role-player, will take on this role and, as the face of the fair, will guide the community through the event.

Service for visitors

This year, Merz Verlag is focusing solely on day tickets, providing regular updates on the current status. Tickets are sold exclusively online via the [shop](#); there is no longer a box office on site. The free SPIEL Essen app is a helpful companion during the trade fair. In addition to interactive hall plans and information on new products, it offers the option of marking and sorting Favourites for the first time. The app will be available for download in all app stores from 4 September. The board game fair is open from Thursday to Saturday from 10 am to 7 pm and on Sunday until 6 pm.

A detailed program overview can be found at www.spiel-essen.de/en/program/spieltalks. Images are available at www.spielwarenmesse-eg.de/media.

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SPIEL Essen

SPIEL Essen is the world's largest public fair for board games and brings passionate board game fans together with national and international exhibitors in the heart of the Ruhr region. The fair has been around for over 40 years and presents thousands of new releases from exhibitors from over 50 nations. The focus is on socialising and playing together, as the new titles can be tested directly on site at the booths at SPIEL Essen.

Spielwarenmesse eG

The multifaceted positioning and international orientation of Spielwarenmesse eG is representative of the toy sector and other consumer goods markets. With its legal structure as a cooperative, the business is unique among trade fair companies and is highly successful. Its 60-member team operates from the 'ToyCity' of Nuremberg and is supported by representatives in over 100 countries. Its portfolio includes two major global fairs: the **Spielwarenmesse** in Nuremberg is the lead international event for the B2B sector, as is **SPIEL** in Essen for the B2C field. To these can be added **Kids India** in Mumbai and the **World of Toys by Spielwarenmesse** trade fair programme, which opens up new markets for manufacturers through joint activities in **Hong Kong, Tokyo and New York**. The Company's own subsidiaries in the key locations of **China and India** ensure that appropriate expertise is available locally. With its accumulated knowledge and global network, the trade fair producer is becoming an ever stronger initiator and groundbreaker in the industry's issues and trends. The most recent example of this is **BRANDmania** in Essen, which casts an unconventional and future-directed spotlight on the topic of licensing and partnerships. With its combination of events and online activities, Spielwarenmesse eG (www.spielwarenmesse-eg.de) is active all year round.