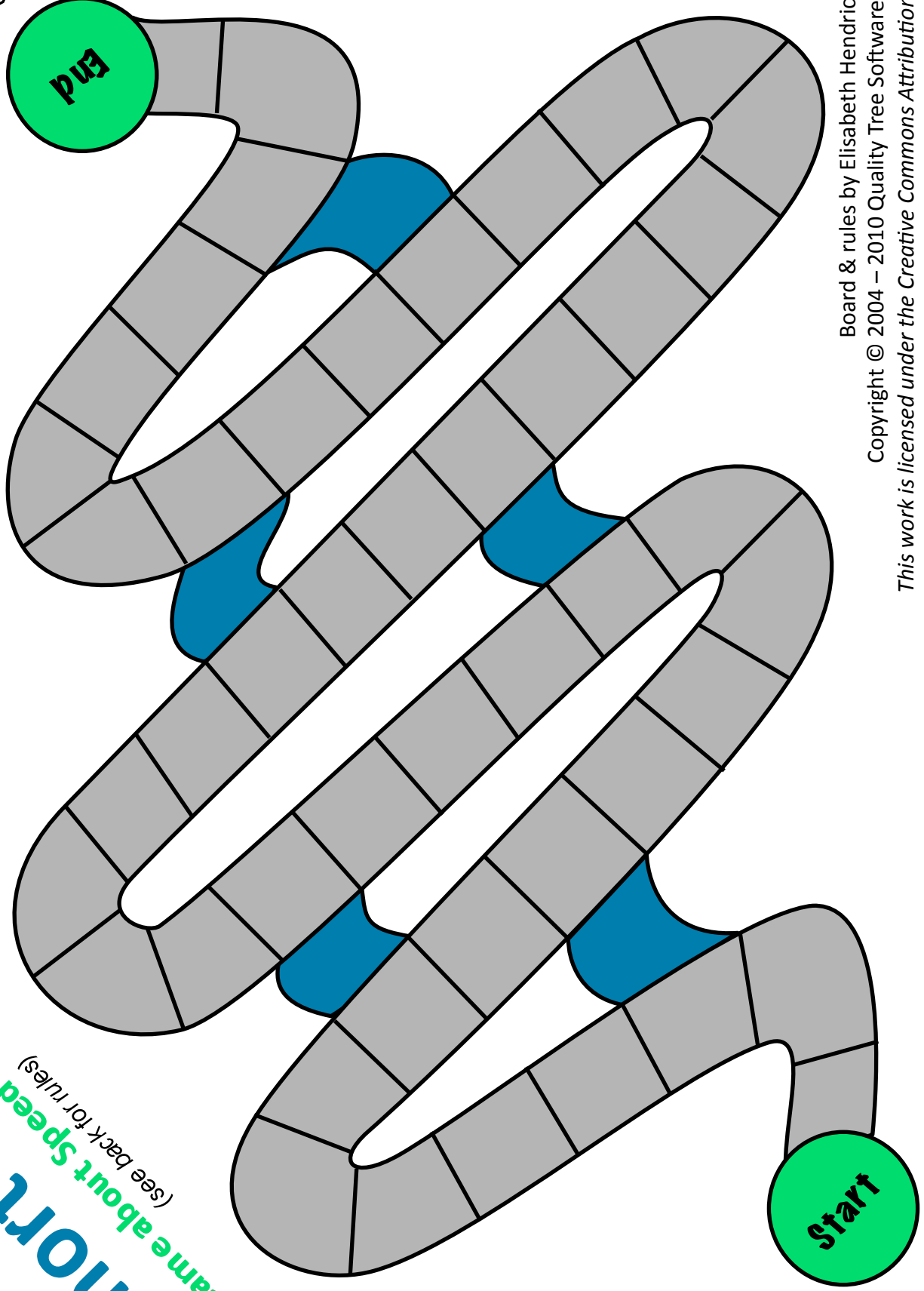


# Short Cut

a Game about Speed and Risk  
(see back for rules)



If you like this game, you'll love Agilistry Studio at Quality Tree Software, Inc. in Pleasanton, CA. See [www.agilistry.com](http://www.agilistry.com).



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# Short Cut

## A Game About Speed and Risk

**Materials:** The Short Cut game board, a six-sided die, chips as counters for “penalties,” and markers that players move around the game board.

### **Rules of play:**

The game is a race from the start to the end of the board.

1. All players place their markers on the “Start” circle. Players begin with 0 penalties.
2. Each player rolls the die to determine who goes first, highest roll wins. Play then proceeds clockwise.
3. On his turn, each player rolls the die to determine how many spaces to move:
  - a. The player moves his marker the number of spaces indicated on the die minus the number of penalties he has. For example, if the player rolls a 3 and has 2 penalties, he moves his marker 1 space. If the player rolls a 2 and has 3 penalties, the player cannot move.
  - b. A player may move his piece in any direction, even switching directions in mid-move.
  - c. If a marker touches on a gray space adjacent to a blue bridge space, the player may choose to take the “Short Cut.” If the player takes the short cut, he incurs a penalty and takes a penalty chip from the pile as a reminder.
4. Whoever reaches the “End” space first wins the game.

### **Variations:**

Consider these variations on the original rules:

- Once the game is over, all players start back at the beginning keeping all their penalties. (*What does that suggest about technical debt?*)
- Decide on a mechanism by which penalties can be paid back. For example, instead of taking their turn a player could announce, “Paying back a penalty.” The player then returns a penalty token instead of rolling the die. (*Are there times when it is worth it to incur technical debt and pay it down later?*)
- Change the goal from a competitive race between individuals to a collaborative team effort: the game isn’t over until all the markers make it to the end. To add the competitive element back in, compete against another team to see which team can finish fastest or with fewest die rolls. (*Consider ways in which players can collaborate in this game. What insights could that offer for collaboration in the real world?*)
- Imagine that the markers represent features instead of people. (*How does changing what the markers represent change the game for you?*)

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Rules & board by Elisabeth Hendrickson. This game was inspired by a game created by a team in a session on Exploratory Testing that Brian Marick and Elisabeth Hendrickson led at ADC 2004.

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