

# Mineral Quest

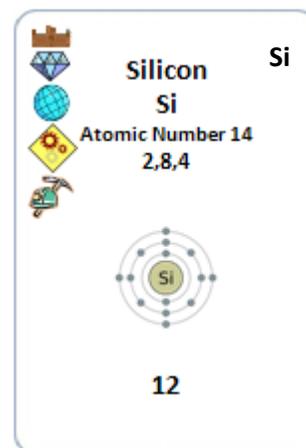
## Rules

**Introduction.** Mineral Quest is a card-driven board game for 3 to 5 Players, with a duration of 45-60 minutes, where Players collect “Element Cards” and then exchange them for Minerals that are comprised of those Elements. Each Player takes one of 5 different Roles representing occupations that all seek Minerals, but for different reasons. **Those Roles are the Curator, the Jeweler, the Geologist, the Chemist, and the Miner.** A few Minerals are sought by only one of the Roles, but most are competed for by several of the Roles. Each Mineral completed earns Victory Points (VP). The most VPs at the end wins.

For example, every Player (every Role) wants Quartz (the second most common Mineral in the earth’s crust), but for different reasons. The Curator wants spectacular crystal display specimens for his museum exhibits; the Jeweler wants Quartz in gem-quality with a blue color, and calls it Amethyst (the Birthstone for February); and the Geologist needs it to make up common rocks such as sandstone and granite. The Chemist uses it to make common window glass, and the Miner knows that gold is frequently found in Quartz veins. *(See expanded discussion of Roles later on).*

**Components.** The game has 1 deck of 106 Element cards, 5 player mats, 70 small plastic “crystal” tokens, a Periodic Table Market board, and player aids:

**Element Deck:** 106 small-format (“Euro-mini”) cards for 25 Elements needed to make up common Minerals (of the 92 found naturally); at least 2 of each ranging up to 10 for Oxygen (since it is part of many Minerals). These cards display the Element Name, Symbol, the number of how many cards of that Element are in the deck, and icons identifying which roles need it. Also shown are the Atomic Number, electron shell configurations, and a Valence Diagram (for “theme flavor” and educational value, not used directly in the game system). Hydrogen is a special case: it only occurs in minerals in the form of hydroxide ions (OH<sup>-</sup>) or as interstitial water (H<sub>2</sub>O). Thus rather than including Hydrogen Element cards in the deck, there are instead 6 Hydroxide OH<sup>-</sup> cards and 3 water H<sub>2</sub>O cards. Ten of the cards are “Alchemy” cards, which are wild cards that can be used to represent any element.



Sample Element card

**Player Mats:** One for each of the 5 Roles, showing that Role’s Special Ability, which Minerals that Role/Player is seeking and how many victory points he will earn for each one. The mat also shows what the Mineral is used for by that Role (in the case of the Curator, they are all for museum display specimens) and what Elements will be needed to comprise each Mineral. In addition, Photographs of the Mineral (or Gemstone) are shown.

**Crystal Tokens:** 70 small plastic “crystal” tokens to use to keep track of Mineral Cards collected and Victory Points earned during the game.

**Periodic Table Market:** A 4 X 8 matrix on a board with spaces for each of the Element card types. This board is double-sided: one side has the elements arranged basically in Periodic Table order; the other side has them arranged in alphabetical order. Each turn, Players can choose to exchange 2 Element cards (can be different types) to this Market for any available 1 of their choice. The Jeweler can exchange at 1-for-1.

**Player Aids:** Two tables showing which minerals and which elements are wanted by each role, and a Periodic Table of the Elements with the 25 used in the game highlighted, used for reference only. This same information is incorporated into both the Element cards and Mineral Cards by icons representing the Roles. Also wood bases (10) with slots for cards to hold and organize cards, hidden from view of the other players.

## Setup

- Starting Player: the Starting Player is the one who can show the most minerals on their person, such as gemstones in rings, watches, bracelets, or necklaces. *Play passes to the Player on your left (clockwise).*
- Each Player in turn takes one of the 5 Player Mats for the Role of his choice, and 2 of the slotted wood bases as card holders/organizers.
- Place a pile of plastic crystal tokens where each Player can reach them for use in keeping track of Minerals completed and Victory Points earned on their Player Mat.
- Shuffle the Element Card deck and deal 7 cards to each Player. Place 7 more cards face-up in the Periodic Table Market. Place 3-5 more cards, equal to the number of Players, face-up in the playing area. Place remaining cards in a face-down draw deck. The space to the left of the draw deck will be used for a discard pile.
- If any Element cards are taken or revealed that only pertain to a Role not chosen this time (easily seen using the role icons on the card), they are removed from the game and immediately replenished from the draw deck.

## Illustration of the playing area:

Periodic Table Market

Li	Be	H <sub>2</sub> O	OH	C		O	F
Na	Mg	Wild Card	Al	Si	P	S	Cl
K	Ca			Fe	Cu	Zn	
Mo		Ag	Sn	Pt	Au	Hg	Pb

Element Cards



Discard Pile



Draw Deck



Element cards face-up

### Order of Play – Summary:

- Exchange (discard) Element Cards in hand for one target Mineral on Player Mat if you can.
- Place a crystal token on Player Mat.
- Draw 2 Element cards from the Draw Deck or face-up piles (not from the Market)
- Exchange Element cards in hand for cards in the the Periodic Table Market at 2-for-1; *the Jeweler can exchange at 1-for-1*
- Check hand limit (10 maximum at end of turn); *the Chemist has a higher hand limit of 12*

**Roles.** Each Role is represented by a graphic icon as shown below, has a target list of Minerals, and has a Special Ability:



**Curator** – The Curator runs a large Natural Science Museum which has an extensive collection of spectacular Mineral specimens on display, and he is always looking for more. For his Special Ability, he always has one free hydroxide ion (OH<sup>-</sup>) available to complete a target mineral without needing that Element Card.



**Jeweler** – The Jeweler seeks gem-quality mineral specimens that can be cut and polished to create jewelry. Birthstones for each month of the year are needed to prepare for the next season. As a Special Ability, he can exchange at 1-for-1 in the Periodic Table Market.



**Geologist** – The Geologist is an expert in the study of the earth, its materials, and processes. He seeks common minerals that are the main constituents of the rocks in the earth's crust, which provide clues about the earth's natural history. His Special Ability: on his turn, *instead of his normal Periodic Table Market exchange*, he can choose to look through the discard pile and take one card.



**Chemist** – The Chemist uses minerals that are mined or quarried to create useful products for building construction, consumer goods, or industrial processes. For his Special Ability, he has a higher hand limit of 12 cards.



Miner -- The Miner seeks metallic ores. Since many of these ores, especially the Sulfides, are often found in association with each other, for his Special Ability he can use one Sulfur card to complete two sulfide minerals at the same time, if the needed metals are also in his hand. *This is an exception to the rule restricting Mineral fulfillment to one per turn.*

## Order of Play:

### Complete (or fulfill) Minerals

- If possible (if you have all the Element Cards needed in your hand), exchange Elements for **one** target Mineral that you need for your Role, discarding the Elements played to the Discard Pile (*not to the Periodic Table Market*). *Exception: the Miner has a Special Ability allowing **two** sulfide Minerals to be completed.*
  - When fulfilling the requirements of the Mineral, the Element Cards represent the unlimited presence of the needed Element, not just a single instance of the Element. So for example, to complete a Quartz Mineral needs just 1 Silicon and 1 Oxygen, not 2 Oxygen cards. In a more extreme example, Hornblende doesn't require 22 Oxygen cards, just 1.
  - Also allowed are substitutions per formula parentheses, for example: Sphalerite, (Zn,Fe)S, can be satisfied with either Zinc (Zn) or Iron (Fe), you don't need both (you still of course need Sulfur).
  - *Special rule: 2 Hydroxide (OH<sup>-</sup>) Element cards can substitute for 1 Water (H<sub>2</sub>O).*
  - *Special Ability of the Curator: he always has one free hydroxide ion (OH<sup>-</sup>) available to complete a target mineral without needing that Element Card.*
- When Minerals are completed, place a crystal token on the corresponding space on your Player Mat.

### Draw Element Cards

- Draw 2 cards from Element supply, either off the top of the deck, and/or from the face-up cards. As cards are taken from the face-up set, immediately replenish the vacated spot with a new one off the top of the deck.
- If any Element cards are taken or revealed that only pertain to a Role not chosen this time (easily seen using the role icons on the card), they are removed from the game and immediately replenished from the draw deck.

### Exchange Element Cards in the Periodic Table Market

- Exchange Element cards in the Periodic Table Market at 2-for-1, placing your "discards" in the appropriate labeled spaces, and taking the desired card.
- The discarded cards used to make the exchange can be of different Elements.
- *Exception: the Jeweler has a Special Ability to exchange at 1-for-1 in the Periodic Table Market.*
- *Exception: for the Geologist's Special Ability, on his turn he can choose to do this normal Periodic Table Market exchange, or instead look through the discard pile and take one card (without having to exchange any cards).*

### Cleanup

- Check hand limit –
  - If more than 10, must discard down to 10 (*to the Discard Pile not to the Periodic Table Market*).
  - *Exceptions: For his Special Ability, the Chemist has a higher hand limit of 12 cards.*
- Turn end, play passes to the Player on your left.

**End Game.** When the Element Card Draw Deck is depleted, this triggers one final turn for all Players, *including the Player who drew the last card*, however, the only action allowed in this final turn is to fulfill Minerals.

**Scoring.** Each Player adds up all the Victory Points earned as indicated by the crystal tokens on their Player Mat.

The Player with the most Victory Points wins!

Copyright © 2015, Thomas C. Anderson; Design: Thomas C. Anderson; Development: Scott C. Anderson  
Playtesting: BGG.CON (Dallas), including Trey Chambers, R. Eric Reuss, Tyler Smith, Eric Kunz, Candy Weber, Stefan Brunell, Darrell Louder, and Gil Hova; the Board Game Designers Guild of Utah, and the extended Anderson family.