**Objective** – Ludo is played by 2 – 4 players from about age 4 and up with each player having a set of 4 tokens (usually identified by color) placed in the starting zone which is at the left corner for each player. Players race their four tokens from start to finish according to dice rolls while trying to avoid being captured or killed by opponents.

**Start of game** – To start the game, each player rolls a single die and the player with the highest number on the die gets to go first, followed by the next player in a clockwise rotation. If there is a tie for high number, (example – two players rolling 6s), those players will roll again for a tie break. The game will start with the winner of the tie break. That player will now roll 2 dice in an attempt to get a 6 which is necessary to move his/her tokens from the starting zone to the starting square. A player will continue to be the active player as long as he/she continues to roll 6s. It becomes the next player’s turn when the active player fails to roll a 6.

**Tokens on the game board** – Tokens from competing players cannot occupy the same square. If a throw of the dice causes your token to land on a square occupied by another player’s token, this is considered a ‘kill’ or a ‘capture’, whatever term you prefer to use. In such case, the active player’s token will now occupy the spot and the previous token is sent back to that player’s starting zone where it will remain until it is that player’s turn and a successful die throw of a 6 makes it eligible to be re-enter to the game.

**Barriers** – A barrier is formed when two or more tokens of the same color occupy the same square. This prevents tokens from other players to advance past a barrier. *If agreed upon prior to start of game, only a barrier can pass or capture/kill another barrier.* You are forced to break down the barrier when there are no other legal moves available.

**Design** – Although there are only four players, these boards are designed with six colors in such a way as to make moving the token easier with fewer errors. If you notice, every 6th square on the board is the same color. This means that if your token is on a red square and you need to move 6 spaces, just look for the next red square ahead. The same is true for all colors. Also if for example you are on a blue square and you need to move ten spaces, you can look for the second blue square ahead and then back track two spaces, this will put you ten spaces ahead. (Remember, every 6th square has the same color no matter what).

**Forced Pass** – A player is forced to pass his/her turn if a throw of the dice results in no legal moves.

**Landing on the Home Spaces** – A player needs an exact die roll in order to land a token on his/her home space. Tokens that are already resting on home spaces can no longer be moved.

**Team Play** – Playing as a team adds a new level of fun to the game. Here are a few general practices to consider during team play. Team play is done with 4 players playing 2 against 2. You are allowed to cross your team mate’s barrier. You are allowed to land on another team mate’s token to form a barrier. Team mates can work together to win a game.

**End of game** – Once a token has made it way around the board it moves up the home stretch of its own color. A token is safe from capture/kill while on the home stretch. The player must throw the exact number to land on the home spot. The winner is the first to get all four tokens home.

**History** – Ludo (from Latin *ludo*, ‘I play’) is a simple and fun board game with its heritage traced back to the game of Parcheesi which originated in 6th century India. The earliest evidence of this game in India is the depiction of boards on the caves of Ajanta. The game and its variants are popular in many countries under various names.
In North America, the game is sold under the brand name ‘Parcheesi’. Variations of the game are sold under the brand names ‘Sorry!’ and ‘Trouble’.

Ludo, also known as Ludi or Ludu, was at some point adopted in the UK, brought to the Caribbean islands where it enjoyed great popularity on the island of Jamaica and eventually experienced minor changes along the way. You can also find Ludi/Ludo in many African Nations.

In Germany, this game is called ‘Mensch ärgere dich nicht’ which means ‘Man, don't get irritated’, and has equivalent names in Dutch, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Czech and Slovak.

In Sweden it is known as ‘Fia’, a name derived from the Latin word *fiat* which means ‘so be it!’ Common variations on the name are ‘Fia-spel’ (Fia the game) and ‘Fia med knuff’ (Fia with a nudge). In Denmark and Norway though, the game is known as Ludo.

**Variations** – Because the game is played under different names and rules in many countries we have listed a few variations that may be adapted to the rules listed above.

- To get a game started faster, some house rules allow a player with no tokens on the board to bring their first piece into play on any roll, on a 1 or a 6, or allow multiple tries to roll a 6 (with three rolls being the most popular).
- If a piece lands on the same space as another piece of the same color, the moved piece must take the preceding space.
- If a player's piece lands on another of their own pieces, they are doubled and form a "block or barrier" which cannot be passed by any opponent's pieces. Or in some variations may only be passed by rolling a 6 or 1.
- Doubled pieces may move half the number if an even number is thrown e.g. move 2 spaces if a 4 is thrown.
- A doubled piece may capture another doubled piece (like in Coppit).
- A board may have only four spaces in each "home column". All four of a player's pieces must finish in these spaces for the player to have finished the game. (See Mensch ärgere dich nicht.)
- To speed the game up, extra turns or bonus moves can be awarded capturing a piece or getting a piece home; these may grant passage past a block.
- In Denmark and some other countries the board has eight spaces marked with a globe and eight with a star. The globes are safe spaces where a piece can not be captured. The exception is that a player who has not yet entered all pieces, can always enter a piece on a roll of six. If the entry space is occupied by another player's piece, that piece is captured. Otherwise the entry spaces work like the other globe spaces. A piece which would have landed on a star instead moves to the next star.
- A barrier blocks trailing pieces of the player who created the block, or blocks them unless they roll the exact number to land on the block and doubled can't move forward until landed move. This reduces the tactical advantage of a barrier and makes the game more interesting.
- There are 4 safety squares on the board, like castle squares in Pachisi, as well as the safe home squares, where a piece may able to move forwards or backwards and start their turn before previous player finishes.
- A piece landing on a square with an opponent's piece not only sends the opponent piece back to the starting area but also sends the piece to its home square.
- A player cannot move their first piece into the "home column" unless they have captured at least one piece of any of the opponents.

Please visit the following link to place orders for additional Ludi game boards and accessories:

http://www.strumatic.com

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