

# Kate Jones, President Kadon Enterprises, Inc.

## Overview

Since 1979, Kadon has created, developed and produced over 200 original “gamepuzzles®” — geometric mosaic sets of puzzles and games — where a set, moreover, contains all the different combinations of a certain theme. Such sets provide a virtual laboratory of recreational mathematics and visual art. Kate Jones ( <http://www.gamepuzzles.com/kjbio.htm> ) is the chief researcher/designer. Over the years, many other talented inventors have contributed ideas. They are acknowledged in the printed material and on the company’s extensive website, **Gamepuzzles for the joy of thinking®**. Latest news are at <http://www.gamepuzzles.com/newtopic.htm> .

All ages gain skills and insights through play. For earliest entry levels, and for homeschooling families, see the section, **For Youngest Players**, in the Gamepuzzles website: <http://www.gamepuzzles.com/fyplayer.htm>. The sets are well documented for progressive levels of challenge, tailored to each learning style and readiness, adaptable to each individual’s needs. Learning happens joyously and more effectively in an environment of playfulness and purposeful fun. Each set is “open-ended” for inexhaustible adventures in exploration and discovery.

Kadon uses permutations of *shapes* and *colors*. With such sets you can create visually exciting graphic images, evoking the look of an M. C. Escher or Vasarely painting. This is where math meets art in a highly playable form. This is where creativity combines with problem-solving for full-brain development. This is “the joy of thinking” at its best.

The two main types of Kadon's combinatorial sets are *edge-matching* tiles and *polyforms*. In the former, every permutation and combination of color or symbol is used (think of dominoes); in the latter, all the different *shapes* of a certain type are included. The challenge is to match the tiles by color or to fit the shapes together into larger, invariably beautiful patterns.

## The Website

A tour through Kadon's online catalog will show you the amazing variety of such sets that nature's geometry provides. The site is arranged in these major categories, with a few products overlapping into more than one section:

For Youngest Players	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/fyplayer.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/fyplayer.htm</a>
Essential Polyforms	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/esspoly.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/esspoly.htm</a>
Polyominoes and Polycubes	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/polycube.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/polycube.htm</a>
Tilings and Designs	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/tiling.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/tiling.htm</a>
Our Hottest Sellers	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/hottest.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/hottest.htm</a>
Games Magazine selects	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/gamesmag.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/gamesmag.htm</a>
Puzzles, Just Puzzles	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/prpuzzls.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/prpuzzls.htm</a>
Abstract Strategy Games	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/abstract.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/abstract.htm</a>
Historical Games	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/histfun.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/histfun.htm</a>
The Pentagon Universe	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/pentuniv.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/pentuniv.htm</a>
Edgematching Colors/Shapes	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/edgemtch.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/edgemtch.htm</a>
The Rusticana Collection	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/rustican.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/rustican.htm</a>
Tactile Graphics	— <a href="http://www.gamepuzzles.com/tactile.htm">http://www.gamepuzzles.com/tactile.htm</a>

The website offers many other attractions as free entertainment: Puzzle Parlor, the Life of Games journal, an online coloring book, children's stories, an Emmy-winning video, a large number of hidden games and surprises, other amusements, and the notoriously tricky mini-quizzes. Bonus features are links to valuable resources, an FAQ page, how-to-order page, show calendar, sitemap, an overview of the company in **Who we are** and the historical archives. The printable 24-page condensed catalog can also be viewed as a flip-through page turner. A special feature is a visit to Kadon's pavilion, "Ye Olde Gamery", at the Maryland Renaissance Festival.

## **Educational benefits**

Playing with sets like these is great for kids (and grown-ups, too) because it gives them a direct and fun-filled hands-on experience of visualizing shapes and forms. "Sensory learning" and "Spatial visualization" are among the techniques educators recognize as valuable to develop in a child, the younger the better.

"Manipulative" sets are the ideal way to have a child learn through play. The sensory experience of touching, handling, moving pieces about into desired patterns is the natural way for the mind to build its knowledge about the world. The Montessori system is based on these same principles. And the kids love them.

Kadon gamepuzzles are used in many *schools* and by many *homeschooling* families. The "joy of thinking" makes learning more fun. And being creative and feeling one's mind working well is also good for building self-esteem.

## **Systems thinking**

"Combinatorial" puzzle sets further develop systems thinking, understanding structure and relationships, which are the very important ways the mind works naturally. That's why all ages intuitively enjoy playing with Kadon gamepuzzles. "They make you feel smart," and "Our family has so much fun with these," is the way customers put it. Systems thinking also prepares the individual for coping with the real problems in the world at large.

## **The boardgames**

Kadon also makes boardgames with unusual visual designs and intriguing methods of play. Many of the boards have strikingly beautiful artistic symmetries, like kaleidoscopes. They can double as art objects. Such designs evoke an appreciation for the beauty of design and inspire innovation and creativity in young minds.

Kadon generally avoids making games whose objective is merely the direct annihilation of the opponent's pieces; rather, the search is for non-predatory themes that let players feel good about playing even if they don't win every time. Kadon's designers believe that games are microcosms of the world at large, of striving for results. At this point in history, where the greatest human collaboration is needed to achieve triumphs like landing on the moon and creating a World Wide Web, the games that enshrine war-like themes have outlived their usefulness.

## **Friendly competition**

The competitive games you can play with these puzzle sets are of the "friendly" type, and create interesting visual effects as the tiles are joined or maneuvered during play. The aesthetics are amazing, and the strategies draw on your best constructive thinking.

## **Non-hostile competition**

Conflict resolution through means other than mutual destruction is what games should be about. The Kadon philosophy is to embody civilized forms of the adversary art, with non-hostile competition that allows each player to strive for the best result without having to harm the other players (Kadon folks don't even like to use the word "opponent"). Players get the satisfaction of using their ingenuity and of finding their skills and insights improving with each play.

## **Social benefits**

Playing games is great social entertainment for family and friends. Kadon games run the gamut from the most casual game of chance that provides lots of laughs (The Royal Game of the Goose) to intense and complex pure strategy (most of the games in the Abstract Strategy Games section). Sharing the fun with people you care about makes it even more enjoyable.

Games of chance are kept to a minimum to give you the maximum freedom of choice of action. Where chance is part of the game, it is as an adjunct to your strategy, not the controlling factor.

Kadon designs their games to be enjoyed by all ages, from kids to the most avid game lover and strategist. There's something here for all of them.

## **Puzzles on a grid**

Boardgames are usually played with pieces (pawns, markers, stones, etc.) that are placed or move about on a board or grid. Many elegant solitaire puzzles can be constructed that explore relationships and processes on a grid. Most Kadon game books include a variety of process or positional puzzles of ascending levels of difficulty, in addition to several competitive game formats. Test your wits on these puzzle challenges, and you may find your game skills improve as well. Such solitaires develop forward thinking, considering alternatives and consequences, and seeing "the big picture" of goal attainment. Constructive rather than destructive goals are favored.

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## **ABOUT THE COMPANY — <http://www.gamepuzzles.com/kadon.htm>**

### ***The Philosophy***

Kadon's goal is to make and sell good and true and beautiful things at decent prices. The games and puzzles are a celebration of Mind—the uniquely human capacity to observe, learn, invent, imagine, reason and solve. The products should bring pleasure to the widest range of individuals, from child to adult, from beginner to expert. The style and concept of the products should be universal and timeless, each idea presented in its purest form. Each product must be worthy of the customer's time and money.

### ***Marketing***

Kadon markets its products only directly to the customer. The games are not available through stores or other wholesale channels. Kadon's philosophy is that the games should be produced in high-quality materials for durability, beauty and tactile pleasure. By eliminating middle layers in marketing, Kadon can offer the games at the lowest price possible. The company ships to

customers in every state and in 48 other countries, and exhibits in about 40 art shows a year. The highly detailed website, [www.gamepuzzles.com](http://www.gamepuzzles.com), includes a free printable edition of a highly condensed catalog, available in printed form for \$4.00.

### ***Recognition***

Two of Kadon's present-day games were chosen by *Omni* magazine in 1983 as among the ten best new games of the year: Proteus and Kaliko.

*Games* magazine has reviewed so many of Kadon's games through the years that they have their own section—***Games Magazine selects***—in the Kadon website. As of December 2011, Kadon has been included 48 times in the "Games 100" list of best games.

Kadon's exhibit of gamepuzzles at art shows has won dozens of ribbons for excellence. A full list of honors is on the company's website: <http://www.gamepuzzles.com/kadon.htm#awards>

### ***Contact***

Kate Jones, President  
kadon@gamepuzzles.com  
www.gamepuzzles.com  
Tel. 410-437-2163

Facebook	Kadon-Enterprises
Kate's Facebook page:	puzzl lady
Kate's Twitter page:	katalinjones
Kate's Linked-in page:	puzzl lady
Kate's Flickr page:	puzzl lady
Kate's LiveJournal blog:	puzzl lady
Kate's Blogspot page:	kates-takes.blogspot.com
Kate's Kaneva page:	memehunter
Kate's personal page:	www.memehunter.net

### ***Our other domain names***

[www.tactilegraphics.us](http://www.tactilegraphics.us)  
[www.playable-art.com](http://www.playable-art.com)  
[www.polyformpuzzles.com](http://www.polyformpuzzles.com)  
[www.thelifeofgames.com](http://www.thelifeofgames.com)  
[www.hexdominoes.com](http://www.hexdominoes.com)

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[www.gamepuzzles.us](http://www.gamepuzzles.us)