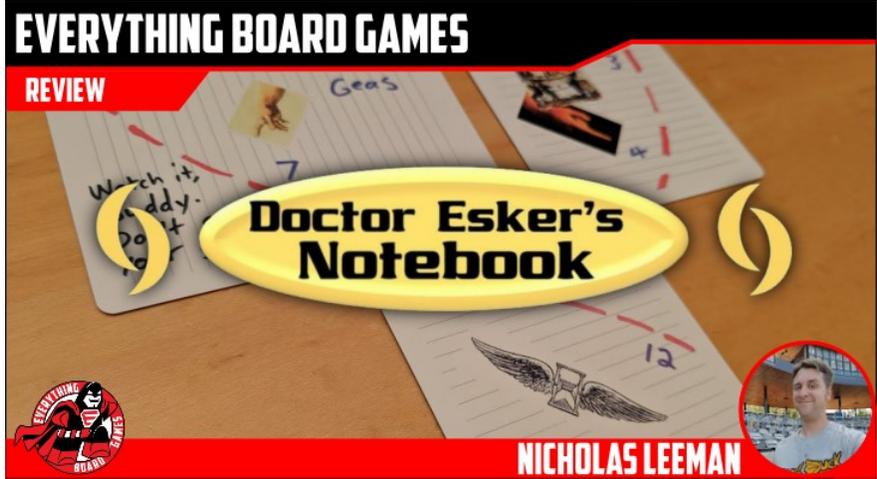




# DOCTOR ESKER'S NOTEBOOK REVIEW

The Madjai August 12, 2019



### FOLLOW BY EMAIL

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Email address...

### MORE PAGES

- Home
- Reviews
- EBG Giveaways
- Crowd Funding Database
- EBG Contributors
- Calendar
- Contact Us
- Everything Board Game T-Shirts

### SPONSORS



## Quick Look: Doctor Esker's Notebook

**Designer:** David Dobson  
**Publisher:** Plankton Games  
**Year Published:** 2018  
**No. of Players:** 1-6  
**Ages:** 13+  
**Playing Time:** 60 - 180 min

Find more info on [BoardGameGeek.com](http://BoardGameGeek.com)



## Review:

**tl;dr:** Pseudo escape room in a very small box. Chapter-based mind puzzles you can do by yourself or with friends.

**Getting to the Game:** A stack of cards in the box reveals nine different puzzles. Sort them in their respective piles by the art on their backs, and begin with the one that says "Start."

### FACEBOOK



### CATEGORIES

- › Conventions
- › Featured
- › Game Giveaways
- › Interviews
- › Kickstarter Games
- › News



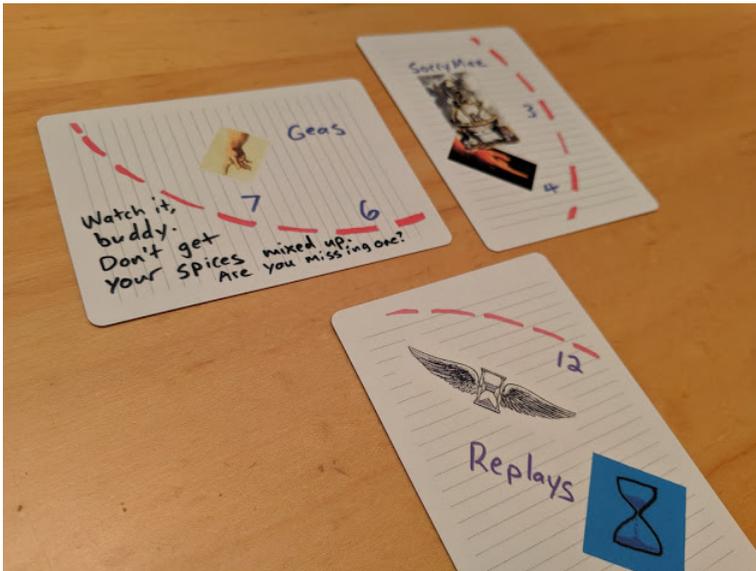
› Poll

› Reviews

› Videos

Each art backing is its own unique, self-dependent puzzle. When you solve it, it will point you to the next one. You don't have to do all of them at once, but you're going to want to. These are fiendish in their simplicity, and finding the solution is incredibly satisfying.

**Playing the Game:** Really, truly, each "chapter" in the notebook is all about laying out the cards, and then figuring out the trick. Each standalone puzzle has a hook that once you find, you can solve it pretty quickly. The trouble is going to be finding out exactly what the thing is. You'll notice that this review has a pretty marked lack of pictures. I wrestled with whether or not to take spoiler-free pictures, and in the end decided that I wasn't going to ruin the beauty of this game.



Because this game is beautiful. And not just the art—the attention to detail here is astounding, and the ease of the solutions is brilliant. Each puzzle is going to point you to a number, some combination of digits from 0-9. If you arrange the solution cards in the proper order, you'll be pointed very clearly towards the next set. They all flow in a wonderful order, representing (in this reviewer's opinion) a great difficulty curve. The first couple are easy, warming you up to the game. There are a few in the middle that I thought were very clearly impossible until they obviously weren't, and by the end, whether it was just my group being mentally warmed up or something clicking in our brains, but we dealt with the last pair of stacks in quick, satisfying fashion.

We loved our time with the notebook, though that's not to say it didn't have minor annoyances. For a game that deals with manipulating cards and getting things aligned *just so*, the white borders of the cards on their faces is maddening. I really wanted to be able to get a perfect fit on more than a few occasions, only being thwarted by the cards themselves. Frustrating, but far from game-breaking.

**Artwork and Components:** All the art in the game is done by the designer—this is literally just directly lifted from his

notebook, and he is, in fact, a doctor. For a game that lives or dies by how well the visuals are to be understood, these are clear and bright—and it very much feels like these are pages in a notebook. Perhaps not a traditional doctor's notebook, though; the overlying feel of the cards is a teenager's encoded and colorful doodlings. It works for the game, but doesn't fit the title very well.



The components are just a stack of cards and a simple cardboard tuckbox. Nothing flashy, and I've already mentioned the annoying blank borders.

**The Good:** Fun, clean, difficulty-ranging puzzles. Attention paid to the overall game experience, able to be stopped and started at any point. Art style is fresh and attractive. Price is just right for the content.

**The Bad:** Card borders get in the way of lining up important artwork. Hints are online-only, so if the site goes down or crashes, you're out of luck.

**Score:** I really enjoyed Doctor Esker's Notebook, and I'm excited to see the sequel in real life. If you're not into the escape room games of late, but enjoy puzzles and want to try something different, this is a good box to grab. I'm giving Doctor Esker's Notebook a score of **A Clean Bill of Health**.

---

Check out **Doctor Esker's Notebook** on:



**Nicholas Leeman** - Reviewer

Nicholas has been a board game evangelist for over 10 years now, converting friends and family alike to the hobby. He's also a trained actor and works summers as one of the PA announcers for the St. Paul Saints. He lives in Minneapolis, MN with his board gaming wife and son.

See Nicholas's reviews [HERE](#).

[NICHOLAS LEEMAN](#) [X](#) [PLANKTON GAMES](#) [X](#) [REVIEWS](#)

