

# A Compilation of Game Rules for

# *the* DECKTET

Version 1.9

<http://www.fecundity.com/pmagnus/decktet/>  
<http://decktet.wikidot.com/>

Version 1.9 . Edited by Matthieu Weber, 2009–2015.

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# ALPHABETICAL LIST

- A** Ace Trump (9). Adaman (11). Ascend (13). Auction Chicken (17).
- B** Badger's Court (21). Beluga Cup (25). Bharg (27). Bharg Deluxe (29). Biscuit (31). Bisque (33). Blulu (35). Boojum (39).
- C** Caravan (43). Centrifuge (47). Chancellors (51). Chicane (55). Circle Search (59). Colour Bazaar (61). Corundum Conundrum (65). The Curious Case of the Disappeared Decktet card (67).
- D** Decktet-Uno (69). Double Knot (71). Dueling Runes (75).
- E** Election Day (81). Emu ranchers (85). Escape! (89).
- F** Fifes and Drums (93). Fifth Challenge (97). Fistellavates (101). Follow the Author (109). Forget Venice (113). The Four Courts (115). Frogger (119).
- G** Gasp! (121). Goblin Market (125). Gongor Whist (129).
- H** Head Solitaire (131). Hermit (133).
- I** If Badger was a Bunny (137). Ivory Tower (141).
- J** Jacynth (143). Jigger (147). Journalists (151).
- K** Kittyhawk (153).
- L** Libtis (155). Lith (159).
- M** Magnate (163). Moco! (169). Monster Day (171). Moonscrown (175). Moving Day (177). Muse (181). Myrmex (185).
- N** Natural Order (189). Nonesuch (195).
- O** Off-label (197). Oh Quay (201). Old Janx Spirit (203).
- P** Pauntel's Got Talent (205). Power Suit (207).
- Q** Quäsenbö (211). Quincunx (213).
- R** Ransom Trump (217). Revelation (219). Royal Python (223). Rumourmongers (227). Ruta (231).
- S** Saldo (235). Second Story (237). Shed (241). Siege Of Jacynth (247). Snakebit (251). Solo Hex (253). Sorcerous Futures (255). Stamp Albums (259). Suitcases (261). Sun Bid (263). Suzerain (269).
- T** Terrapin (273). Third Wheel (277). Thricewise (279). Tightwad (281). Tinker, Sailor, Soldier, Spy (283). Titles (287). Turtle Soup (289). Type Trump (291).
- V** Varg Bid (295).
- W** The Wall (297). Window (301). Wyvern Pass Not (303).
- Y** The Young Queen's Palimpsest (307).
- Z** Ziggurat Demolition Throwdown (309).

# LISTS BY CATEGORY

**2 Decktets Needed:** [Kittyhawk \(153\)](#).

**Area Control:** [The Four Courts \(115\)](#). [Jacynth \(143\)](#). [Libtis \(155\)](#).  
[Magnate \(163\)](#). [Rumourmongers \(227\)](#). [Siege Of Jacynth \(247\)](#). [The Young Queen's Palimpsest \(307\)](#).

**Auction:** [Boojum \(39\)](#). [Goblin Market \(125\)](#). [Sorcerous Futures \(255\)](#). [Sun Bid \(263\)](#). [Varg Bid \(295\)](#).

**Betting:** [Lith \(159\)](#). [Terrapin \(273\)](#).

**Bluffing:** [Fifes and Drums \(93\)](#). [Lith \(159\)](#). [Sorcerous Futures \(255\)](#).  
[Terrapin \(273\)](#).

**Card Drafting:** [Ruta \(231\)](#).

**Card Shedding:** [Caravan \(43\)](#).

**Climbing Games:** [Ascend \(13\)](#). [Caravan \(43\)](#). [Follow the Author \(109\)](#). [If Badger was a Bunny \(137\)](#). [Moonscrown \(175\)](#).

**Combat:** [Dueling Runes \(75\)](#). [Fifth Challenge \(97\)](#).

**Commodity Speculation:** [Colour Bazaar \(61\)](#). [Sorcerous Futures \(255\)](#).

**Cooperative:** [Escape! \(89\)](#).

**Deduction:** [Bisque \(33\)](#). [The Curious Case of the Disappeared Decktet card \(67\)](#).  
[Escape! \(89\)](#). [Jigger \(147\)](#).

**Dice:** [Chancellors \(51\)](#). [Fifth Challenge \(97\)](#). [Magnate \(163\)](#). [Off-label \(197\)](#).  
[Second Story \(237\)](#). [The Wall \(297\)](#).

**Drafting:** [Journalists \(151\)](#).

**Fishing:** [Blulu \(35\)](#).

**Hand Management:** [Rumourmongers \(227\)](#).

**Light Weight:** [Circle Search \(59\)](#). [Decktet-Uno \(69\)](#). [Fifth Challenge \(97\)](#).  
[Jigger \(147\)](#). [Moco! \(169\)](#). [Monster Day \(171\)](#). [Off-label \(197\)](#).  
[Quäsenbö \(211\)](#). [Second Story \(237\)](#). [Tightwad \(281\)](#). [The Young Queen's Palimpsest \(307\)](#).

**Network Building:** [Natural Order \(189\)](#). [Ruta \(231\)](#).

**Pattern Recognition:** [Thricewise \(279\)](#).

**Player Elimination:** [Moonscrown \(175\)](#).

**Press Your Luck:** [Gongor Whist \(129\)](#). [Off-label \(197\)](#). [Second Story \(237\)](#).  
[Terrapin \(273\)](#). [Turtle Soup \(289\)](#).

**Pyramids:** [Ziggurat Demolition Throwdown \(309\)](#).

**Racing:** [Frogger \(119\)](#).

**Resource Management:** [Chancellors \(51\)](#). [Dueling Runes \(75\)](#). [Election Day \(81\)](#). [Magnate \(163\)](#).

**Set Collection:** [Bharg \(27\)](#). [Bharg Deluxe \(29\)](#). [Boojum \(39\)](#). [Emu ranchers \(85\)](#). [Fistellavates \(101\)](#). [Forget Venice \(113\)](#). [The Four Courts \(115\)](#). [Gasp! \(121\)](#). [Head Solitaire \(131\)](#). [Kittyhawk \(153\)](#). [Myrmex \(185\)](#). [Old Janx Spirit \(203\)](#). [Rumourmongers \(227\)](#). [Shed \(241\)](#). [Sun Bid \(263\)](#). [Suzerain \(269\)](#).

**Simultaneous Action:** Chancellors (51). Fistellavates (101). The Four Courts (115). Muse (181). Thricewise (279).

**Suit Chips:** Beluga Cup (25). Boojum (39). Colour Bazaar (61). The Four Courts (115). Gasp! (121). Magnate (163). Moco! (169). Muse (181). Off-label (197). Pauntel's Got Talent (205). Ruta (231). Second Story (237). Shed (241). The Wall (297).

**Tableau Building:** Biscuit (31). Dueling Runes (75). Election Day (81). Jacynth (143). Journalists (151). Magnate (163). Quincunx (213). Siege Of Jacynth (247). Thricewise (279).

**Trick Bidding:** Chicane (55). Double Knot (71). Gongor Whist (129). Nonesuch (195). Third Wheel (277).

**Trick Taking:** Ace Trump (9). Bisque (33). Centrifuge (47). Chicane (55). Corundum Conundrum (65). Double Knot (71). Gasp! (121). Gongor Whist (129). Hermit (133). Nonesuch (195). Pauntel's Got Talent (205). Ransom Trump (217). Revelation (219). Shed (241). Snakebit (251). Suzerain (269). Third Wheel (277). Tightwad (281). Type Trump (291).

**Tug Of War:** Monster Day (171).

**Two Decktets Needed:** Boojum (39). Myrmex (185).

**Uno:** Decktet-Uno (69).

**Work In Progress:** Auction Chicken (17). Beluga Cup (25). Blulu (35). Boojum (39). Dueling Runes (75). Election Day (81). Escape! (89). Follow the Author (109). Journalists (151). Libtis (155). Lith (159). Moco! (169). Muse (181). Rumourmongers (227). Saldo (235). Sorcerous Futures (255). Sun Bid (263). Suzerain (269). Third Wheel (277). Tinker, Sailor, Soldier, Spy (283). Titles (287). Type Trump (291). The Young Queen's Palimpsest (307).

# LISTS BY NUMBER OF PLAYERS

**Solitaire / 1 Player Games:** Adaman (11). Dueling Runes (75). Gongor Whist (129). Head Solitaire (131). Ivory Tower (141). Jacynth (143). Kittyhawk (153). Myrmex (185). Quincunx (213). Solo Hex (253). Tinker, Sailor, Soldier, Spy (283). Window (301). Wyvern Pass Not (303).

**2 Player Games:** Ace Trump (9). Beluga Cup (25). Bharg (27). Bharg Deluxe (29). Biscuit (31). Blulu (35). Boojum (39). Caravan (43). Chancellors (51). Circle Search (59). Colour Bazaar (61). Decktet-Uno (69). Dueling Runes (75). Emu ranchers (85). Fifes and Drums (93). Fifth Challenge (97). Fistellavates (101). Follow the Author (109). Frogger (119). Gasp! (121). Hermit (133). If Badger was a Bunny (137). Jacynth (143). Journalists (151). Lith (159). Magnate (163). Moco! (169). Monster Day (171). Moonscrown (175). Natural Order (189). Oh Quay (201). Old Janx Spirit (203). Pauntel's Got Talent (205). Quäsenbö (211). Quincunx (213). Ransom Trump (217). Revelation (219). Ruta (231). Saldo (235). Second Story (237). Shed (241). Siege Of Jacynth (247). Stamp Albums (259). Suitcases (261). Sun Bid (263). Suzerain (269). Terrapin (273). Thricewise (279). The Wall (297). The Young Queen's Palimpsest (307). Ziggurat Demolition Throwdown (309).

**3 Player Games:** Ace Trump (9). Ascend (13). Bharg Deluxe (29). Biscuit (31). Bisque (33). Blulu (35). Boojum (39). Chancellors (51). Chicane (55). Colour Bazaar (61). The Curious Case of the Disappeared Decktet card (67). Decktet-Uno (69). Double Knot (71). Dueling Runes (75). Election Day (81). Escape! (89). Fifth Challenge (97). Forget Venice (113). The Four Courts (115). Frogger (119). Gasp! (121). Goblin Market (125). Hermit (133). Jacynth (143). Journalists (151). Libtis (155). Lith (159). Moco! (169). Moonscrown (175). Muse (181). Nonesuch (195). Quincunx (213). Ransom Trump (217). Revelation (219). Second Story (237). Shed (241). Sorcerous Futures (255). Sun Bid (263). Terrapin (273). Third Wheel (277). Thricewise (279). Tightwad (281). Type Trump (291). Varg Bid (295). The Young Queen's Palimpsest (307).

**4 Player Games:** Ace Trump (9). Ascend (13). Bharg Deluxe (29). Biscuit (31). Blulu (35). Boojum (39). Chancellors (51). Chicane (55). Corundum Conundrum (65). The Curious Case of the Disappeared Decktet card (67). Decktet-Uno (69). Double Knot (71). Dueling Runes (75). Election Day (81). Escape! (89). Fifth Challenge (97). The Four Courts (115). Frogger (119). Gasp! (121). Goblin Market (125). Hermit (133). Journalists (151). Libtis (155). Lith (159). Moco! (169). Moonscrown (175). Muse (181). Nonesuch (195). Quincunx (213). Ransom Trump (217). Revelation (219). Second Story (237). Shed (241). Sorcerous Futures (255). Sun Bid (263). Terrapin (273). Thricewise (279). Tightwad (281). Turtle Soup (289). Type Trump (291). Varg Bid (295). The Young Queen's Palimpsest (307).

**5 Player Games:** Ace Trump (9). Bharg Deluxe (29). Boojum (39). The Curious Case of the Disappeared Decktet card (67). Double Knot (71).

Election Day (81). Escape! (89). Frogger (119). Gasp! (121). Goblin Market (125). Hermit (133). Libtis (155). Lith (159). Moco! (169). Second Story (237). Shed (241). Sorcerous Futures (255). Terrapin (273). Thricewise (279). Tightwad (281). Turtle Soup (289). Varg Bid (295). The Young Queen's Palimpsest (307).

**6 Player Games:** Ace Trump (9). Bharg Deluxe (29). Boojum (39). The Curious Case of the Disappeared Decktet card (67). Lith (159). Terrapin (273). Tightwad (281). Turtle Soup (289).

**7 Player Games:** Lith (159). Terrapin (273). Tightwad (281).

**8 Player Games:** Lith (159).



# ACE TRUMP

*the first trick-taking game that was ever devised for the Decktet, for 2 to 6 players (best with 3 or 4 players), by P.D. Magnus*

This was one of the first two games created for the Decktet. I now consider Chicane to be the better trick-taking game.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

**Object of the game:** To take as many tricks as possible.

## SETUP

The deck is dealt out evenly to the players: With three players, each is dealt 12 cards. With four players, each is dealt 9 cards. With five players, each player is dealt 7 cards and the final card is set aside. With six players, each is dealt 6 cards.

Two players games are usually played with only part of the deck. Each player is dealt 9 cards and the remainder are set aside. The game could be played with the entire deck, but it would be awkward and not really worth the trouble.

There is no bidding. The player to the dealer's left may lead any card.

## GAMEPLAY

Clockwise around the table, each player plays a card that matches a suit with the card that was led; if a player has no cards of the suit led, he may play any card from his hand.

In order to follow suit, a card need only match one suit.

*Example:* If the Diplomat (8 of Moons and Suns) was led, then each subsequent player must play a card with a Moon or Sun on it if they can. They are not especially required to play a card with *both* a moon and sun, even if they have one.

If no trump was played, then the highest card that follows suit wins the trick. If any trumps are played, then the highest trump wins the trick. An Ace is below 2; a Crown is above 9.

The winner of the trick leads the next trick.

**Trump:** There is no trump suit until an Ace is played. The suit of that Ace is then trump for that trick and until another Ace is played.

Note that an Ace that decides trump does not automatically win the trick. If it follows suit, then it will definitely lose the trick to a higher trump.

**Ties:** In a game with three or more players, it is possible that two cards will be played that both follow suit and that are of the same rank. If two cards in a trick would tie for highest rank (and no trump was played) then look at the suits on the card that was led: One of the two symbols is higher up, closer to the card rank (number) than the other. The card that follows that suit is considered higher than the other for purposes of resolving the trick.

**Scoring:** Each trick is worth 1 point. Points accumulate across multiple hands and you can play until someone reaches an agreed upon score, until an agreed upon time has been reached, or for an agreed upon number of total hands.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in the Excuse, the Pawns, or both. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game, deal every player the same number of cards, and set the remainder aside without looking at it.

### Ace Trump

**The Excuse:** The Excuse may be played in any trick, even if the player who has it could play a card that would follow suit. However, the Excuse card never wins a trick.

**Pawns:** Pawns are a rank between 9s and Crowns. Ties between Pawns that both follow suit are resolved by order of play: The earlier one beats the later one.

## VARIANTS

There are several ways to change or add to the rules. In fact, Sticky Aces was originally the default.

**Sticky Aces:** In this variant, only the first Ace determines the trump suit. Subsequent Aces are simply the low card of their suit. This makes it a big advantage to go first, because it gives you the option of leading an Ace; that is guaranteed to lose the first trick, but determines the trump suit for the remainder of the hand.

**Early bird:** In this variant, ties are resolved by order of play. If two cards of the same rank are played on a trick, the earlier one beats the later one.

**Partners:** For an even number players. Players on opposite sides of the table are partners, and their scores are added together.

**Bidding:** After looking at their hands, players bid the number of tricks they think they can take, starting with the player on the dealer's left and going clockwise around the table. If you take fewer tricks than their bid, you score no points. If you make your bid, you score 5 points for each trick bid and 1 point for each overtrick.

**Tides of fortune:** In this variant for 2 to 4 players, each player is dealt only one card for the first hand. After that, the last card played in the last trick of the previous hand determines the number of cards dealt to each player in the following hand: 1 each if the last card was an Ace, between 2 and 9 if the last card was a number, or 9 if the last card was a crown. Other than the variable hand size, the usual rules apply.

**Fixed trump:** Although it wouldn't be Ace Trump anymore, you could play a similar trick taking game without a variable trump. Just decide on the trump suit before dealing.

# ADAMAN

*a solitaire game of conspiracy and manipulation by P.D. Magnus*

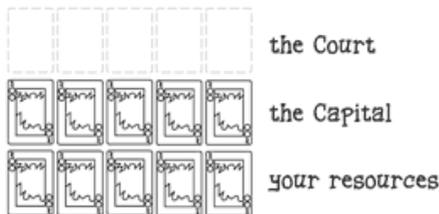
You are the heir to the throne, but the monarch might live a very long time. You intend to speed things along, but it will only work if the major personalities in the kingdom back your play. You need to buy, trick, or eliminate anyone who might stand in your way.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## OVERVIEW

In this game, personality cards represent different people in the kingdom who you need to control; personalities are the cards done up like face cards, with two close ups of a single figure. All of the other cards represent elements which you can use to control personalities.

## SETUP



Deal five cards in a row; these represent people and events occurring around the capital city.

Deal another five cards below the capital to represent resources you have at your disposal. If you turn up a personality when dealing your resources, put it in a row above the capital cards and deal another card to your resources.

Repeat if the next card is a personality,

and so on until you have five resources none of which are personality cards.

The row of cards above the capital represents people at the royal palace. You only place cards in the palace if you turn up a personality while dealing your resources, so there will typically be a few or even no cards in the palace. If you place a sixth card in the palace row, however, the game ends immediately. (See below.)

## GAME PLAY

You may exercise your resources to control a card in the capital or palace rows. In order to do so, discard one or more cards from your resource row. The cards must all share a suit with the card you are trying to control, and the total of their ranks must be at least the rank of the target card. It is legal to discard more resource cards than needed. Aces are treated as rank 1, Crowns as rank 10.

Note that the cards discarded from your resource row do not need to share a suit with each other, provided they share a suit with the card you are trying to control.

If you control a personality, move it to the discard pile. If you control a non-personality card, move it to your resource row; you may use it later to control something else.

After a play, deal cards so that the capital row has five cards. Then deal so that your resource row has five cards; put personalities in the palace row, as above. When the deck runs out, continue to play until one of the end game conditions is met.

## ENDING THE GAME

The game can end in three possible ways. One means victory, the other two mean defeat.

- You have moved all eleven of the personality cards to the discard pile. You have control of everyone who matters and can safely seize the throne. You win.
- You cannot make any further moves, but there are personality cards remaining in the deck, palace or capital rows. Without the backing of everyone, your plan must be abandoned. All that scheming for nothing! You lose.
- There are more than five personalities in the palace row. With so many people snooping about, someone's discovered your plot. You lose utterly. It's the gallows for you, old chum.

Note that you do not win the game if you merely eliminate all of the face up personalities. If there are personality cards remaining in the draw pile, then you should continue playing. You should play resources to control cards from the capital, bidding your time until the personalities turn up.

If you want to keep score, beyond just winning or losing: If you win, total up the ranks of the personality cards you control and the cards remaining in your resource row. (The ranks of the eleven personalities in the basic deck add up to 66, so it's 66 plus the ranks in your resource row.) If you lose, total up the ranks of just the personality cards you control. (With the basic deck, it will be less than 66 since you lost.) If lose utterly, you score zero.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

I only play the game with the basic deck. If you insist on including some of the extended deck cards, here is how they might work.

**The Excuse:** If the Excuse turns up in the capital row, you must select one card from your resource row and put it in the capital. If the Excuse turns up in your resource row, select one card from the capital and put it in your resources. In either case, discard the Excuse.

**Pawns and Courts:** These are treated as being of rank 10. Adding all of them makes the game easier. If you want to make the game harder, add one or more of the extra personalities to the deck but none of the other cards.

## VARIANTS

None yet.

# ASCEND

*a game for 3 to 4 players, by Daniël Muilwijk.*

You and your opponents try to be the first duck to reach the peak. During the ascent you will be set back by bombs falling from the sky. Therefore, it takes quite some personality to persist the ascent in order to be able to crown oneself as King of the Quackers and flush the opponents straight back to the swampy pond they came from.

**Extended Decktet:** Recommended (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## OVERVIEW

The game is played over multiple hands. Every hand you get dealt some cards. After each hand, you score points according to how quickly you got rid of your cards. Your points accumulate from hand to hand and once someone collects enough points he or she is declared the winner of the game.

## SETUP

The game uses the extended Decktet (including the Pawns, the Courts and the Excuse), although it is playable with only the basic Decktet.

## DEAL

Shuffle the deck and deal it out evenly to the players.

If you play a four player game with the extended Decktet one card remains and is put aside face down.

## EXCHANGE

After the cards have been dealt, the players pick up their cards and evaluate their hand. The players pick two cards they don't need and pass them face down to their neighbors; one to every neighbor. Once everyone has done this, the players simultaneously pick up the two cards which are passed to them and add those to their hands.

## GAME PLAY

The player on the dealer's left leads with a playable combination of cards. The opportunity to play proceeds clockwise and at each turn a player chooses to pass or to play. A player who has passed is not barred from playing if the chance comes round again.

After the lead, all plays in that round must be of the same kind of combination, contain the same number of cards, and be of equal or higher rank than the previous play. (Bombs are an exception and will be explained later.)

Play continues until a play is followed by passes from all other players, whereupon all the played cards are gathered up and put aside. Whoever played last starts again by leading any playable combination.

By this means, the players will eventually run out of cards. The first player to do so wins the hand, the second comes second, and so on. The hand is played until only one player has cards left.

If the player due to lead has no cards, the turn to lead passes to the right.

## PLAYABLE COMBINATIONS

There are four kinds of playable combinations:

- Single Card
- Set
- Straight Flush
- Bomb

### SINGLE CARD

A Single Card is exactly what you expect it to be; it's just a single card. Any card can be used for this purpose.

In ascending order, the rank of Single Cards is:

Excuse, Ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Pawn, Court, Crown.

When someone leads with a Single Card, all subsequently played cards must share a suit with this lead card and must be of equal or higher rank than the previous card played (the Excuse is an exception).

### SET

Two or more cards of the same rank are called a Set. Suits are irrelevant in Sets. Crowns can't be used as Sets.

The rank of a Set is represented by the rank of its members.

When someone leads with a Set, all subsequently played Sets must be of the same size as the Set lead and must be of equal or higher rank than the previous Set played. (Bombs are an exception.)

### STRAIGHT FLUSH

A Straight Flush is a sequence of three or more cards of consecutive rank, which all share the same suit. Pawns, Courts and Crowns can't be used as part of a Straight Flush.

In Straight Flushes, Aces play the role of 'suited wild cards'. This means an Ace can represent any number card – 2 to 9 – of its suit.

The rank of a Straight Flush is represented by the rank of the highest ranked card it contains. In the case an Ace is used as a wild card for the highest number in a Straight Flush, the number the Ace represents is considered as the rank of that Straight Flush. Of course, this can be as high as a 9.

When someone leads with a Straight Flush, all subsequently played Straight Flushes must be of the same length as the Straight Flush lead and must be of equal or higher rank than the previous Straight Flush played. (Again, Bombs are an exception.)

## BOMB

A Bomb is a combination of two or more personality cards, irrespective of their ranks or suits. Personality cards are the cards done up as face cards, with two close-ups of a single figure.

The rank of a Bomb is represented by the lowest ranked card it contains.

A Bomb can be played to follow either a Set, a Straight Flush, or another Bomb. A Bomb must contain the same number of cards as whatever combination it is following.

A Bomb may be beaten by another Bomb of equal size. A Bomb may also be beaten by a Set or a Straight Flush, if the Set or the Straight Flush is of equal or higher rank than the Bomb just played. Note that the rank of a Bomb only matters when a player wants to play a different combination upon that Bomb.

Sets and Straight Flushes can never be played in the same round, even if interrupted by a Bomb.

Bombs can also be used to lead.

Some combinations can be interpreted as both Sets and Bombs; those are Sets that exist of personality cards only. They should be interpreted as Bombs during gameplay.

## EXCUSE

The Excuse should be considered as a personality card and can thus be part of Bombs.

According to the order of rank depicted under 'Single Cards', the Excuse has the lowest possible rank in the game. This means that when the Excuse is part of a Bomb, the Bomb has a very low rank also.

The Excuse has a special use, and may be played as a single card Bomb to follow any played Single Card. The Excuse, when used as a single card Bomb, can be followed by a Single Card which shares a suit with the card led and must be of equal or higher rank than the Excuse, which is trivial.

When the Excuse is led it acts like a Single Card with no suit. Any Single Card can be played upon it and determines the suit or suits to be followed.

## SCORING

In each hand players get points as follows:

Place	3-Players	4-Players
1st out	9	7
2nd out	4	4
3rd out	0	2
4th out		0

# GAME

The game ends when someone reaches 50 points. You may increase or decrease this boundary though, depending on how long you want the game to be.

The player with the most points is declared the winner. In case of a tie play continues, until there is a unique winner.

# BIDDING

The bidding rules are optional and only advised if the players are already used to playing the game. Also, note that some experienced players even prefer just the basic game, so don't feel obliged to use them at all. It all depends on your tastes though.

Ascend

Directly after you've played a combination of cards, you may make a promise to be the first player who will go out of cards. The value of this promise is equal to the number of cards you have in your hand at the time you make the promise. Remember this value or write it down.

You may not make a promise if someone else has already promised earlier during the hand or if the Mountain (4 ) already has been played. For this purpose it is advised that when the player holding the Mountain plays it, he also mentions that fact to the other players.

If the player who made the promise indeed managed to go out first, he gets a number of points equal to the value of his promise.

If the player who made the promise breaks it because someone else went out first, the other players distribute the value of the promise evenly among themselves (rounding up if necessary) and add them to their score.

In addition to this special scoring from promising, regular scoring also applies. Both are added to form the total score of a player for that hand. In hands where no one made a promise, only regular scoring applies. When you play with these bidding rules, regular scoring is slightly different though. In each hand players get regular points as follows:

Place	3-Players	4-Players
1st out	8	6
2nd out	4	4
3rd out	0	2
4th out		0

With bidding, the game ends when someone reaches 75 points. You may increase or decrease this boundary though, depending on how long you want the game to be.

# AUCTION CHICKEN

*an auction and brinksmanship game that's alternately tense and mad-cap, by Kenny VenOsdel and P.D. Magmu.*

**Extra material:** suit chips

This is still a work in progress. To be honest, development has stalled out. It seems OK, but has problems. I'm not sure how to fix them or even if they can be fixed. Comments are welcome.

It's about timing. You need to know when to baulk.

Bawk? Like a chicken?

No. It's who baulks first. Who finches first.

Finches? They're smaller than chickens.

This is a brinksmanship and auction game played in two phases. During the first phase, you build a hand of cards. During the second phase, you play the cards from your hand to win cards for your score pile. At the end, the player with the most highly ranked cards in their score pile wins the game.

## SETUP

Shuffle the basic deck. With five players, set one card aside.

Each player starts with 12 tokens: 2 of each suit.

Players start with no cards in their hands.

Decide who will be start player and give them the Excuse. The Excuse serves as a start player marker, and it should always be kept face up on the table.

## PHASE ONE

Deal out one card per player, face up in the middle of the table. Arrange them in rank order, from low to high: as usual, the order is A,2,...,9,♣. If there are cards of matching ranks, the one dealt earlier goes before the one dealt later.

The player who has the Excuse puts it next to the lowest card and takes the first turn. He must has a choice to either (a) put one of his suit tokens on the lowest card in the line or (b) take the lowest card in the line and add it to his hand. The player on his left takes the next turn, choosing one of the two options.

The first player to take a card also takes the Excuse.

When you put a token on a card, it can be of any suit.

When you take a card, you are out of the round. Play continues with the remaining players until all of the cards have been taken. Everybody will have gotten one card in the round.

If you run out of tokens, you must take a card. When you take a card that has tokens on it, you add the tokens to your supply.

Once all of the cards have been taken, another group of cards is dealt out and arranged. If this exhausts the deck, then Phase Two starts. If not, then another round starts: the player with the Excuse puts it next to the lowest card and takes the first turn, and so on.

## PHASE TWO

The round begins with an *auction lot* of one card per player face up in the middle of the table. In the first round, these will be the last cards dealt out from the deck.

Each player selects a card from their hand to be their *bid* and puts it face down in front of them. Players then simultaneously reveal their bids.

The player with the highest ranked bid card takes the highest-ranked card from the auction lot and puts it face down in front of them to start their score pile. (The rule for resolving tied bids is given below.) Then the player with the second ranked bid takes the second ranked card from the auction lot. And so on, with everybody getting one card for their score pile.

A new auction lot is formed from the cards that were bid in the first round, launching another auction round. Each player selects one of the remaining cards from their hand to bid for that lot.

This continues until players have bid with all of their cards, when the game ends. The cards used to bid in the final auction round are discarded.

### Resolving tied bids

When two players play bid cards that are the same ranks, there is an auction with tokens to resolve it. Each player bids with suit tokens which they have from Phase One, but they may only use tokens of a suit on the card that they used to bid.

**Example:** Maire bids with 6♠♣, and Evan bids with 6♠♥. In the tie-breaker, Maire can use ♠ and ♣ tokens. Evan can use ♥ and ♣ tokens.

Players select their bids at the same time, either hiding them behind their hands or in their closed fists, and reveal their bids simultaneously.

If one of the players has bid more tokens than the other, then the player who bid more discards their tokens and decides how the tie is resolved.

If the closed-fist auction is also a tie, then start with the player on the righthand side of the player holding the Excuse and continue counter-clockwise until you come to a player who bid in the closed-fist auction. That player discards the tokens that they bid with, decides how the tie is resolved, and also takes the Excuse.

Discarded tokens are removed from the game.

### Resolving ties in the auction lot

If there are two cards of the same rank in the auction lot, the player who takes their card first may decide which one to take.

You may not decide to take a lower-ranked card instead of a higher-ranked one; you only get a choice when there is more than one card with the same highest rank in the auction lot when you take a card.

## SCORING

At the end of the game, tally up the value of the cards in your score pile. Tokens that you have at the end of the game may influence the value of Aces and Crowns, but are not in themselves worth points.

The player with the highest score wins. If there is a tie, the player with the most tokens wins. If that is a tie, too, then everybody wins.

Each Ace is worth the number of tokens of that suit which you have or the value of the highest-ranked number card of that suit in your score pile, whichever is *lower*.

Number-ranked cards are worth their rank.

Each Crown is worth the number of tokens of that suit which you have or the value of the highest-ranked number card of that suit in your score pile, whichever is *higher*.

**Example:** Maire has 6 ♠ tokens and A♠, 9♣, ♣♠ in her score pile. The Ace is worth 6 points, the nine is worth 9 points, and the ♣♠ is worth 9 points.

## THE STATUS OF THE GAME

I have now playtested this several times. People enjoyed themselves. Jeff said, “I thought it was fun”; Bryan said, “I love the game”; but there are still some glitches.

First, it does not really feel like a Decktet game. Using the Decktet makes for some needlessly awkward aspects, like the fact that many cards share ranks. The use of suit tokens is meant to make the suits do work, but it feels as ad hoc.

Second, Phase Two feels much wilder and harder to control than Phase One. So the game encourages agonizing strategy early on that probably doesn’t make a difference in the end.



# BADGER'S COURT

*a casino-like game for 2 players, by evanievan.*

Vie for control of the Badger's royal court, carefully orchestrating events to sway personalities to your side!

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Courts)

## START

Choose which player will deal first. Shuffle the cards. Deal one card face-down in front of the non-dealer, then one in front of the dealer, then one face-up in between (in the Court). Repeat until there are four cards in each hand and in the Court. Set the remaining cards aside near the dealer.

## PLAY

The non-dealer starts and play alternates.

On each turn *one* card is played from your hand into the Court area. Players alternate until they exhaust their four card hand, then the dealer passes out a new four card hand (the Court is *not* refilled). The round continues until the deck is exhausted, i.e. there will be four deals per round.

The goal is to capture cards by matching rank. Aces are one, ♠ are ten. Each player makes a face-down pile of his captured cards in front of himself.

**Matching:** The basic capture is a match—take a card from the court by laying its equal in rank from your hand on top. Take the pair and place in a face-down pile in front of you. A threesome, foursome, etc can also be made if there is more than one of the same rank in the Court.

*Example:* Your hand has a six and the Court has two sixes. You stack the two sixes in the Court, then play the six from your hand on top and place the stack in in your captured pile.

If you have more than one of the same rank in your hand and want to continue building the stack on your next turn, declare “building” and leave the stack in the Court. The other player could take the stack on his turn if he has the same rank.

*Example:* Your hand has two fours, and the Court has one four. You play one of your fours on top of the four in the Court and say “building.” The other player takes his turn. On your next turn, lay your second four on top of the others, take the stack and place it in your pile.

*Example:* Your hand has two aces and the Court has one ace. You play one of your aces on top of the ace in the Court and say “building.” The other player takes his turn—unfortunately he has an ace as well! He plays his ace on top of the two aces in the Court and places the stack in his captured pile.

**Adding:** Cards in the Court can also be added together to equal the value of a card in hand. Any number of cards can be included in the addition.

*Example:* The Court contains an ace, a two, and a five. You could stack those cards together and lay an eight from your hand to take the whole group.

**Building:** A player can place a card from his hand on top of a card(s) in the Court which adds up to the rank of another card in his hand. Once combined in a build the cards can not be separated. You must be able to take the number you build on your next turn. Any number of cards can be used to build and can be stacked with others of the same rank as well.

*Example:* You have an ace and a nine in your hand. The Court has an eight. You play the ace from your hand on top of the eight and declare “building nines.” You hope to take the built nine on the next turn. However, the other player can take it (if he has a nine in his hand) or build it into a different number following the same rules.

Once more than one of the same rank is placed on the build it can not be “added” into a different number.

*Example:* You have an ace and two fives in your hand. The Court has a four and a five. You put your ace on top of the four in the Court, then place the Court’s five on top and declare “building fives.” The other player takes his turn (he could take the pile of fives if he had one, but he can not convert it into a different number by adding since there is now two “fives” in the pile). You place one of your fives on top of the pile in the Court and declare “building fives” again. The other player takes his turn. You lay your last five on top, take the stack and place it in your captured pile.

If you can not/do not want to build or capture on your turn, you must still place a card from your hand face up into the Court.

## SCORING

On the final deal of the round, the player that takes the last stack takes all the remaining cards in the Court.

The players then count through their captured piles and score points for capturing the most of these cards:

most Crowns = 1 point

most Aces = 2 points

most Personalities = 3 points

There is no score on a tie.

Capturing all the cards in a category is worth double the points. Winning all three categories is worth one bonus point.

After scoring, switch dealers and start another round.

Play until at least one player passes 17 total points at the end of a round. The player with the highest total points wins—he has mastered the Court to become the next Emperor!

# THE EXTENDED DECK

Add the pawns and courts (this adds one deal to each round and three personalities). They have no numerical value, however Ace + ♠ = ♠♠, and Ace + ♠♠ = ♠♠♠.

## VARIANTS

Casino-like games have many possible variations.

**Alternate scoring:** To focus more tightly on capturing personalities, they are worth one point each.

**“Royal” Court** All cards have numerical value and can be added. Ace = 1, ♠ = 10, ♠♠ = 11, ♠♠♠ = 12.

**Alternate dealing** Rather than exhausting hands of four cards and re-dealing, players draw one card at the end of their turn. Thus they always have a hand of four until the deck is exhausted.

**Add the big and little Casino** Traditional casino awards points for capturing the big and little casino cards. The Origin (2♠♠) is worth one point. The End (♠♠♠) is worth two points.

**Very traditional (conventional casino with decktet quirks)** Ace = 1, but ♠, ♠♠, and ♠♠♠ have no numerical value and can only be taken by matching. Deal and play is the same as above.

Scoring:

1 for most total cards captured;

1 for most moons suit captured;

1 for each ace;

1 for The Origin;

2 for The End;

1 bonus point for sweeping all the possible points.

Play to 25 (traditional is 21, however decktet’s two extra aces add more possible points).



# BELUGA CUP

*a fish eating competition inspired by Baloon Cup, by Kenny VenOsdel*

You are a beluga whale competing in the annual “Belugas are Best” exotic fish eating competition. Your goal as a competitor is to eat the most fish of the different varieties. At the end of the competition points will be awarded to whoever can regurgitate the most fish of each type. Down with Narwhals!

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** Suit Chips

## SETUP

Place 7 fish (suit chips) for each suit into an opaque bag. Place the Pawns in a face down row of “zones” in the center of the table. Draw fish from the bag to fill each zone. From the dealer’s left the zones receive 1, 2, 3, and 4 fish. Shuffle the rest of the Decktet and deal 6 cards to each player. The remaining deck forms the draw pile.

## GAME PLAY

On a player’s turn they must, if able, play a card into a zone on either player’s side of the table. The fish in the zone dictate the suit demand for that zone. For example, on zone 3 if there are 2 green fish and 1 yellow fish present, player’s must place cards that contain either a , , or both. Each card played contributes all of its suits to the demand. When the number of suits played on a side match the demand, that side of the zone is full. Thus in the previous example when there are cards containing a total of 2  and 1  the zone is full. A player may not purposefully go above the suit demand unless the card being played also fulfills another demand.

*Example:* Zone 3 contains 2 green and 1 yellow fish. You have played 4  into a zone satisfying the demand for 1 green and 1 yellow fish. You may not play 6  since the yellow demand is met. You may play 8  despite the yellow demand being met as it also satisfies the final green demand.

Aces have one special ability. As a single turn you may play as many aces into a single zone as you want provided they all match the suit demand. At least one of the aces must have an unfulfilled demand.

*Example:* A zone has a yellow, blue, and green fish and you have already met the yellow and blue demand. You may play the yellow, blue, and green aces as a single play since the green was still needed.

If none of your cards match the demand you may show your hand and discard up to 3 cards. At the end of your turn always draw until you have 6 cards in your hand. If the draw pile is empty shuffle the discard pile. Players alternate turns this way until a zone is eaten.

## EATING A ZONE

When both sides of a zone have met the demand, the fish in that zone are eaten by the player with the largest sum of cards. Each card is only counted once. If this is a tie the player who placed the last card in that zone eats the fish. Place the fish in front of the player who ate them and draw new fish from the bag to replace them. Discard the cards on both sides of that zone. Play continues with the player who lost that zone. Thus, a player may take more than one turn in a row by first playing into a zone and losing it, this can be a good way to cycle bad cards out of your hand and get a jump start on a new zone.

## END OF GAME

When there are not enough fish left to fill a zone the game is over. The remaining fish in the zones are not scored.

## SCORING

Regurgitate the fish you have eaten into piles separated by color. For each color, the whale with more fish gains a point for each fish that their opponent has of the same color. The whale with the highest total of points wins the coveted Beluga Cup.

In case of a tie, whichever player ate the most fish wins.

*Note: Regurgitating the fish is not mandatory. You may simply place them into piles; though it is highly suggested you at least make regurgitation noises since it greatly adds to the theme of the game.*

## THE EXCUSE, AND THE COURTS

The Courts are played like any other card. Their value is equal to 4 times the number of matching fish. Thus each court can be worth either 4, 8, 12, or 16 points for matching 1–4 fish. Each of the suits of the Court can be used to fill a demand.

The Excuse can be played in two ways.

1. If a zone has not been played into by either player you may play The Excuse to adjust the fish available in the zone. Draw fish from the bag equal to the number of fish in the zone and combine them with the available fish. Return as many fish to the bag as you drew, these may be the original fish, the just drawn fish, or a combination. If there aren't enough fish left in the bag draw as many as you can.
2. On your turn you may play the Excuse to pick up a single card from your own zone into your hand. Your turn then ends as usual.

## VARIANTS

For slight variation you may choose to use the Pawns in the deck and the Courts as the zones.

For a longer game add more fish to the draw bag at the beginning of the game.

# BhARG

a set-making game for 2 players, by P.D. Magnus

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

**Object of the game:** To bind all the cards in your hand.

## SETUP:

Each player is dealt a hand of seven cards. The dealer then deals one card face up to start a discard pile. If the face up card is an ace, then that card starts the Ace Pile and the dealer continues to deal cards face up until there is a non-ace to start the discard pile.

As the game progresses, there will be two discard piles: one for aces, the other for number cards and crowns. The discard pile for aces is called the Ace Pile.

Bharg

## GAME PLAY:

On your turn, you may take the top card of the numbers-and-crowns discard pile or the top card of the deck. Then you discard a card.

A *bharg set* is a group of three or more cards that have one of each suit between them without duplication. A bharg set must have one and only one instance of each suit.

*Example:* A three card bharg set could consist of the 2♠, 4♣, and 5♥. A four card bharg set could be the A♠, ♠, 7♥, and 6♦. Three cards of the same rank (the three 6s, for example) will always form a bharg set. Sets will be larger than three cards only if they include aces or crowns, which provide one suit each.

A card is *bound* if it is part of a bharg set or has a suit symbol matching the top card of the Ace Pile. A bound card may be part of a bharg set *and also* match the top card of the Ace Pile.

If all seven of your cards are bound after you have discarded, then you win the round. Note that you cannot win *until* you have discarded. If you discard an ace, this may change which cards in your hand are bound and which are not.

A card may be counted as part of at most one bharg set.

## SCORING:

When you win, you score the value of any unbound cards in your opponent's hand: Aces are worth one, crowns are worth ten, and numbered cards are worth their rank.

With multiple rounds, play continues until one player reaches a target score. 50 is good.

## STRATEGY:

Three cards of the same rank (the three 6s, for example) will always form a set. Sets will be larger than three cards if they include aces or crowns, which only provide one suit each.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in some of the extended deck cards. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game. I tend to feel that adding both the Pawns and Courts is too much, so we typically play with either but not both.

**The Excuse:** The Excuse is a blank. It always counts as bound, but it does not help to bind other cards.

**Pawns:** Pawns contribute all three of their suits to a bharg set and can be bound by an Ace that matches any of those three suits. A player who goes out gets 10 points for an unbound Pawn in their opponent's hand.

**Courts:** Play as Pawns.

# BHARG DELUXE

*a set-making Decktet game for 2 or more players by P.D. Magnus*

## **Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns)

A double Decktet (two Decktets shuffled together) improves the game considerably, and is nearly required with more than two players. For six players, a triple Decktet may be used.

## OVERVIEW:

You bind sets or straights by playing the cards face up in front of you on your turn. The aim is to score points by binding as many cards as possible and having as few cards as possible left over when the hand ends.

There are two discard piles: The Ace Pile (the discard pile for aces) and the Discard Cue (the discard pile for number cards and crowns). The top card of the Ace Pile determines which straights may be bound. The Discard Cue is used as a draw pile, and players may draw as many cards as they want from the top of the stack. Cards in the Discard Cue should be set at a slight offset, so that players can see its entire contents.

## SETUP

Each player is dealt a hand of ten cards. The dealer then deals one card face up. If the face up card is an ace, then that card starts the Ace Pile and the dealer continues to turn cards until there is a non-ace to start the Discard Cue.

Play begins on the dealer's left.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you draw, bind sets (if possible), and discard.

**Draw:** You may take the top card of the deck or any number of cards from the top of the Discard Cue. You may not draw from both on a single turn.

If you draw from the Discard Cue, you may take as few as one card as many as all the cards in the stack. However, you cannot take a card from the Discard Cue without taking every card on top of it.

**Bind:** If you have sets, complete straights, or partial straights in your hand, you may bind them by placing the cards on the table in front of you. You may bind any number of cards, but you are not required to bind cards on your turn.

A *set* is a group of three or more cards that have one of each suit between them without duplication. A set must have one and only one instance of each suit.

A *complete straight* is three or more cards in rank order that share a suit symbol. In order to bind a straight, the suit of straight must match the top card of the Ace Pile. If another Ace is discarded later, a straight that was already bound remains bound. If the Ace pile has no cards in it, you may not yet bind any straights.

For the purpose of straight order, Aces are before 2s; Crowns are after 9s.

A *partial straight* is one or two cards that can combine with cards already on the table to form a complete straight. Cards that are bound in sets may be used

for this purpose, as can straights already bound. You may even use cards that were previously bound by other players. When you bind a partial straight, the partial straight goes in front of you; the cards you are using for the combination remain in front of the player who bound them.

All cards in a partial straight must match the suit of the top card of the Ace Pile.

You may not use just part of a bound straight to make a partial straight.

*Example:* There is a bound 4-5-6. You may play a 3 or 7 of the same suit as a partial straight. You may not play another 6 using the 4-5, however; they cannot be used apart from the entire sequence 4-5-6.

**Discard:** If you have any cards remaining, you must discard one. Aces are discarded in the Ace Pile. Any other card is added to the Discard Cue.

## END OF THE HAND

When a player has run out of cards, either by binding their last card or by discarding their last card, the hand is over.

If a player runs out of cards on their first turn, before every player has gotten a turn, remaining players may bind any set or straights in their hand. After the first turn, you're stuck with whatever is in your hand.

**Scoring:** You earn points for bound cards, and lose points for any unbound cards remaining in your hand at the end. Aces and Crowns are worth 1 point each; number cards are worth 2 points each regardless of rank. It is possible to have a negative score for the hand, if you have fewer bound points than unbound points.

With multiple rounds, play continues until one player reaches a target score. 50 is good for a short game; 100 for a longer game.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add the Pawns. The Excuse does not have a use in Bharg Deluxe.

**Pawns:** Pawns contribute all three of their suits to a set. If Pawns are in play, they are between 9s and Crowns for the purpose of straights; 8-9-Crown is not a straight without the intervening Pawn. Pawns are worth 3 points each at the end of the hand.

# BISCUIT

*a tableau building game for 2 to 4 players, by David L. Van Slyke*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Object of the game:** Score points by placing cards to make straights and pairs and by being the first player to play the last card in their hand.

## SETUP

Deal each player six cards. Deal one card face down in the middle of the table and another card face up crossways on top of it. The remaining cards form the draw pile.

The player to the left of the dealer takes the first turn.

## GAME PLAY

The first player places a card to the left or right of the initial card. Subsequent players may place cards on the left or right side of this *main line*. Later in the game, there may be *cross lines* that allow cards to be played up or down.

On your turn, choose one card from your hand and place it to extend one of the lines of cards. The card you play must match at least one suit with the card adjacent to it in line.

If you do not have a card that can be legally played, then you must draw a card. You may play it immediately if possible. Then it is the next players' turn.

If there are no cards left in the draw pile when a player is supposed to draw, the player does not draw and play continues.

**Cross lines:** If you play a card in the main line that is the same rank as the initial face up card, then you open a cross line. Subsequent cards may be played up or down from the cross card. The main line may still be continued to the left or right of the cross card.

Note that the initial face up card is not a cross card. Cards played in cross lines (up or down from cross cards) cannot start cross lines.

**Straights:** If the card you played forms a continuous run of cards in rank order, then you score the length of the run. Aces are before 2s, Crowns are after 9s, and straights do not wrap around.

*Example:* If the initial card is a 5 and you play a 6 next to it, then you score two points. If the next player plays a 7 next to the 6, then they score three points.

It does not matter if the straight goes left-to-right, right-to-left, or (on cross lines) up-down, but all the cards must be in the same line.

**Elevensies:** If the card you play and the card at the opposite end of the line add to 11, then every opponent must draw a card. (In a four-player game without partners, only your opponent with the fewest cards in hand must draw.)

**Biscuits:** If the card you played in the main left-to-right line and matches the card at the other end of the main line, it's called a *hot biscuit* and is worth 2 points.

If the card you played is on an up-to-down cross line and matches the card at the other end of that cross line, it's called a *hot cross biscuit* and is worth 4 points.

If the card you played matches the end of another line, then it's a *biscuit* worth 1 point.

It is possible to score multiple biscuits in a single turn.

*Example:* You play a Crown at the top of a cross line that already has a Crown at the bottom of it; there is also a Crown at one end of the main line. This scores 5 (=4 for the hot cross biscuit + 1 for the biscuit).

## GOING OUT

The hand ends when a player has no cards remaining in their hand.

If you play the last card in your hand, then you score 5 points, plus a bonus for the cards remaining in your opponents' hands: 1 for each Ace or Crown, 2 for each number card.

If the draw pile is exhausted and no player is able to make any further plays, then the game is *stale*. The hand ends. There is no penalty for cards left in your hand if this happens.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in the Excuse, Pawns, or Courts. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game.

**The Excuse:** May be played in any line, regardless of suit. Any card may be played next to it. Playing the Excuse card does not score any points, and it may not be included in a straight.

**Pawns:** For the purpose of elevensies, Pawns may count either 1 or 10. This means that a Pawn can make elevensies with an Ace at the other end of the line, with a Crown, or with another Pawn. For the purpose of straights, Pawns are between 9s and Crowns. When a player goes out, they score a bonus of 3 for each Pawn remaining in opponents' hands.

**Courts:** If you play with both Pawns and Courts, then Pawns do not use the rules for Pawns above. Instead, a Pawn and a Court together make elevensies; neither makes elevensies with any other rank. For straights, the order of cards is 9-Pawn-Court-Crown.

## VARIANTS

**Partner Biscuit:** A four-player game is best with partners who combine their scores. Use the rules for standard Biscuit with the following differences: An elevensies play makes both your two opponents draw, but not your partner. When a player goes out, any cards remaining in their partner's hand are a penalty rather than a bonus.

# BISQUE

*a trick-taking game for 3 players, by Daniël Muilwijk.*

Three chefs in one kitchen, that can't be good. They all want to make soup, even though there's only one kettle available. Stubborn as they are they all start to work on the same soup. To make things worse, all chefs have a very personal taste. During the process each chef tries to squeeze in as much of their own preferences as they possibly can. After the soup is done, the personal taste of each chef is revealed and it is evaluated which chef has managed to add his own flair and ingredients the most.

**Extended Decktet:** No

## OVERVIEW

In Bisque every player secretly selects a goal card from his hand to declare which suits he wants to end up in the soup pot. With the rest of the cards tricks are played and the winner of each tricks decides which card will end up in the soup pot. After all the tricks the suits in the soup pot are scored. The goal cards are revealed and the winner of the round is declared.

## SETUP

The game uses the basic Decktet only. If you have an extended Decktet, remove the ♠'s, the ♠'s and the Excuse.

## DEAL

Shuffle the deck and deal it out evenly to the players. Every player should have twelve cards. There should be no remaining cards.

## GOAL CARDS

Every player picks a double suited card from his hand (no Ace or ♣) and puts it in front of him, face down. These are called goal cards. The suits on a goal card determines which cards a player wants to end up in the score pile; these are called goal suits.

In the extremely rare case a player is only holding single suited cards, a redeal takes place.

## BANK

The rank of the cards is as usual: Ace 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ♣.

## GAME PLAY

The player on the dealer's left leads to the first trick. Clockwise around the table, each player plays a card to the trick. You don't have to follow suit, you're allowed to play any card in your hand.

The highest ranked card played to the trick wins the trick. When two equally ranked cards are played to a trick, the first played is higher than the second.

The winner of the trick picks one of the two cards the other players played to the trick. The picked card is put aside, face up, to form the soup pot. Take in mind that this soup pot is not owned by any player, it is a communal soup pot instead. The other cards played to the trick, including the winning card, are discarded and thus put aside face down.

The winner of a trick leads to the next. After each trick a card is added to the soup pot. All the cards in the soup pot should be visible for all players at all times.

Play continues until players have no cards remaining.

## SCORING

Every player reveals their goal card. The goal card depicts two suits and for each of them a score is calculated.

For every matching Ace in the soup pot 5 points is added to the score of that suit, for a matching number card as many points are added as is depicted on the card and for a matching Crown 10 points are added.

Every player compares the scores of both their goal suits. The lower score is the score for that player in that round.

## GAME

It is advised to play six hands. Points are accumulated. The player with the highest score wins the game. If multiple people have the highest score, there are multiple winners.

# BLULU

*an arithmetically paired fishing game for 2 to 4 players, by Justus Pang.*

The jackrabbits of the eastern deserts are regarded as a pest and a delicacy. Lesser known is that between eating (and being eaten) they while away their time with a simple fishing game.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Courts)

**Extra material:** Scorekeeping aid (paper and pencil)

## INTRODUCTION

As a fishing game, the goal of the game is to capture cards. Each player will play two cards every turn, capturing cards using either the sum or difference of the played cards. The players that captures the most cards scores points for the round. The first player to reach twenty-two points wins the game and is granted the privilege to be the first bunny out for dinner.

## SETUP

Shuffle the basic deck and deal four cards to each player and four face up to the table. After the initial deal, no further cards will be dealt to the table, but there will be three additional deals during the round (emptying the deck). The same player will be the dealer during the entire round, and the dealer switches each round.

Only the two player version has been playtested, so the two player game is the basis of these rules.

## GAMEPLAY

A player will play two cards on each turn.

If the sum *or* the difference between the played cards equal the rank of a card on the table, the player captures the card on the table along the pair just played. If there are several cards of that rank on the table, then all cards are captured, a player may not leave any on the table. A player is restricted to capturing only *one* rank per turn, even if a play could capture two ranks. (7 and 3 captures 4 *or* Crown but not both).

If the cards played are a pair (of the same rank) they will capture all the cards of the rank just played. (7 and 7 would capture a 7).

If a player cannot make a capturing play, then he or she must place two cards on the table.

When both players are out of cards (after two plays each) the dealer then deals out four more cards to each player. At the end of the game, the last player to capture cards takes the remaining cards on the table.

# BONUSES

There are two possible bonuses during gameplay.

**Flush:** each of the cards (played and captured) share a same suit. The capturing player scores 2 points. (e.g., 7♠♠ - 3♠♠ = 4♠♠)

**Sextet:** the group of cards (played and captured) show one of each suit between them without duplication. A sextet must have exactly one instance of each suit. The capturing player scores 4 points. (e.g., 4♠♠♠ + 5♣♣♣ = 9♠♠♠, or any triplet of the 2 through 9 rank cards)

Some warrens will exchange captured cards to keep track of bonus points (i.e., if you score a flush, the opponent will place two of her captured cards in your capture pile), thus the bonus points are not “scored” until the end of a round. Some warrens do not exchange cards but keep a running tally, thus scoring bonus points immediately and ending the game as soon as a player reaches 22 points.

Blulu

## SCORING THE BOUND / WINNING

At the end of a round, each player will count their captured cards. The player with more than 18 cards (half the deck) will score a point for each card in excess (20 cards would score 2 points).

As noted in the introduction, the first player to reach 22 points is the winner. If both players reach 22 points, then whoever has more points is the winner. If both players are tied, play additional rounds until the tie is broken.

## VARIANTS

There are several variants that were tested. The most promising one is to deal out six cards to each player per deal (none to the table). It may actually be a better game, but after designing and playing it with the four cards, it felt a little strange to me. It may be in part because I have a numerological fondness for the current game with 2 pairs dealt, 2 plays per round, 4 deals per round, 22 points per game. However, one could easily construct a cohesive numerical system with 3 pairs, 3 plays per round, 3 deals per round, 18 card goal, and 18 or 36 point games. As such, I would not hesitate to switch numerological allegiances, if this variant is clearly the better game after further playtesting.

A streamlined version (my original idea for the game) is to calculate only the difference between the cards. I think it works but is a little too constricted.

A more complex version would be to allow a pair of cards to capture *both* the sum and the difference of the two cards. However, I think it adds a little unneeded complexity to the calculations and detracts from the suit bonuses.

## EXTENDED DECK (UNTESTED)

There is no place for the excuse, but there could be uses for the Pawns and Courts. Both the Pawns and Courts are worth 0 points in summing cards. In all cases, scoring at the end of the round is based off of the deck size divided by the number of players.

A 3-player game could add either the Pawns or Courts making a 40 card deck. Deal four cards to each player and four to the table. There will be three deals in a round. One could just use a standard deck and start with no cards dealt to the table.

A 4-player game could also be played using the standard deck with two deals per round (four cards to the table during the initial deal) but I suspect each round would be a little short and unsatisfying. Maybe this will work better with a double deck.

In a 2-player game, add both Pawns and Courts to the deck for a deck of 44 cards. Deal and play as in the main rules, but there will be an additional round.

Many domesticated warrens are rumored to play a variant called Brulu, using a 40 card deck including pawns. There are no cards dealt to the table during the initial deal and they play to 41 points. Many aficionados consider this the purest way to play.



# BooJUM

*a sort of deck building auction game with set collection tendencies and a hard to define attitude for 2 to 6 players (but better with 4 or 5 players), by Richard Morris.*

Or something like that. Whatever it is, you can be sure you will be pretty snarked if you lose.

**Extended Decktet:** Recommended (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** Boojum requires two Decktets (and with even more Decktets, even more players could join in), and enough suit tokens to allow each player to gain one of each. 42 would be a particularly good number. If the players' memory is suspect, a bar of soap, or an equivalent object, may be used to track who is to bid first in the next auction. Extended Decktets can be used.

BooJum

## INTRODUCTION

You bid on groups of cards to gather the necessary combinations of cards to make different types of sets. So far, so good. However, in the absence of thimbles, care, forks and hope (not to mention butchers, bakers and beavers), all you have to bid with is the cards already in your hand, which you then lose, of course. But they can return back home to you – the cards that won the auctions in one round are topped up and become the subject of the auctions in the next round. Completed sets can be cashed in for suit tokens, and the aim is to complete a collection of one of each of the six suit tokens. The winner can then frabjously galumph off into the middle distance whilst the losers softly and suddenly vanish away.

## SETUP

Shuffle the Decktets together, and deal 5 cards to each player. Each round there will be one fewer auction than there are players, so create space for that number of auction slots. Deal two cards into each auction slots. Agree an auction slot ordering (typically left to right) as the groups of cards will be auctioned in turn. The player to the left of the dealer is the 'first to bid'. Put the remaining cards into a draw stack with space for a discard pile next to it. Cards from set claims are put in the discard pile, and this should be shuffled to form a new draw stack when the draw stack is exhausted.

## GAME PLAY

The game is played in rounds, with each round consisting of auction, build and claim phases, in a, b, c order.

### The auction phase

Turn the cards in all the auction slots face up, so players can make judgements on whether to bid on early slots or wait for later ones. Starting with the 'first to bid' player, players may bid for the group of cards in the first auction slot. When that

auction has been completed, the player to the left of the winner of that auction becomes the ‘first to bid’ (if no one won the auction, the ‘first to bid’ player does not change), and the next auction slot is auctioned off. This continues until all the auction slots have been auctioned off.

Bidding is in play order, and on their turn players may either make a bid that is higher than the current bid (if any) or pass. Once they have passed they may not rejoin the bidding for that auction slot, but may bid for subsequent auction slots.

Players bid with cards from their hand, placing them face up in front of them for all to see. Once placed a card cannot be picked up again until the auction for that slot is over. The value of your bid is a combination of the number of cards and the pip count (Aces count 1, number cards count their rank, and Crowns count 10). The number of cards is the dominant factor in the bidding: a bid with more cards always beats a bid with fewer cards, whatever the pip count. Thus, for example, a bid of two Aces will beat a bid of one Crown. However, for bids with the same number of cards, the higher pip count wins. By convention, you should announce your bid by calling out the number of cards and total pip count, e.g. “two for fourteen” if you bid a 6 and an 8. If your bid has been beaten, you may bid again when your turn comes around by adding one or more cards from your hand to your bid. Bidding continues until all players pass.

If all players passed on an auction slot, the cards should be returned to the same auction slot face down, ready for the next round. If a player won the auction, he should take the cards that were auctioned and place them face down in front of him. He may not look at the cards again during the auction round, and may not use those cards for bidding (but he may bid on subsequent auction slots using cards from his hand). He should take the cards from his successful bid, and place them face down in the auction slot, ready for the next round. All unsuccessful bidders should pick up the cards they bid and return them to their hands.

## The build phase

Deal one card onto each auction slot from the draw stack. Also deal a card face down to each player who failed to win any auctions in the auction phase. All players should pick up the face down card(s) in front of them (from winning auctions or just dealt to them) and place them in their hands.

## The claim phase

Players may claim suit tokens for completed sets of cards. If they do, the cards in the set should be placed in the discard pile. The player also receives a card from the draw stack for each set they claim, which they place in their hands, and may even use immediately for another claim. There is no sequence to claiming sets – players can claim in any order. When all players have finished making claims, the next round starts with the auction phase.

Different suit tokens require different types of sets, as follows:

### Moons Token:

A 6-card straight (cards of consecutive rank with at least one suit in common).  
**or** 4 Aces of any Suit and 4 Crowns of any Suit  
**or** A 6-card set (cards all of the same rank)

**Suns Token:** ☀

A 5-card straight

or A 5-card set

or An 8-card flush (Cards of any rank, including duplicates, with at least one suit in common)

**Waves Token:** 🌊

A 4-card straight

or A 4-card set

or A 7-card flush

**Leaves Token:** 🍃

A group of any number of cards of any rank that between them have exactly twelve suit symbols, two of each type 🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊

or Any 6 location cards

or Any 6 people cards

or Any 6 event cards

**Wyrms Token:** 🐉

3 location cards of the same suit

or 3 people cards of the same suit

or 3 event cards of the same suit

or 3 location cards of consecutive rank

or 3 people cards of consecutive rank

or 3 event cards of consecutive rank

**Knots Token:** 🎣

A group of any number of cards of any rank that between them have exactly six suit symbols, one of each type 🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊🌊

or A 5-card run (cards of consecutive rank of any suit)

or A 5-card flush

Note that for straights and runs, the cards do not 'wrap around'. Thus ♠A234 is NOT a 5-straight or 5-run.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

You are encouraged to use extended deck cards. If the Excuse is used, it acts as a joker in any set – essentially it acts as a single card of any named rank/suit/interpretive type (location/people/event) and fills any gap (including those that may not actually exist, such as a rank 3 location or a rank 7 person). If the Excuse is used in auction bidding, it counts as two cards but zero pips.

If Pawns or Pawns and Courts are used, they fit in their normal sequence for runs and straights:

A23456789♠♣♠♣

For auction bidding pip counts they count 10 for Pawns and 11 for Courts, with Crown moving up to 11 or 12 as necessary.

## WINNING THE GAME

The game ends when a player completes his collection of all six suit tokens. The other players should be allowed to finish all their claims. If two or more people

complete their suit token collection in the same round, then the tiebreaker is to consider the unused cards in their hands as if they were an auction bid, with the highest (number of cards, then pip count) winning. If two or more are equal, they are joint winners.

## VARIANTS

None as yet.

# CARAVAN

*a Decktet game for two players by P.D. Magnus*

You and your opponent lead rival caravans across the vast eastern desert, carrying goods between *Jacynth* and *the Valley*. Between the sand and the bandits, you just want to be done with it.

**Extended Decktet:** No

## OVERVIEW

The goal of the game is to score points, which you can do by collecting cards during the hand and by being the first player to lay down your last cards.

Each hand is played as a series of *trade seasons*, and the score is tallied up at the end of each hand.

## SETUP

Separate the *Aces* and *Crowns* from the basic deck, shuffle them separately, and deal four to each player. Then deal two of them face up at the edge of the play area. This will leave two cards; set them aside without looking at them. (If the two face up cards have the same suit, set aside the second one and flip over one of the two remaining cards.)

Shuffle the remainder of the basic deck and deal eleven cards to each player. This will leave two cards; set them aside without looking at them. (The point of having cards left over is to introduce some uncertainty. You won't know just by looking at your hand what cards your opponent must have.)

The two Aces or Crowns flipped up indicate which trade goods will be profitable or costly during the hand. If the card is an *Ace*, then players will lose points for collecting cards of that suit. If the card is a *Crown*, then players will gain points for collecting cards of that suit. If both cards are Aces, then there is no possible upside to collecting cards; only penalties. If both are Crowns, then there is no possible loss.

Randomly decide who will begin the first trade season of the first hand. In subsequent hands, the player with the lower cumulative score plays first.

## GAME PLAY

At the beginning of each trade season, a player plays a collection of cards from their hand called a '*caravan*'. The opposing player must then play a higher combination of cards or pass. (The higher combination may either be a higher caravan or a different configuration of cards called a '*bandit*'.) If the opposing player does not pass, then the original player must play a higher combination of cards or pass. And so on, with each player laying down cards that beat the previous cards until one of them passes – once one player passes, the trade season ends.

**Caravans:** A *caravan* is a collection of sequential number cards. Each card in the sequence must share a suit symbol with each adjacent card.

*Aces* and *Crowns* may be used in place of any number-ranked card to make a caravan, but their suit does not change.

Wild cards can only substitute for a number rank; they can't be rank *1* or *10*.

A caravan may consist of just one number card, and a caravan must include at least one number card; it can't be made entirely out of *Aces* and *Crowns*.

A caravan can be beaten by another caravan of the same length with a higher numbered card.

*Example:* Morgan begins the season by playing a *3-4-5*. His opponent may play a *4-5-6* caravan, *5-6-7*, etc. – but not a *2-3-4* (too low) nor a *4-5-6-7* (different length).

**Bandits:** A bandit is either a single Ace, a single Crown, or an Ace and a Crown together. Any bandit beats any caravan, regardless of the caravan's length or rank; bandits themselves are ordered in this way:

A *single Ace* is the lowest bandit.

A *single Crown* beats a single Ace.

An *Ace and Crown of different suits* beat a single Crown.

An *Ace and the Crown of the same suit* beat everything else.

*Example:* His opponent answers Morgan's *3-4-5* caravan with a *Crown* bandit. Morgan must either play an *Ace-Crown* bandit or pass.

**Ending the season:** When one of the players passes, the trade season ends.

If the last cards to be played were a caravan, then the player who played the caravan collects all of the cards from the season. Collected cards count for scoring at the end of the hand. They do not become part of the player's hand.

If the last card or cards to be played were a bandit, then the opponent of the player who played the bandit collects all of the cards from the season. Again, the collected cards count for scoring and do not become part of the player's hand.

If both players have cards remaining in their hands, a new season begins. The player who made the last play in the previous season (the one who did not pass) plays first in the new season.

## SCORING

When you play the last cards from your hand, your opponent may finish the season by making one play if they have cards to do so. You then score five points, plus one point per card remaining in your opponent's hand. Those remaining cards are set aside; they don't count as having been collected by either player.

Both players then score points for cards they collected. For each *Crown* that was turned up at the beginning of the hand, players score one point for each card they collected during the hand that shares a suit with the Crown. For each *Ace* that was turned up, players lose one point for each card they collected during the hand that shares a suit with the Ace. A card that shares suits with both up cards may be worth two points (if both up cards are Crowns), negative two (if both are Aces), or zero (if the up cards are a Crown and an Ace).

Add each player's score to their score from previous hands. We find that five hands makes for a comfortable game, but you may increase or decrease this depending on how long you want the game to be.



# CENTRIFUGE

*a trick-taking Decktet game for 2–6 players by Nathan Morse*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** Scorekeeping aid (paper and pencil)

## SETUP

*(With two players, see two-player rules; with an even number of players, consider the partnership rules)*

Crown = 10. Aces are not in play.

Each player can score a maximum of 9 points per hand.

To start a hand:

- Shuffle all the aces, then deal each player an ace face-down, which will indicate the player's target suit. Put the leftover aces aside, unseen.
- Shuffle all the rest of the cards, then deal an equal number of cards to each player. (Any leftovers are set aside, unseen.)

## GOAL:

Take as many cards as you can with your target suit on them. Each card is a point. Typically, you play to a target number of points, which, when met or exceeded, ends the game, and the game goes to the person with the single highest score. In a tie, keep playing additional hands until someone – not necessarily one of the tied players – wins.

## PLAY

Player left of the dealer leads, and play goes clockwise. Subsequent players must follow one of the 1-2 led suits.

### If 2–9 is led:

- Cards played in the higher suit (the one closer to the number on the card) are positive; cards played in the lower suit are negative. A card played in both suits counts as both, and is thus worth 0. This means that the lead card is always worth 0, if it's a 2–9.
- Off-suit cards (i.e. they don't match either suit) are worthless, as well.

### If crown is led:

- The crown's suit is the super-positive suit. This means any card with this suit is exclusively positive.
- Every other suit is negative. This means that any card without the led suit is negative.

## Evaluating the trick:

- If the total for the cards is positive, then the highest card - even if it's an off-suit card - wins the trick. A tie is broken like this:
  1. A card with the positive suit wins. If there isn't one, then...
  2. A card with the negative suit wins. If there isn't one, then...
  3. The trick is a bust: No one wins it. Discard the trick's cards.
- If the total for the cards is negative, then the lowest card - even if it's an off-suit card - wins the trick. A tie is broken like this:
  1. A card with the negative suit wins. If there isn't one, then...
  2. A card with the positive suit wins. If there isn't one, then...
  3. The trick is a bust: No one wins it. Discard the trick's cards.

Whoever wins the trick takes the cards from the trick, and keeps them face-down, on top of, but perpendicular to her ace. This person leads the next trick. In the event of a bust, the player who played the last card leads the trick.

**Evaluating the hand:** Each player reveals her target suit (her ace), then counts up the number of cards she took bearing that suit. Each matching card taken counts as a point. After recording everyone's scores, start a new hand, unless someone has met your predetermined target score, of course.

## PARTNERSHIP RULES

With an even number of players, you can play Centrifuge in pairs. One player in the pair will be positive; the other, negative. The positive player's points count as positive, so this player - like usual - wants to take as many cards in her target suit as she can. The negative player's points count as negative, though, so this player wants to avoid taking cards in his target suit.

**Setup:** The players sitting opposite one another constitute a team. One of the players on the team flips a coin. If it's heads, that player is the positive player on the team; tails, that player is the negative player. The polarity switches after each hand: The positive player becomes the negative player for the team, and vice versa.

**Cancellation variant:** With a proper lack of table talk, this can be a chaotic and surprising way to play in partnerships. Once the hand is finished, teams combine the cards they've taken, and then the players reveal their target suits like usual. The team's cards that bear the both the positive and negative suit for the team are canceled, and count for neither positive nor negative points. All other cards are evaluated as usual.

## TWO-PLAYER RULES

You are playing a four-player partnership game, except that each player plays both roles of her own team. You may never look at more than one hand at a time. Your right hand is always positive. Your left hand is always negative. The play order is still "clockwise", assuming the players' hands are seated as follows:

P1L (-)   P2R (+)  
P2L (-)   P1R (+)

**Playing for Both Teams variant:** The rules are the same as the normal two-player rules, except that your right hand (dexter) is your team's positive player, and your left hand (sinister) is your opponent's negative player. Now you want to win every trick you can with either hand!



# Chancellors

*a resource management game for 2 to 4 players, by P.D. Magnus*

The Lord High Chancellor has retired, but the King has not yet named a successor. As one of the King's Chancellors, you are hoping to move up to the first seat. To do this, you need to impress His Majesty and outdo the other Chancellors. Fail and you'll be a back bencher for the rest of your career. Of course, things could be worse than being a mere Chancellor. If things go too badly, the King might decide to fire all the old advisors.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** 6-sided dice (for two players, you need six dice; for three players, eight dice; for four players, ten dice)

## OVERVIEW

This is a game about affairs of state, in which players score points by solving problems that face the kingdom. Typically, a player wins by scoring enough points. If a problem escalates out of control, however, the busy players will be blamed - and then the player with the lowest score wins.

## SETUP

Arrange the dice into pairs. Each pair represents a problem that is facing the kingdom. So there are three problems at a time in a two-player game, four at a time in a three-player game, and five at a time in a four-player game.

At the beginning of the game, roll each pair of dice to determine just how bad things are. Higher numbers are more serious problems. Put the dice as rolled out on the table where everyone can see them.

Remove the *Sailor* (4 of Waves and Leaves), *Soldier* (5 Wyrms and Knots), and *Diplomat* (8 Moons and Suns) from the deck. These represent three royal services: the *Navy*, *Army*, and *Diplomatic corps* respectively. Put them in the center of the table to indicate that they are up for grabs. Once the game is underway, these cards will be in front of the player who has control over them.

Shuffle the remainder of the deck and deal each player three cards.

## GAME PLAY

Each turn of the game consists of the following steps: **(A)** Players exert influence to control royal services. **(B)** Players who control services take turns solving problems. **(C)** Players who don't control services solve problems. **(D)** Remaining problems escalate. **(E)** Players draw cards.

**Control royal services:** Players each select one card from their hand and place it face down in front of them. Once everyone has made a selection, the cards are revealed.

A card might control a service if it has a suit that matches one of the suits on that service's card. For example, the Crown of Suns may control the diplomatic corps because the *Diplomat* is a Moons and Suns card.

If only one player selected a card that can control a specific service, then they control it; to indicate this, they take the card representing the service and put it in front of them. If more than one player selected a card that matches the service, then the player who played the highest matching card controls the service.

*Example:* Selia plays 9♣♠, Shar plays ♠♣, and Henri plays 7♣♠. Because she played the highest card matching the *Sailor*, Selia controls the navy and takes the *Sailor* card. Shar controls the army and takes the *Soldier* card. No one played a Moons or Suns card, so the diplomatic corps is uncontrolled and the *Diplomat* card remains in the center of the table.

In subsequent turns, services may already be under some player's control. If someone takes control of the service, the player holding the card must hand it over. But if no one else takes control of it, the service stays where it is. In the example: If it were later in the game and Henri had the *Diplomat*, he would keep it.

If two players select cards of the same rank which might control a service, then the player with the lower cumulative score takes it. If both players have the same cumulative score, then the service becomes uncontrolled and the card is put in the middle of the table.

Players must play in this part of the turn, and the cards played are discarded.

**Solve problems, with control:** Players who control services take turns playing cards to solve problems that face the kingdom.

The player who controls the diplomatic corps goes first, then the player who controls the army, followed by the player who controls the navy; the services play in decreasing order of rank. If a player controls more than one service, then they have the opportunity to solve more than one problem.

When it comes to you, you may choose to solve any problem in play. Each service only gives you the chance to solve one problem, and doing so requires further cards from your hand. You can only play cards that share a suit with a service that you control.

*Example:* Tarrant controls only the *Army*. It's represented by the *Soldier*, the suits of which are ♣ and ♠. Tarrant could play the 7♣♠ from his hand (because it shares a suit with the *Soldier*) but not the 7♠♣.

To solve an *entire problem*, discard a card or cards that add up to at least as much as the sum of the two dice. Aces count for one; number cards count for their rank; Crowns count for the value showing on the higher die in the problem. (Two Crowns will solve any problem, because they can always match or exceed the sum of the two dice.)

When you solve an entire problem, you score points equal to the sum of the two dice. Set the dice aside. The problem may not be solved again this turn. At the end of the turn, both dice will be rerolled.

If you cannot or do not want to solve the whole problem, you may solve *part* of it. Play a single card with *at most* the value of the lower die in the problem. If a

problem has a die showing 1, then only any *Ace* can solve part of that problem. A Crown (which counts for the value of the higher die) can solve part of a problem only if the two dice have the same value.

When you solve part of a problem, you score points equal to *half* the total of both dice (rounded up). Select one of the two dice in the problem and set it aside. The remaining part of the problem cannot be solved by another player this turn. At the end of the turn, the die you set aside will be rerolled.

If you do not wish to solve a problem or if you don't have cards that match the services you control, you may pass. When you pass, you have the option of abdicating control of the service. When abdicating, put the card for the service in the middle of the table.

**Solve problems, without help:** After players who control services have either solved problems or passed, start on the left of the player who most recently solved a problem and proceed clockwise around the table. Any players who do not control any services may try to solve problems. This includes players who controlled services earlier in the turn but passed and abdicated control instead of solving problems.

If you do not control any services, you may not solve part of a problem – only the whole thing. Moreover, the cards you play must add up to at least *twice* the sum of two dice. You still only score the sum of the dice.

As some consolation, you may play any cards from your hand regardless of their suits.

**Problems escalate:** Problems get worse if no one has solved them.

Reroll single dice from partially solved problems, making them two dice again; this represents the problem unfolding.

Now take the lower of the two dice in each unsolved problem and turn it so as to increase the value by one; if both dice have the same value, increment either one. If a problem is already 6 and 6 (six on both dice) when it escalates, then the game ends immediately – see Endings, below.

Finally, reroll all the dice that were set aside earlier in the turn. Dice from completely solved problems become new problems and do not escalate this turn.

**Draw cards:** At the end of the turn, every player draws three cards. If you have more than six cards in your hand, you must select and discard cards until you have only six cards.

If the draw pile runs out, reshuffle the discard pile.

## ENDINGS, HAPPY AND OTHERWISE

If a player reaches a cumulative score of 100 or more points, play continues until the end of the turn. Then the game ends, and the player with the highest score is the winner. The King names them Lord High Chancellor, and all the other players labour on as Chancellors simpliciter.

If a problem escalates when it was already 6 and 6, the kingdom is in serious trouble. The King decides that the players make terrible counselors and sacks all but the least offensive of them. The game ends, and the player with the *lowest* score wins.

You may agree to increase or decrease the target score, if you prefer a shorter or longer game. Regardless, it is possible for multiple players to have the same winning score. Ties should be settled by fisticuffs.

*Example:* Evan has the *Diplomat*, which he uses to solve a problem. This increases his cumulative score to 102. Maire has the *Soldier*, allowing her to solve a problem later in the turn. This increases her cumulative score to 102. The game is over at the end of that turn. Maire flips over the table and punches Evan, securing victory.

## STRATEGY

When a problem has a 6 as one of its dice, you can try to deliberately arrange a catastrophe: Solve part of the problem and reroll the other die. If you roll a 6 when rerolling the die - the problem becomes 6 and 6, it escalates out of control, and the game ends. Since this won't happen on any other roll, it is a bit of a longshot.

Nevertheless, the chance may be worth taking if you are far enough behind on points that partially solving the problem won't lift you out of last place. If the game ends by escalation, everyone else will be blamed and you'll win. It's a viable tactic.

So, when you are not in last place, you should try to block the player who is in last place from prompting a catastrophe. If you completely solve a problem that includes a 6, then the dice will be rerolled and won't escalate this turn. If you solve part of the problem that includes a 6, then you can choose to reroll the 6 itself. And if you have control of the right service, you'll be able to do this before the saboteur player gets to the problem.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

To vary the game, you can add in some or all of the extended deck cards. I think that the game plays well with or without them.

When you draw the *Excuse*, put it in front of you like a card for one of the royal services. On a turn when you do not control any of the services, you may solve problems just as if you did: You may solve part or all of a problem, and solving all of a problem only requires cards adding up to the total of the two dice. You may still use any cards, regardless of suits. If you use the *Excuse* in this way, pass it to the player on your left.

With *Pawns* and *Courts*, the order of ranks becomes 9, ♠, ♣, ♠. For solving problems, Pawns and Courts match more services but otherwise work like Crowns; they are worth the value of the higher of the two dice in the problem. For controlling services, however, they work a bit differently:

Pawns only help you maintain control of services that you already control. For example, if you play the *Watchman* (♠♣♣) when you already control the *Diplomat* (♣♣) and the *Soldier* (♣♣) from the previous turn, you will keep them unless someone else plays a Court or Crown to take them away.

Courts act only to control the diplomatic corps, regardless of the suits on the Court card.

# CHICANE

a trick-taking game for 3 to 4 players in which players bid to determine which suit cards will have, by P.D. Magnus

**Extended Decktet:** No

## INTRODUCTION

In this trick-taking game, each of the Decktet cards is treated as just having one suit. For the double-suited number cards, only the top or bottom suit is active in a given hand.

## SETUP

TOP	
♁	A 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ♀
☀	A 2 3 5 6 7 ♀
♁	A 2 4 7 8 9 ♀
♁	A 3 6 9 ♀
♁	A 4 5 8 ♀
♁	A ♀
BOTTOM	
♁	A ♀
☀	A 4 8 9 ♀
♁	A 3 5 6 ♀
♁	A 2 4 5 7 8 ♀
♁	A 2 3 6 7 9 ♀
♁	A 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ♀

Decide arbitrarily who will deal the first hand. In subsequent hands, the player on the dealer's left becomes the new dealer.

Deal the entire basic deck out evenly to players. Three players will get 12 cards each; four players will get 9 each.

The player on the dealer's left starts bidding by calling either a suit, TOP, or BOTTOM. If a suit is called, then that will be the trump suit for the hand. If TOP or BOTTOM is called, then that determines how cards will be read for the hand. In a TOP hand, the topmost of the two suit symbols determines the suit of a number card. In a BOTTOM hand, the bottommost suit symbol does.

*Example:* In a TOP hand, the 8 *Wyrrms-Knots* is a *Wyrrm* card. In a BOTTOM hand, it is a *Knot* card.

The next player, clockwise around the table, must then declare a trump suit (if the first player called TOP or BOTTOM) or TOP or BOTTOM (if the first player called a trump suit). After this call, it will have been decided both how suits will be read (top or bottom) and which suit is trump.

Continuing around the table clockwise, players must bid a number of tricks that they think they will be able to take.

Once all players' bids have been recorded, the player who bid first selects a card from their hand to lead the first trick.

## GAME PLAY

You may not lead a card with the trump suit until a trump card has been played in the hand, unless you have nothing but trumps in your hand.

After a card is led, clockwise around the table, each player plays a card with the same suit as the card that was led. Players who have no cards of the named suit may play any card from their hand.

If no trump cards were played, then the highest card that follows suit wins the trick; if any trumps were played, then the highest ranked trump card wins the trick. (As usual: Aces are low. Crowns are high.)

The winner of the trick leads the next trick. Once someone has played a trump, it is permissible to lead with a trump card.

Play continues until there are no cards remaining.

## SCORING

If you win exactly the number of tricks than you bid, then you score four times your bid; if you win one trick more or less than you bid, then you score two times your bid; if they score two tricks more or less than you bid, then you score points equal to your bid.

Game can be played for a fixed amount of time or to a target score. We find that 31 points is a satisfactory game.

## NIL BIDS

A player may bid Nil, which commits them to taking exactly zero tricks. The score for Nil depends on how many tricks were taken by the player who took the most tricks – regardless of whether or not they made their bid! If you bid Nil and get exactly zero tricks, then you score points equal to four times the number of tricks that were taken by that other player.

## PARTNER CHICANE

Although it is possible to play free-for-all with four players, I much prefer this variant. Players pair up in shifting partnerships, changing their allegiances from hand to hand. Rather than just having the first two players declare how the hand will be played, players make declarations until two players have declared the same thing; they become partners for the hand.

Deal out cards for four.

The player to the dealer's left declares Top, Bottom, or a trump suit. The player to their left does the same. If the first and second player declare the same thing, then they will be partners for this hand. If they did not, then declaration continues clockwise around the table. If it goes all the way around the table and you make a second or even a third declaration, you may not repeat a declaration that you have already made.

When two players have made the same declaration as each other, those two will be partners against the other two. This both determines partnerships and how the hand will be played (Top, Bottom, or trump; whichever declaration was repeated). The other two players (the ones who have not matched declarations yet) continue declaring to determine the other aspect of the hand.

The last player to make a declaration leads the first trick, and play proceeds according to the usual rules. At the end of the hand, each player scores one point for each trick taken by them or by their partner.

## OLD SCHOOL CHICANE

This is an earlier version of the game which is played without trump. Although not a smashing success, it does have its fans.

Deal out cards as usual.

The player on the dealer's left starts bidding. The player bids a number and either *top* or *bottom*. The number is the exact number of tricks they think they can take if they determine suits.

Continuing around the table clockwise, players have the option of making a larger bid or passing. A top bid is considered higher than a bottom bid. A player may not bid in a hand after they have passed. Bidding continues until a highest bid is unchallenged.

**Example** : The first bidder bids 3 *bottom*. A subsequent player must either pass, bid 3 *top*, or bid 4 or more. If the next player bids 4 *top*, then a subsequent player must either pass or bid 5 or more.

The high bidder then selects any card from their hand to lead the first trick. Note that only the last, highest bid determines whether the hand is played top or bottom; prior, lower bids don't matter once play begins.

**Game play:** Clockwise around the table, each player plays a card that matches the suit of the card that was led. If you have no cards of the suit led, then you may play any card from your hand. The highest card that follows suit wins the trick. An Ace is below 2; a Crown is above 9.

The winner of the trick leads the next trick. Play continues until players have no cards remaining.

If the high bidder won fewer tricks than they bid, they score nothing; if they score exactly as many tricks as they bid, then they score their bid *plus* three bonus points; if they score more more tricks than they bid, then they score their bid *minus* one penalty point per overtrick.

Other players score one point for each trick they won, regardless of whatever they might have bid.

**Nil bids:** A player may bid *nil*, which commits them to taking exactly zero tricks. In the order of bidding, a *nil bottom* bid is higher than any number bid whatever. A *nil top* bid is higher than *nil bottom*. Once someone bids *nil top*, there is no room left for further bidding.

A player who bids *nil* and wins no tricks scores ten points. If the player wins even a single trick, however, the *nil* bid is lost. The player loses one point for each trick they won.



# CIRCLE SEARCH

*a Decktet memory game for two children, by David L. Van Slyke*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** two tokens

## SETUP

Separate the aces and place them face up in the middle of the table. Shuffle the rest of the deck (either basic or extended) and deal out eight cards face-down in a square (a 3 by 3 grid with the middle card missing). Place two tokens on opposite corners of the square, one for each player.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, declare “I am searching for” and name the suit from one of the unclaimed aces. Then move your token one card clockwise and turn over the card your token lands on, revealing it for everyone to see. If that card has the suit you were searching for, claim the ace of that suit – unless it was a Crown, which causes you to put back in the middle of the table the claimed ace of the Crown’s suit if you have currently claimed it. The excuse does nothing when one of the face-down cards.

The younger player goes first, unless the game was just played and someone won, in which case the previous game’s loser goes first. Players take turns until all six aces are claimed. The player who claims the most aces wins. If both players claim three aces the game is a draw.

## VARIANTS

To play with more than two players make the path of face-down cards larger (always a rectangle with four times as many cards as players) and keep starting positions equally spaced apart. To make the excuse meaningful, the first player to reveal it keeps it as a “tie-breaker” and replaces it with a new face-down card that is first revealed to all players. For children who enjoy counting more than balance, use the remaining cards as a “draw pile” that determines movement around the circle by card rank.

**Note:** Feel free to add a plot to the game, such as exploring a haunted house or a beach (in which, respectively, the Crowns could be ghosts or crabs that surprise you so you drop a treasure when running away).



# COLOUR BAZAAR

*the treacherous winds of fashion for 2 or 3 players, by P.D. Magnus.*

The Isles of Purple and Red, renown for their fine fabric and vivid dyes, are far across the sea. When the island trading houses send cargo ships to the Sapphire Ports, they can only guess what the demand will be for different styles once the cargo finally arrives. So the houses send agents ahead in faster boats, on missions to promote the products the the house anticipates sending. At the same time, they try to guess what will be in demand.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns), Optional (Courts)

**Extra material:** 30 suit chips (5 of each suit)

## OVERVIEW

Each of the six Decktet suits represents a different colour or style of fabric. Players use cards to influence the value of each style and collect chips representing investment in particular styles. The goal is to have invested more in the styles that are ultimately the most popular.

## SETUP

Put the four Pawn cards in the middle of the table. Each represents a different fashion market in Sapphire.

Shuffle the basic deck and deal each player a hand of four cards.

The rest of the deck forms a draw pile; put it, along with the chips, somewhere so that every player can reach them.

The player wearing the most expensive clothing goes first. Subsequent play proceeds clockwise around the table.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, do each of the following in order:

1. *Influence fashion* by playing a card.
2. *Invest in a style* by taking a chip.
3. Draw a card.

**Influence Fashion:** Four stacks of cards will be built up over the course of play, each starting with a Pawn. You influence fashion by adding a card to one of the stacks.

When you add a card, place it slightly offset so that players can see the cards further down in the stack.

You may only play a card onto a stack if the top card of the stack shares at least one suit with the card you are playing. Within that limit, you may choose to play any card from your hand onto any stack.

You may only play one card per turn.

If you have no cards which can be added to top of any of the stacks (because suits don't match) then you must choose one card from your hand and discard it. You still get to take a chip even if you are unable to play a card. You may not *choose* to discard if even just one of your cards could be legally played.

**Take one chip of your choice.** Your choice of chip is not restricted by the card that you played.

You may only pick from the available suits. This means that you may have no choice on your final turn.

**Draw a card.** After you draw, the player on your left takes the next turn.

If the draw pile is depleted, you don't get a card. Typically this will happen in the last couple of turns. Play still continues until one of the end game conditions is met.

**The End of the Game:** The game ends after a player takes the last suit chip. Scores are then tabulated, and the high scoring player wins.

## SCORING

To determine the value of a chip, look separately at each stack. Find the number card with that chip's suit on it that is closest to the top of the stack. The stack contributes the rank of that card to the value of the chip. Aces are treated as rank 1. ♣s are treated as having the value of the highest-ranked matching card in the stack. If there is no card of the suit in a stack, that stack contributes nothing.

The value of a chip is the total contribution of all four stacks. Your score is the total value of all your chips.

*Example:* At the end of the game, this is one of the four stacks.

♠ - 7♣ - 5♠ - A♣ - 8♠ - 2♣ - ♣

This adds 8 to the value of ♠s, because the ♣ copies the highest-ranked moon card; 8 to the value of ♠s, because the 8 is the sun closest to the top of the stack; 5 to the value of ♣s; zero to the value of ♠s, because there are no leaves in the stack; 7 to the value of ♣s; 2 to the value of ♣s. The total value for each suit chip is determined by adding the value for this stack to the value for the other three stacks.

**Shortcuts:** Scoring at the end of the game involves more arithmetic than I can do in my head. We begin by calculating the value of each suit separately, and then adding up each player's score.

Since only the difference between player scores matters, the sums can be simplified. If all players have a chip of a given suit, each player can discard one of those chips without changing the relative scores. Also, you can reduce the value of chips by the value of the least valuable chip – for example: If Moons are the least valuable chip with a value per chip of 12, you can subtract 12 from the value of each chip. Moon chips are worth zero, and the other chips are worth smaller amounts. So adding up player scores is easier.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you wish, you may add the Courts (♠) to the deck. I think they improve the game slightly but are not essential. If they are used in the three player game, then there are enough cards in the deck that players will still have four cards to choose from on their final turn.

Court cards represent the attention of the royal court, focussed on a specific market and style. You may play a ♠ in the usual way; the top card of the stack must share a suit with the ♠ card. When you do, name aloud one of the three suits on the ♠. On the very next turn, the player to your left must play a card *of that suit on that stack* if they can possibly do so. If they cannot, they must reveal their hand of cards. They must still play on that stack, if they have a card that matches one of the ♠s other suits. They may play elsewhere only if they have no cards that can legally be played on the ♠.

The ♠ has no further effect, and it does not affect scoring. Ignore Court cards at the end of the game for determining the value of each suit; score stacks as if the ♠ were not there.



# CORUNDUM CONUNDRUM

*a partnership trick-taking game for 4 players, by Nate Straight.*

In Corundum, this game is called 'Conundrum Terrapin'. This may be because, as in Terrapin, something happens when every suit is present in a group of cards. But it may instead be because of court politics, which render people in Corundum unable to use the proper name for anything. People outside Corundum call the game 'Corundum Conundrum' – except the tongue-tied Bhargivians, who call it 'Conungrem'.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## OVERVIEW

Conundrum is a partnership game for 4 in teams of 2 sitting opposite each other.

The goal of the game is to take the most cards possible in the most tricks possible.

## GAME SETUP

Conundrum uses the entire extended Decktet.

Shuffle and deal out the entire deck until each player has an equal number of cards. There will be one card left over, leave it face down in the middle of the table. Ranks are standard (A, 2-9, Pawn, Court, Crown). Play order is standard. Deal passes to the left.

## PREGAME ACTIONS

Each player selects one card from their hand and passes it to their partner. After the pass, the player to the left of the dealer will lead to the first trick.

## GAME PLAY

The game is played out in a series of tricks, the number of which and the size of which is uncertain.

Beginning with the lead player, each player on their turn must play any 1 card from their hand. Cards should be played in front of oneself and not added to a central pile (it will be hard to recall who played what).

You may wish to add chips from a supply to the center of table, one matching each suit on the card you play, as a play aid. You may also wish to use a token or card (I suggest the Gypsy / fortune-teller card) to indicate who began each trick.

Play continues around the table, with each player continuing to add cards to the trick, until the trick is complete. The trick is complete as soon as each of the 6 Decktet suits is represented at least once (on any card) in the trick. (If it happens that the first 2 or 3 players complete a trick, the 3rd and/or 4th player must still play 1 card to the finished trick.)

## TAKING TRICKS

Each trick is taken by the player who played the highest card in the suit represented by the most cards (played by any player) in the finished trick.

If two or more suits have the same number of cards in the trick, the higher card among all of these suits takes the trick. If these are tied in rank, the first card played among them takes the trick.

When the first trick is taken, the card set aside in the deal is immediately turned over for inspection and added to the trick before it is taken in to the partnerships' scoring pile. It has no other function.

Partnerships combine tricks, and must keep track (criss-cross stacking style) of how many tricks they've taken. The trick winner leads to the next trick.

## ENDING THE HAND

The hand will end after one player runs out of cards (since tricks are of variable size, a player can run out "early"). If any player runs out of cards on their first play to a trick, that trick is played to completion and is the final trick in the hand. If a player runs out of cards after playing their first card to a trick, that trick is finished as normal and one more trick is played.

When playing the last trick(s), simply skip over any players without cards. If this means someone should lead (by winning the penultimate trick after running out of cards in the middle thereof) and has no cards, skip them and the player on their left leads the final trick.

It may happen that all players run out of cards before the final trick is "complete". Simply score the "unfinished" trick. Do not score any cards remaining in players' hands after the final trick is closed. They must have been played to count.

## THE EXCUSE

The Excuse is a special card that may be played to immediately cause a trick to be counted complete and be scored. The Excuse itself has no rank or suit and cannot win a trick or otherwise affect which player will win.

If played as the 2nd or 3rd card in a trick, the 3rd and/or 4th players do not play to the trick. The Excuse cannot be led.

## SCORING THE HAND

A partnership's score for each hand is the number of tricks they took multiplied by the number of cards they took. Yes, this can get quite high.

## WINNING THE GAME

The game is played to 1000 points.

# THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE DISAPPEARED DECKTET CARD

*a deduction game for 3–6 players, by Roger Meertens*

HELP! One of the cards from the original deckett has been stolen. You are on the case, like the good detective you are. The rich reward and eternal glory certainly are good motivations. Unfortunately you are not the only detective who's after the card. This makes the investigation difficult at least. The answers you get from your fellow detectives are ambiguous and enigmatic. So... it's up to you to find the missing card first

**Extended Deckett:** Mandatory (Excuse)

**Extra material:** pen and paper for all players

## SETUP

Take out "The Excuse" card and the twenty-four "2" through "9" cards. All other cards are removed from play. Place "The Excuse" in the middle of the table. Shuffle the 2–9 deck well and take out one card without looking at it. Place it under "The Excuse" in the middle of the table. Deal out the remaining 23 cards evenly among the players. These cards should remain unknown to the other players. Left over cards are placed face up in the middle of the table.

## GAME PLAY

**Nature of the cards:** The cards in play all show at least 4 characteristics. These characteristics are one rank (2–9), two suits (a combination of moon, sun, waves, leaves, wyrms, knots) and (at least) one type (location, personality or event; in this game there are two cards that have two characteristics: origin and market). Your investigation will be by way of combinations of characteristics in order to identify the missing card (under "The Excuse").

**Turns:** On your turn you interrogate your fellow detectives and optionally declare the missing card. When you have finished interrogating, the detective on your left will continue with his/her search.

*Interrogating your fellow detectives:*

When it's your turn, choose two characteristics you would like to know more about. Ask the other players how many times these characteristics appear on their cards. If both characteristics appear on the same card(s), they naturally should be counted separately. Any combination of the four aforementioned characteristics is possible: rank & suit; suit & event; location & personality; etc.

*Declaring the Missing Card (optional):*

On your turn, whenever you think you have solved the case of the disappeared deckettcard, you are allowed to declare the missing card. Just tell your fellow detectives that you solved the mystery. Declaring the Disappeared Card is done

by writing it down. You then get to take a careful look at the card under the “The Excuse” (*do not show it to the other players!*). If you were right, the game is over: show the card and your note to your fellow detectives and eternal glory will be yours. If you were mistaken, play continues. You are no longer allowed to ask questions, but you are still under interrogation.

# DECKTET-UNO

*a game inspired by Uno, by Daniele Mazzoni*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** None

## SETUP

The Excuse Card is removed from the deck.

Every player is given 3 cards.

The deck is then placed in the center and the first card is drawn and put face-up next to the deck.

## GAME PLAY

Each player chooses a card and places it on top of the face-up card at the center, starting to form a pile.

Each time a card is played by someone, that player gets awarded a total of points calculated as:

*Number of symbols on the face-up card on the top of the pile × Number of matching symbols on the card the player is placing on top of it*

After playing a card, the current player finishes the turn and draws a card from the deck.

## END OF GAME

After all cards are drawn from the deck, the drawing phase is skipped.

When all cards in every player's hand has been played, the game is over and who's collected most points is declared the Decktet-Uno winner.

## EXAMPLE OF A TURN

Player Armando sees on top of the face-up pile next to the deck a card with symbols:



From the three cards he has in his hand, he decides then to play the card with symbols



He's therefore awarded 6 points and writes them down on a score sheet.

*Example:* Calculating points:

3 Symbols of the face-up card:  × 2 Matching Symbols of the card he's playing:  = 6

He draws a new card and passes the turn to the next player.

## FACE-DOWN VARIANT

If none of the 3 cards in the hand would award points to a player, he/she can decide to play one face-down next to the face-up pile and then draw normally and finish the turn.

The **following** player at the end of his/her turn, will place the face-down card of the previous player on top of the card he/she just played.

If any symbol matches now, the previous player is awarded the corresponding points, otherwise he/she loses 2 points.

If a card was placed face-down by a player, the following player cannot do it.

# DOUBLE KNOT

*a trick-taking game for 3 to 5 players with a lot of trumps by Daniël Muilwijk.*

Double Knot is the favourite trick-taking game among pandas. It's a common habit to end a dispute with a game of Double Knot in order to decide who gets to sleep in the best bed. Unfortunately, in case of a tie, play is continued. This explains the amount of pandas.

**Extended Decktet:** Recommended (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## OVERVIEW

The game is named after the two highest cards in the game, the Ace of Knots and the Crown of Knots.

In Double Knot every player bids a number of tricks. The object of the game is to win exactly the number of tricks bid and at the same time let other people fail to do the same.

In a hand of Double Knot, each of the Decktet cards is treated as belonging only to the top suit. The bottom suits of the first card played into a trick determines which cards can be used as trumps in that trick.

## SETUP

The game uses the extended Decktet (including the Pawns, the Courts and the Excuse), although it is playable with only the basic Decktet. When using the extended Decktet in a four player game, exclude the Excuse from the game.

## DEAL

Shuffle the deck and deal it out evenly to the players. There should be no remaining cards.

## BID

The player on the dealer's left starts bidding and the bidding continues clockwise, until everyone has made a bid. Each player bids the number of tricks he thinks he will get.

## SUITS

Each of the Decktet cards is treated as belonging only to the top suit. The Excuse doesn't belong to any suit.

# BANK

In every suit the rank of the cards is: Ace 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ♠ ♣ ♠ ♣. A lot of suits miss a lot of ranks though. Here is an overview of the card distribution:

Suit	# of Cards	
	14	A 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ♠ ♣ ♠ ♣
	10	A 2 3 5 6 7 ♠ ♣ ♣ ♣
	8	A 2 4 7 8 9 ♠ ♣
	5	A 3 6 9 ♣
	5	A 4 5 8 ♣
	2	A ♣

# TRUMPS

In every trick, the bottom suit(s) of the card led determines which suit(s) is regarded as trump in that trick.

The number cards 2 to 9 have two suits and thus one bottom suit. When such a card is led, the bottom suit is the trump suit for that trick.

The Pawns and Courts have three suits and thus two bottom suits. When such a card is led, both bottom suits are the trump suits for that trick.

The Aces and Crowns have only one suit. When such a card is led, a special rule applies to determine the trump suits. The six suits of the Decktet have a strict ranking. From highest to lowest we have Moons, Suns, Waves, Leaves, Wyrms and Knots. This ranking is also displayed on two reference cards that came with the official printed Decktet. When an Ace or a Crown of a particular suit is led, all lower suits are regarded as trump for that trick. There can be as many as five trump suits, but there can also be no trump at all, as can be seen in the table below.

The card led	Trump suits
A  or 	    
A  or 	   
A  or 	  
A  or 	 
A  or 	
A  or 	

# GAME PLAY

The player on the dealer's left leads to the first trick. Clockwise around the table, each player plays a card to the trick.

You have to follow suit if possible. If you don't have any card of the suit led, you have to trump if possible. Otherwise, you may play any card (which could be the Excuse).

If The Excuse is led to a trick, any card can be played upon it. In this case the second played card can be seen as the leading card.

The two rules above describe the only situations in which it is possible to play The Excuse.

If no trumps are played, the highest card of the suit led wins the trick. Otherwise, the highest trump card played wins the trick. If cards of different trump suits are played to the same trick, cards of a lower trump suit beat cards of a higher trump suit.

When two equally ranked cards are played to a trick, the first is higher than the second.

The winner of the trick takes the trick, puts it in front of him, and leads to the next trick. Play continues until players have no cards remaining.

## SCORING

If you get at least within one of your bid, you get 1 point.

If you make your bid exactly, you get an additional point for each player who did not make their bid exactly.

If you do not get within one of your bid, you get 0 points.

*Example:* Suppose your bid was 4 tricks. When you get 2 tricks, you get 0 points. When you get 3 tricks, you get 1 point. When you get exactly 4 tricks, you get 1 point plus some additional points, which are dependant of how many other people have made their bid exactly. Suppose that 2 players have not made their bid exactly. Then you get  $1+2=3$  points for making your bid exactly.

## GAME

It is advised to play until someone reaches a specific amount of points.

Players	Points
3	15
4	18
5	20

The player with the highest score wins the game. If multiple people have the highest score, play on until there is a unique leader.

## VARIANTS

**Scoring Variant** With this variant you add an exception to the normal scoring rules:

If you bid zero or all the tricks and miss your bid even by one, you get no points.

If you bid zero or all the tricks and make your bid, you get 4 points, regardless of how other players did on their bids.

**Team Variant** With 4 players you can play this game in partnerships, sitting crosswise. The bidding goes the same way as in the solo game. Each team adds together the bids of the two partners, and the total is the number of tricks that team must try to win in order to get a positive score. Scoring then works the same as in the solo game, but the scores of the team members are combined to form the score of the team.

## Double Knot

# DUELING RUNES

*a game of spell casting and dueling for 2 players (with solitaire and 3-4 players variants), by Jorge Arroyo*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra Material:** Some markers, a die for each player

## INTRODUCTION

This game depicts a battle between 2 (or more) wizards that cast spells at each other by using magical runes with different symbols. Each suit in the decktet represents a rune. Cards can have from 1 to 3 runes that wizards can use in their spells.

**Two types of runes:** First, there are the Energy Runes: Suns, Waves and Leaves. These runes are used to power up different type of spells, but by themselves don't produce any effect.

Then there are the Activation Runes: Moons, Wyrms, Knots. They draw power from earlier energy runes to produce a variety of magical effects.

Basically, the type of activation rune determines how the energy is used, specifically:

- Moon Runes direct energy at the caster. These spells are usually about protection/healing
- Wurm Runes violently direct the energy at a target. These spells usually damage the target in some way.
- Knot Runes weave the energy to create more elaborate spells that can be directed to anyone.

**Spell Sequences:** Each turn, players choose a card secretly and then reveal it at the same time. Each player then plays the card face up in front of them. If there are cards already on the table in front of them, the new card is placed over the old one but displaced a bit to the right, so the suits from older cards can be seen. This is the spell sequence.

The Runes from the cards a player has on the table can be used as energy for one spell that can be activated by an Activation Rune played on the current turn. So spells cannot be activated using activation runes from earlier turns, while energy remains and can be used for later turns. Multiple spells can be activated in a turn as long as they use different runes, so each energy rune can only power one spell up each turn and each activation rune can only activate one spell per turn.

There is a limit of 4 cards on the spell sequence, so older cards get discarded as new ones are played.

## SETUP:

Shuffle the decktet (including pawns but leave the Excuse out). Place the excuse around the middle of the deck and then deal each player 5 cards. Leave the decktet within easy reach for all the players.

Each player gets a 12 sided die (or 12 generic markers) and places it in front of them showing the largest numbered side. The die represents the wizard's health points. (If players of different skill are playing together, consider lowering the starting health points for the more experienced player).

A variety of markers can be used to represent spell effects that remain for more than one turn. Color Beads, die, etc (or just pen and paper).

## GAME PLAY

Each turn all the players secretly choose a card (unless a player is "confused" see below). When everyone is ready they all reveal it simultaneously and place it on their spell sequence to the right of their last placed card, so that suits from all earlier cards can be seen.

After that, spell effects are resolved in this order: Moon Runes, Wyrms Runes, Knot Runes. If more than one player is casting a spell of the same type, the player that played the highest numbered card resolves their spell first. If two players activate a spell in the same phase with the same number on the card, they are considered simultaneous (so if both spells kill their targets, both players die and the game ends in a draw).

Spells are activated by specifying an Activation Rune from the card just played and stating what other energy runes from the whole spell sequence will be used to power it (including ones available on the card just played). If the last card played has two activation Runes or more, then more than one spell can be cast in this turn but each one must use different energy runes, as each one can only be used for one spell each turn.

Here are the spell effects for the Basic Game:

	Caster (Moons)	Enemy(Wyrms)	Spell (Knots)
Sun	Resist Cold	Fire Ball	Haste
Waves	Resist Heat	Ice Bolt	Invisibility
Leaves	Heal	Drain	Amnesia
Nothing	Shield	Hit	Confusion

*Any activation rune + one other activation rune used as energy = Counter Spell*

*Any activation rune + the other two activation runes used as energy = Magic Mirror*

**Resist Cold** The caster is immune to cold attacks for as many turns as activated Sun Runes. Player is protected starting next turn.

**Resist Heat** The caster is immune to heat attacks for as many turns as activated Waves Runes. Player is protected this turn.

**Heal** The caster immediately recovers as many health points as leaves activated.

**Shield** The caster is protected from: Hit, Confusion and Drain spells this turn

**Fire Ball** The target loses as many hit points as suns activated (unless protected from Heat)

**Ice Bolt** The target loses as many hit points as waves activated (unless protected from Cold)

**Drain** The target loses as many hit points as leaves activated and the caster recovers the same number of points (unless a Shield is in effect).

**Hit** The target loses one hit point (unless a Shield is in effect).

**Haste** The target gets to play two cards each turn for as many turns (starting next turn) as suns activated. The first card will be solved by the all the players under a haste spell first, and then the second one will be solved with everyone else. So players under this spell get an extra mini-turn to cast spells or play energy runes before the regular turn is solved.

**Invisibility** The target cannot get targeted by anyone else for as many turns as waves activated. Player is invisible starting next turn but might be protected on the same turn the spell is cast if targeted with a knots spell of a lower/equal value than the card used for this spell.

**Amnesia** The caster turns face down as many cards from the target's spell sequence as leaves activated. Caster can choose which cards. The face down cards remain in the sequence but cannot be used by the wizard. They leave play normally when enough turns have passed. Note that if due to timing rules the target of the Amnesia spell has his last played card turned face down before he was able to activate a spell with that card, that spell is lost (This can happen if it's a knot card with a lower value than the card used for the Amnesia spell).

**Confusion** The target has to randomly place his card next turn.

**Special Spells** These two spells are casted with runes from the hand of the player. The player must discard a number of cards containing at least one of each required rune. These spells can be cast at any time during a turn.

**Counter Spell** The target of this spell will not be affected by spells cast on them (either by their opponent or themselves) this turn. This works for all Moons and Knots spells plus the drain spell (the other damaging spells do their damage by physical means).

**Magic Mirror** Any effect cast on the target is reversed and is instead applied to the caster with the original target being considered the new "caster". The reflected spell works normally and can be stopped by the usual spells, even a Counter Spell and another Magic Mirror (Fire Ball is still stopped by Resist Heat, etc. . .)

After all the activated effects have taken place, players draw up to 2 cards so their hand never exceeds the maximum total of 5 cards again. Any player that has more than three cards on their spell sequence, must remove the oldest card (or cards) so that only three cards remain there. Then a new turn is started.

Whenever a player draws the Excuse, the remaining cards are shuffled together with the discard pile to make a new draw deck. Then the Excuse is placed around the middle of the deck.

paragraphThe End: When only one living wizard remains, the game ends and that player wins the game.

# VARIANTS

**Solitaire:** The game can be played solo by playing the opponent’s cards randomly from the deck. This may not make for a very challenging opponent, so players should start with fewer health points. Winning with only one health point can be challenging. Opponent spells should be decided fairly by the player when activated (so if the opponent has a choice between shooting a fire ball or an ice bolt and you are protected against heat, they won’t choose a fire ball).

Also, if you confuse the random player, draw a card normally but if you don’t like it, you can redraw once. The second card must be used.

My guidelines for the random player are:

	Moons	Suns	Knots
1-6 hp	heal then protection (depending on player’s spell sequence)	attack only if can’t use moons or knots defectively	only if can’t heal: invisibility if possible, then haste. Else use wyrms if possible and if not, amnesia/confusion.
7-12 hp	if not wyrms/knots then heal only if necessary, else protection or shield	attack if possible with most damaging spell	only if no wyrms: first aggressive then defensive

**Multiplayer:** I think multiplayer games won’t be a problem. The main difference is that there are more potential targets for offensive spells. Players should announce the targets as the spells are activated (in the correct order). The game gains a diplomatic aspect lacking in the 2-player version.

Note that if two or more players have to decide on a target simultaneously (because they used the same number on their played card) you can use some colored tokens to decide secretly and then show them at the same time.

**Advanced Game:** The advanced game has more spells that can be casted with combinations of energy spells. For example, a lighting bolt spell using sun and moons as energy and wyrm as activation. This variant is not yet done and ideas are welcomed.

Here’s a possible table of advanced spells:

	Caster (Moons)	Enemy(Wyrms)	Spell (Knots)
Sun + Waves	Summon Troll	Lightning Bolt	Electric Touch
Sun + Leaves	Summon Fire Elemental	Fear	Remove Enchantment
Waves + Leaves	Summon Ice Elemental	Poison	Magic Mirror
Sun+Waves+Leaves	Protection	Charm	Dispel Magic

**Summon Troll** Brings a monster that sides with the caster. It has as many health points as Waves used and does as many damage points to a target of the owner’s choice as suns were used to cast it. Hits can be deflected by the shield spell

**Summon Fire Elemental** Brings a monster that sides with the caster. It has as many health points as leaves used and does as many damage points to a target of the owner's choice as suns were used to cast it. Its attacks can be deflected by the resist heat spell.

**Summon Ice Elemental** Same as Fire Elemental but using waves instead of Fire

**Protection** The Caster is shielded (like with the shield spell) for as many turns as the number of suns, waves and leaves used for the spell.

**Lightning Bolt** Does as much damage to the target as the total number of suns used for the spell. Can only be countered with Counter Spell or Dispel Magic.

**Fear** For as many turns as leaves in the spell, the target cannot use a wrym rune (too afraid to attack). If cast on a monster, the monster cannot attack.

**Poison** For as many turns as Waves in the spell, the target loses 1 point of damage per leaves in the spell

**Charm** For as many turns as Leaves in the spell, the caster plays a card (and draws one more at the end) instead of the target choosing a card. If cast on a monster, its owner changes to the caster.

**Electric Touch** For as many turns as waves on the spell, any physical attack on the target produces one point of damage to the attacker (applies to Hit and monster attacks). It doesn't prevent the damage to the target.

**Remove Enchantment** Any spells that are in effect on the target are removed. This includes Protection, Resist heat or cold, invisibility, etc If casted on a monster, it disappears.

**Magic Mirror** Any spells that have been casted that turn on the target are applied instead to the caster. Reverse the effects of the affected spells and apply them to the new target. Example, Player A casts FireBall, and does 2 damage to player B. Then Player B casts Magic Mirror and recovers their 2 points while damaging player A with 2 points.

**Dispel Magic** Like Remove Enchantment but applies to everyone. All the monsters are removed from play too.



# ELECTION DAY

*an influence the outcome game for 3-5 players by Joe Mucchiello*

Rule of the land was benevolently shared by the six Crowned Princes. Every five years the people would elect one of the Princes to lead the land for the next five years. Before the election, the Princes would hold a series of debates in which they would demonstrate why they were most fit to lead for the next five years. The debates were always reviewed by the three major newspapers and typically two of the papers' editors would agree that one of the Princes won the debate while the third paper's editor would choose someone else as the clear victor. In the end, the people would vote and a new leader would rule peacefully for another five years.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## SETUP

- Remove the Crowns and Aces from the deck. Place the six Crowns vertically somewhere in the middle of the play area. This is the score track and it extends to one side of the column of cards. Leave about a foot (30cm) of space for it.
- To the other side of the score track is the debate area.
- Deal out a single Ace face down to each player and return the remaining Aces to the deck. Players should look at their Ace but they must leave it on the table face down in front of them.
- Decide if you want to include the Extended deck in the game. Any or all of the extension cards can be used in Election Day.
- Shuffle and deal out all cards evenly to each player, face down. Players should pick up their hand. They may arrange the cards in any manner they wish.
- Any undealt cards are left in the middle of the debate area to be drawn as described below.

## GAME PLAY

### Debates

The game is divided up into a series of debates. The face down Ace in front of each player indicates what Prince that player hopes will win the election. This can change over the course of the game.

At the start of each debate, if there are any undealt cards remaining turn the top card over and place it in the debate area. Starting with the dealer and continuing clockwise around the table, each player takes an action. They may either further the debate, consider changing which Prince they are backing in the debate, or they may pass.

- To further the debate, the player takes a card *that is not an Ace* from their hand and places it face up in the debate area. Cards are placed in the debate area so that every player can see every card.
- To consider backing a new Prince, the player must have an Ace in their hand. The player removes an Ace from his hand and sets down the rest of his hand. He then picks up the face down Ace in front of him so that he is holding two Aces. He may take either Ace and place it face down in front of him and then hand the remaining Ace to the player on his right. The player is not forced to change whom he backs. This is the only way to remove an Ace from your hand.
- The player may also choose to pass. A player with no cards left must pass. A player may pass on one turn subsequently take an action on another turn.

## Ending the Debate

If all the players pass in a row the debate has ended. If all but the same player passes twice in a row, the debate has ended. So if Bob plays a card, Carol passes, Don passes, Alice passes, Bob plays a card, Carol passes, and Don passes. The debate will end if Alice now passes.

## Scoring the Debate

At the end of the debate go through all the cards in the debate area and determine which two suit symbols occur most frequently. The suit symbol that occurs most frequently indicates which Prince won the debate. Go through the cards having the Prince's symbol on it and place the two cards with the highest rank on them to the right of the Prince's Crown card. For the second most frequently occurring suit, place the one highest ranking card to the right of that Prince's Crown card.

Aces, Pawns and Courts have a value and rank of zero for scoring purposes. They only contribute to the suit symbol count.

In the case of a tie for first, only one card is award to each Prince and there is no award for scoring second. If the tied Princes share the same high ranking card, set it aside and use the next highest ranking card for each Prince. If there is a tie for second place, no second place cards are scored. If for some reason not enough cards are available to indicate who won the debate, the affected Prince(s) do not score on that round.

*Example:* Suppose an entire debate consists of the 4 Wyrms/Knots, 9 Water/Wyrms and the 4 Moon/Sun. The winner of the debate is the Prince of Wyrms with 2 symbols. The 9 Water/Wyrms and 4 Wyrms/Knots would be placed to the right of the Wyrms Crown. All the other suits have but one symbol and thus tie for second and do not score.

## Continue Debating?

After scoring a debate, if the number of players with cards left in their hand is two or fewer the game is over. Otherwise set aside any cards in the playing area, they will not be used any more, and start a new debate.

The game also ends if no one played any cards during the debate

## End of Game

Once the debates are over the election takes place. Add up the ranks of the cards next to each Crown Prince in the scoring area and the Prince with the highest total is elected. If there is a tie, the most number of cards next to the Princes who are tied is used as a tie breaker.

Once the Prince has been elected, the players turn over their face down Aces and the player whose Ace matches the elected Prince is the winner. If no one has the winning Prince's Ace, no one wins (or you may choose the winner based on who Ace score the most points).

## THE EXTENDED DECK

You may freely add or remove the extended deck to Election Day. Like Aces, Pawns and Courts do not have a rank and value of zero when scoring. They only contribute suit symbols to the debates.

## VARIANTS

- If there is no winner, you could decide the winner is whoever's Prince was closest to first place was the winner.
- If an uneven number of cards are available when the cards are dealt, you could just no use the extra cards rather than seeding the debates with the remaining cards.

## FAQ

*Does the game end as soon as only 2 people have cards left?*

No, only check this condition once the debate has ended. Someone might pass the player with no cards an Ace and that player may not wish to end the game immediately.

*Does a left over card have to be played every debate? Does the game end if there are no more left over card to start a debate with?*

No, the left over cards are not important to the debate structure. The reason only one card is added at the beginning of the debate is so the first debate is not overwhelmed with random cards.

*Does the left over card pile count as a player for determining if the end of game condition has been reached?*

No.

*Why would I play The Excuse card?*

It gives you a way to continue a debate without having to play a meaningful card from your hand. Besides, what's a debate without some excuses?

*How can an Ace end up in the debate area?*

Aces that end up in the undealt pile are the only Aces that can end up in the debate area.



# EMU RANCHERS

*a Decktet game of bird ranching for 2 players, by P.D. Magnus.*

It's a hardscrabble life for emu ranchers like yourself, raising exotic birds for foreign markets. With the high cost for every bird you hatch, it probably won't be worth it in the end. You can't tell at the beginning of the year which of the six bird varieties will do best, and beware the birds with exceptional plumage! If they thrive, they can be worth big money; but if they go wrong, they can bankrupt your ranch.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

## SUMMARY OF THE GAME:

Each bird on your ranch is represented by a stack of cards. Cards in a single bird stack must all share a suit and must be in rank order. At the end of the hand, the value of a bird is determined by the total of the number cards in the stack. If the total is too low, then you can end up losing money on a bird. An Ace or Crown makes the stack worth more: more profit if you can cover expenses, but more loss if you can't. The object, naturally enough, is to raise profitable birds.

## SETUP

Deal six cards to each player. The remaining cards form the draw pile. There is no discard pile at the beginning.

Play alternates until the last card is drawn from the draw pile.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you may do one of the following: hatch a new bird, by starting a new stack; grow a bird, by adding a card to an existing stack; or discard a card. After that, you draw one card.

**Hatch a new bird:** You may start a new bird stack by selecting a card from your hand and playing it face up in front of you.

**Grow a bird:** You may grow a bird by adding a card from your hand to the top of a stack already in front of you. All of the cards in the stack must share a single suit, although of course number cards will each have another suit as well. Stacks must be in either increasing or decreasing order, although you may skip ranks.

*Example:* The stack for a blue bird might be comprised of the Ace, 2, and 4 of Waves. You may only play a Wave of rank 5 or more on that bird.

For the purpose of stack order, Aces are below 1s and Crowns are above 9s. If you hatch a bird with a number card, you do not need to declare which suit the stack will follow or which direction it will go; this will eventually be determined by cards you play when growing the bird.

*Example:* You hatch a bird with the 7 of Suns and Knots. You may either make it an orange bird (by growing it with a Sun card) or a yellow bird (by growing it with a Knot). The first time you grow it, you may grow up (by playing a card rank 8 or more) or grow down (by playing 6 or less). If you grow the bird with the 6 of Suns and Wyrms, then you are committed to an orange bird growing down.

When you add cards to a stack, you should set them at a bit of an offset so that both you and your opponent can see what cards are in the stack.

**Discard:** If you don't want to play any of the cards in your hand, you may select and discard one card. Put it on the top of the discard pile, starting the pile if necessary.

**Draw:** If you discarded, take the top card of the draw pile. Otherwise, you may take either the top card of the draw pile or the top card of the discard pile (if any).

After you draw, your turn is over. If there are still cards in the draw pile, it is now your opponent's turn.

## YEAR END

When the last card is drawn from the draw pile, the year ends.

After the year is over, you may play cards from your hands onto birds that you already have in play. However, you may not hatch new birds or draw cards after the year has ended. Since there is no further player interaction after the year end, you may lay down remaining cards without waiting for other players. Then discard any cards that you are not able to play.

## SCORING

Total up the number cards in the bird stack. If the total is less than 18, then the you lose money on the bird. If the total is 18 or more, then you may make a profit.

**Losing money:** You lose points equal to the difference between the bird's total and the upkeep cost of 18. If the number cards total to 15, for example, you lose 3 points. Furthermore, you lose 5 points if there is an Ace or Crown in the stack; 10 if there are both an Ace and a Crown.

*Example:* At the end of the year, the stack for your orange bird is the Crown, 9, and 8 of Suns. You lose 6 points ( $18 - 9 - 8 = 1$  for the number cards plus 5 for the Crown).

**Possible profit:** If the total of the number cards is 18 or more, you still need to pay upkeep for the bird: Discard number cards from the stack that total at least 18. You do not 'get change' for cards if you discard more than 18. If there are any cards remaining – even just an Ace or Crown – you earn some profit.

For profit, you score the total of any remaining number cards. Furthermore, you gain 5 points if there is an Ace or Crown in the stack; 10 if there are both an Ace and a Crown.

*Example:* At the end of the year, the stack for your blue bird is the Ace, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and Crown of Waves. You discard the 2, 3, 5, and 8 to pay upkeep; this totals exactly 18. This leaves the Ace, 6, and Crown. You score 16 points (6 for the number card plus 10 for the Ace/Crown combo).

Your score for the year is equal to the total value of your birds.

Shuffle the cards and deal a new year. The player who went first should go second in the next year. Since there is some disadvantage to going first, it's best to tally the score across an even number of years. We usually play four years at a sitting and call it a game.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in the Excuse, the Pawns, or the Courts. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game. My own preference is to play with the Excuse and either but not both of the Pawns or Courts.

**The Excuse:** If you have the Excuse in your hand at the end of the year, you may discard one of your birds that would lose money rather than scoring it. If you have no losing birds, then the Excuse has no effect.

**Pawns or Courts:** A Pawn or Court is a limited wild card. It may be played as any number rank, but only to grow a bird that matches one of the Pawn's suits. It may not be played as an Ace or Crown, nor may it be played to hatch a bird.



# ESCAPE!

*a cooperative, deduction game for the Decktet inspired by Hanabi, by Fergus Hadley*

Escape a sinking prison ship with or without your fellow inmates.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

**Extra material:** 8 tokens

## INTRODUCTION

You and the other players are convicts, destined for life of hard labour on a distant shore but currently locked away in the bowels of a prison ship. When a storm hits, your ship founders. Will you be plunged to a cold and cruel death in the depths, or can you escape your cell, work with the other felons and find a lifeboat before the ship goes down, all while persuading the guard to aid your escape?

Escape!

## COMPONENTS

Escape! uses the entire extended Decktet: number cards, pawns, courts, crowns, aces and the excuse. You also need ten tokens. A cup to keep them in is useful but not essential.

Only suits not numbers are used in Escape!, and the cards are grouped as follows:

- Keys: Pawns & Courts (all cards with three suits)
- Corridors: Number cards (all cards with two suits)
- Boats: Crowns & Aces (all cards with one suit)
- The Guard: The Excuse

## SETUP

Shuffle the cards and deal 5 to each player. Unlike other games, players do not look at their cards. Instead, they hold them facing away from themselves, fanning them so all the other players can see what suits the cards hold. You can look at other players' cards but you must not discuss them or otherwise give any clue as to what they are, how they might be played or any other information about them. Players only discover information about their cards by receiving clues (see below).

Place the tokens into a cup or other container. As they are used, you will remove them from the cup.

## GAME PLAY

The player who last spoke to an officer of the law goes first.

On a player's turn, he has three options:

- Give a clue

- Play a card
- Discard a card

## Give a clue

This action costs 1 token. Remove a token from the cup and place it on the table. If there are no tokens left, you cannot perform this action.

You can now tell one other player about either a type of card (key, corridor, boat) or suit (wyrms, suns, etc.). Choose another player, then name a type of card or suit and touch each card that matches the description. For example, you might say “this and this are moons” or “this, this and this are corridors”.

You cannot mention The Guard (The Excuse) when giving clues. This means players can never be completely sure of what they have. Playing the Guard can be very good or very bad depending on the situation, so this uncertainty is perilous.

Escape!

## Play a Card

Play a card onto the table.

If it is a key, place it on its own to start a new escape route. There can never be more escape routes in progress than there are players. If there are already as many escape routes as players, disaster strikes!

If it is a corridor, you may use the card to extend any existing escape route. To extend an escape route, the corridor must share at least one suit with either an unused key or the last-played corridor on another escape route. If the corridor does not match any keys or other corridors, disaster strikes!

If it is a boat, it can be used to escape. Do do so, the card must be played onto an escape route with at least three corridors. The player then takes that escape route and places it in front of themselves (or if they already have one, gives it to an unescaped player of their choice). If there are no escape routes, disaster strikes!

See below for what happens when disaster strikes.

Finally, draw one card to replace the card played.

## Disaster Strikes

Should disaster strike (a card is played but cannot be legally placed), both the card that could not be played *and the longest escape route* are put into the discard pile. If there is more than one escape route of the same length, the active player may choose whichever they want to be discarded.

If the card played was a key, both that card **and** the longest escape route must be discarded.

## Discard a Card

Put a card from your hand into the discard pile. Then return one token to the cup and draw a new card.

This allows more clues to be given on future turns and means there is no chance of disaster striking. However, it does bring the ship closer to sinking.

## The Guard

The Excuse has a special role in Escape! If it is played to the table, the guard helps you out. It can count as any type of corridor. To see which cards can be played on top of the Guard, consider it *invisible* – so the new card must match the card below the Guard.

If it is discarded, however, the guard works against you and disaster strikes.

## When the Draw Pile is Empty

The game does not end when the draw pile is empty. But at this point the ship is breaking up. Players continue to play, give clues or discard, but do not draw any new cards to replace those used up. During the final rounds of the game, players will have fewer and fewer cards to choose from when their turn comes, making escape increasingly difficult.

Only when a player would have to play a card from their hand but they have none left does the game end.

## Ending the Game

The game ends in a number of ways:

- When all the players have escaped (they each have a completed escape route in front of them). In this case everyone wins! The players have achieved a complete success.
- When a player has to play a card but has none left. This means the draw pile has ended and they have played with fewer and fewer cards until they played their last card. When their turn comes round, there are no tokens in the cup so they must either play or discard but have no card to do so.

If anyone has escaped, the players have achieved a partial success. Players who have not escaped are free to beg for help or curse their luckier companions. In either case, they are still doomed to a watery grave.

If no one has a completed escape route, the game is lost. But at least you all share the same fate.

# STORYTELLING

To add an imaginative element to the game, before play each player should state what their character is locked up for and whether they “did it”. Then, as each card is played, use any element of the card to add to either your character’s back story or to narrate how their escape is progressing. You might use the name, something in the picture, even how it relates to the card underneath.

If a card is successfully played down, narrate something positive. If a card causes disaster to strike, the narration should be negative. When discarding a card, narrate something that doesn’t advance the plot such as a missed opportunity or descriptive colour.

It’s probably best *not* to add any narration when giving a clue as the player concerned will need to concentrate on assimilating the information they have just received.

# VARIANTS

Escape! is easier to win than Hanabi, so hardcore Hanabi players (or those who like the idea of leaving their friends to drown on a sinking prison ship) may want to ramp up the difficulty. Use one (or more) the following variants to make things harder:

## Bowels of the Ship Variant

The most obvious way to increase the difficulty is to require 4 corridors on each escape route. This leads to a longer, more strategic game. Cards are just as easy to play down but mistakes cost more as there are fewer cards to play with. Also, be aware that if playing with 5 players, this means you must be *very* careful what you discard!

Escape!

## Dark of the Storm Variant

Reduce the number of clue tokens to 6. This will increase the luck needed to succeed and lead to a more risky, exciting game but may also mean the players lose through no fault of their own.

## Rat Warren Variant

The number of allowed escape routes is equal to the number of players - 1. So 1 on a two-player game, 2 in a three-player game, etc. This variant clogs players' hands with boats and keys they cannot play but do not dare discard, leading to fraught decisions.

## Every Man for Himself Variant

Have escape routes that are completed count towards the maximum allowed. So, in a five-player game, when there are two unescaped players left, there can only be 2 escape routes in play, not 5. And only one escape route when the last player is left. This makes for a more cutthroat game, as a full victory becomes much harder. Do you dare play the last corridor so that someone else will launch the boat?

# FIFES AND DRUMS

*sudden but inevitable betrayal or the most efficient rout for 2 players, by P.D. Magnus and Greg Payne.*

It is the last battle in the final campaign of a mad but brilliant general. Six companies of tired soldiers are all that stands between him and the advancing enemy. He doesn't realize it yet, but there is no way for him to win.

Fortunately, you are not playing the general in this game. Unfortunately, you're not the advancing army either.

Instead, you play a member of the general's staff. You were offered money by captains of a few of the remaining companies. Maneuver them off the field before the inevitable defeat, and they will pay you handsomely. So cue the fifes and drums! Jigger the retreat orders to put your cronies as far from danger as possible.

Of course, everybody else on the general's staff was bribed to put their cronies ahead of yours.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** six tokens, battlefield track

## COMPONENTS:

You will need a complete 45-card Decktet, including all of the extended deck cards. In addition, you will need a battlefield track and six unit tokens. The track should be 45 spaces long, although most games won't need more than 25 or 30 spaces; you can draw one or borrow the point track from another board game. The tokens are each associated with one of the Decktet suits; you can use suit chips, coloured cubes, or somesuch.

## SETUP

Shuffle together the Pawns and Courts. Deal one facedown to each player. Each player may look at their card. The three suits on the card represent the three units which the player is trying to help. Set aside the remaining Pawns and Courts without looking at them.

Shuffle the basic deck. Take five cards without looking at them, shuffle the Excuse into that pile, and put it on the bottom of the deck. This forms the draw pile. (When the Excuse is turned over the game ends, so the game will go through most but perhaps not all of the draw pile.)

Deal five cards from the top of the draw pile, face up onto the table. These form the initial pool of possible orders.

All of the unit tokens begin on the first space of the battlefield track. This is in the shadow of the advancing enemy; the track leads away from the enemy and, perhaps, to safety.

Someone takes the first turn; play then alternates.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you will select one card from the pool of possible orders. That card is played immediately and discarded. A new card is then flipped over to replace it in the pool.

Number cards, Aces, and Crowns work in different ways:

Number cards represent an order to retreat. You may move the two units represented by the suits on the card a total number of spaces equal to the rank of the card. You must move each unit at least one space.

*Example:* The 8♠♣ may be used to move the ♠ token 6 spaces along the track (away from the advancing army) and the ♣ token 2 spaces; or any combination of moves which totals 8 spaces.

An *Ace* represents a forced march order for a specific unit. Pick a direction along the track. Move the token represented by the suit of the *Ace* in the chosen direction until it reaches a space occupied by another token. Place the moving token in the occupied space. If there are no other unit tokens in the direction you selected, move the indicated unit token one space instead.

A *Crown* (♔) represents the General's desire for the unit to charge the enemy. If a ♔ is present in the pool of orders and you select a matching number card, then that token is moved toward the beginning of the track the appropriate distance.

*Example:* The 7♠♣ is played while the Crown of Wyrms is one of the cards in the pool. The ♠ token could be moved along the track 4 spaces and the ♣ token back toward the beginning of the track 3 spaces; or any combination of moves which totals 7 spaces.

If you select and play the ♔, move the matching unit token back toward the beginning of the track until it reaches a space occupied by another unit token. (This is the same as playing an *Ace*, except that you do not get to choose a direction.)

If any play would move a token beyond the starting space on the battlefield track, leave the token in the first space instead.

After playing a card, turn over a card from the draw pile to replace it. If the new card is the *Excuse*, then the game ends immediately.

## SCORING

When the *Excuse* is drawn, the enemy army surges forward. Units only have a chance if there are other units behind it, buying the ones further ahead time to escape.

Each player's score is the total value of the three unit tokens represented by the three suits on the *Pawn* or *Crown* that they were dealt at the beginning of the game. The player with the most points is the winner.

The unit token closest to the start of the track is worth zero points. If several unit tokens are in the same space closest to the start, each is worth zero.

The unit token next along the track is worth one point. If several tokens are in the same space, each is worth one.

The unit token next along the track is worth two, and so on. If all the tokens are in different spaces along the battlefield track, then the forwardmost token is worth five points.

Note that players will probably share some of the same scoring suits.

## VARIANTS

**Fog of War:** This variant adds uncertainty about which unit is which. It's untested, but should add some combination of bluffing and madness. Here's how it works:

Shuffle the draw pile, but do put the Excuse in it.

After receiving a goal card, each player draws three cards from the draw pile. If any of these cards is an Ace or Crown, they may reveal it and draw another. Once they have three number-ranked cards, they pick one and put the remaining two back on the draw pile.

Put any revealed Aces or Crowns back on the draw pile, shuffle it, and add the Excuse as per the usual rules. Play proceeds as normal until the Excuse is drawn.

After the Excuse is drawn but before points are counted, players reveal their secret number cards. Starting with the higher ranked card, swap the positions of the unit tokens corresponding to the two suits on the card. (If the two cards are the same rank, order won't matter.)

Then count score, following the usual rules.

*The variant is totally untested but is sure to be crazy.*



# FIFTH CHALLENGE

*a light adventure game for 2 to 4 players, by Jorge Arroyo.*

Young ones coming of age in the wild elven tribes of the west part of the country have to pass a coming of age ritual when they reach adulthood. After years of training in the war and magic arts, when they reach the age of 200 years, they are sent into the dangerous savage lands of the north-west to complete five challenges. Those who complete the toughest challenges will be the most successful that year and will earn the recognition of their tribe and a chance to learn from the greatest masters.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra material:** 6 sided die

## INTRODUCTION

Fifth Challenge is a light card adventure game where players have to complete five challenges of varying difficulty. As challenges are completed, players earn experience that will help complete tougher challenges later on. When a player completes the fifth challenge, points are tallied and the player that got the most points, completing the most difficult challenges, wins.

## BASIC CONCEPTS

Each player controls an elven youngster. The player's hand represents the resources the youngster has at any given moment but also their health. If at any point the player loses all their cards, the elven youngster is considered to be dead and the player has to start over with a new youngster (maybe a relative of the one that didn't make it).

Each suit represents a different aspect of a challenge. Moons represent a spiritual challenge while Suns represent a great physical one. Waves imply dangerous weather and Leaves a challenge in the layout of the land. Wyrms represent combat of a physical kind while Knots represent combat of a magical kind.

The suits available in a player's hand can help them complete challenges (by using them to increase their chances of success) but using them this way will mean health is lost. Also, as challenges are completed, players gain those suits in the challenge card as a permanent bonus, making future challenges of those types a bit easier.

## SETUP

Take the aces out of the deck and shuffle them. Deal one ace to each player. The aces are placed in front of each player, face up and up-right. This is the player's basic power, the type of challenge they handle best at the start of the game. The rest of the aces are out of the game.

Shuffle the rest of the Decktet (including pawns and the Excuse) and deal each player a hand of five cards.

# GAME PLAY

On their turn, a player may take one or some of the following actions (depending on some restrictions) in any order. Then at the end of their turn **if they've got less than 5 cards, they take one card from the draw pile.**

Play passes then to the next player and the game continues until one player completes their fifth challenge.

These are the possible actions (the first two types, playing a card and attempting to complete a challenge can each be taken once in any order. They are both optional):

## Fifth Challenge

### Playing a Card:

Players may play one card during their turn either as a challenge or to modify an existing challenge:

**Playing a Card as a Challenge:** A player may play a card as a challenge for themselves or for an opponent. The challenge is as hard as the number on the card. Crowns have a value of 10 and pawns can't be played as challenges.

If playing a challenge for an opponent, the value of the challenge card may not exceed the sum of the values from completed challenges in front of them. So, for example, you can play a 5 challenge on a player that has completed two 3 challenges, but not if they only completed a 4 challenge. Note that this limit only applies to challenges played on other players, not on yourself.

A challenge card is considered uncompleted when played, so it's placed sideways after the last completed (upright) card in front of the player.

Each player may only have one uncompleted challenge in front of them, so a second one can't be played until the current one is completed.

**Playing a card to Modify a Challenge:** Players may want to spend time trying to devise ways to make their current uncompleted challenge easier or harder. This may represent looking for an easier fight, or a harder path, etc. and can be used to pass a challenge that is too hard or to increase the score of an easier challenge.

In order to do this, a player may play a card to substitute an uncompleted challenge card in front of them (never for another player). The card must share at least one suit and its value must be smaller or bigger by exactly one. This process can be repeated on later turns. The substituted card is placed on the discard pile.

### Attempt to Complete a Challenge

To complete a challenge the player will first add the individual suits from upright cards in front of them that match the ones on the challenge card (including the initial ace). Then the 6 sided die is rolled and the result added to that number.

For example, if a player previously completed a suns-moons challenge, and now wants to attempt a moons-wyrms challenge, they'll add 1 to the die roll thanks to the moons suit from their completed challenges.

If the total number equals or exceeds the number on the challenge card, the challenge is automatically completed. The player turns the card upright and will be able to use the suits on it for future challenges.

If the total number is less than the number on the challenge card, then in order to succeed, the player will have to exert some extra effort. The player may discard

cards from their hand with suits matching at least one suit from the challenge card to reach the necessary total. So for example if the total rolled was 4 for a 6 challenge, the player will have to discard 2 suits which can be from the same card or two different ones.

If the player doesn't have the necessary number of matching suits, they can use 3 any other suits as a substitute for 1 matching suit. For example, the player needs one sun or moons, but doesn't have any. They can discard 2 cards with any four suits to make up for the difference.

In any case, discarding the suits to complete the challenge is optional. If players can't or don't want to do it, they will just take some damage and fail the challenge. In this case they discard a number of cards equal to the difference between the challenge number and the total number rolled. They can reduce the damage by spending suits as described above before discarding cards if they want to.

*Example:* If their total roll is 4 and they needed 7 but have one card that has two matching suits, they can first spend those suits before taking damage, reducing the total number of cards they will discard from 3 to 2.

If at the end of the attempt the player has no cards in their hand, then their character dies and they have to start over next turn. Discard all the completed challenges (keep the ace) and get a new hand of cards. Note that even if the player completed their fifth challenge when they died, they still have to start over.

## Discarding and Replacing Cards

This is a special action that can only be taken if the player chooses not to take any other action for the turn. In this case, the player may discard as many cards from their hand as they want and immediately replace them with cards from the draw pile. In this case the player is allowed to discard all their cards without danger.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

Pawns are special because they can't be used as challenges. They can only be played from a player's hand to help complete a challenge.

When the excuse is drawn from the deck, the discard pile is shuffled into the remaining draw deck to make a new draw deck.

## SCORING AND WINNING

As soon as a player completes their fifth challenge the game ends. Each player adds the values of their completed challenges (any uncompleted ones don't count) and the player with the biggest score wins. Note that the crown scores 11 points even though its playing value is 10 (this is because the fact that it only has one suit makes completing it extra hard).

In case of a tie, the player with more completed challenges wins, and if still tied, the one with more completed challenges matching the suit from their ace card wins. If still tied, then they share the win.

## Fifth Challenge

# FISTELLAVATES

*A game of bluffing and set-building inspired by gin-rummy and yomi, by Alexander Brady.*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

**Extra material:** None

You are a Fistellavate, an astrologer of the Bard's Last Star. Plebeian yokels may pronounce your title "Fist-Ell-Ah-Vayt", but you, a truly posh astrologer, know to pronounce the title "Fist-Ell-Ah-Vay-Tee".

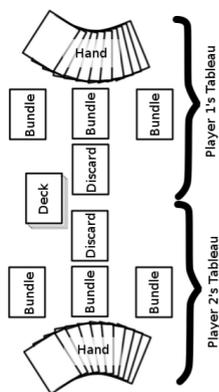
Your teacher, the venerable Fistolavarna Alfred, is frequently asked for astrological predictions by the king. He then assigns these questions to you, his pupils. As the Fistolavarna wisely says, "It is best to learn by doing, and plausible deniability only works if you delegate."

## OVERVIEW

Fistellavates requires bluffing and hand management, where your cards can either represent observations that you must bundle together to support theories, or plans to propose to the head astrologer.

Players compete to reduce the unexplained omens in their hand and their bundles. The player with the lowest total omens scores the difference in omens between the two players. It is recommended to play Fistellavates over multiple rounds, keeping track of each player's score.

## SETUP



Fistellavates uses the extended Decktet deck (including the ♃'s and the ♁'s), but without the Excuse.

- Shuffle the deck and deal each player 10 cards face down to form their starting hand.
- Deal each player three cards that should be placed in three separate piles, face up, to form their starting bundles.
- Deal one card into each player's discard. Compare them using the "Comparing Plan Cards" rules below. If they tie, the player with the longest beard wins. The player whose discard wins the comparison is given the title of "best student." (This might be important if both players tie on the first turn, but probably won't matter)

# BANK AND VALUE

The Fistolarvena always double checks the information a pupil had access to when making a hypothesis. As the Fistolarvena wisely says, “Never overlook the influence of the people and their courts. But don’t worry about royalty, they never do anything meaningful.”

The rank of cards in Fistellavates is slightly modified from traditional Decktet rankings:

Lower ← ♠ A 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ♠ → Higher

Each card has an omen value in Fistellavates as well. Crowns (♠) are 0 omens, aces are 1 omen, numbered cards signify a number of omens equal to the number on the card (4’s are 4 omens, for example), pawns (♠) are 10 omens, and courts (♠) are 11.

Fistellavates

## GAME PLAY

### The Flow of Play

Each turn consists of four phases (plus a fifth phase that only takes place if one of the players can end the game), but typically only one player will get to take advantage of two of the phases.

1. **Drawing:** Each player will draw one more card.
2. **Planning:** Each player chooses a card to propose as a plan to the Fistolarvena. The player who proposed the better plan becomes the “predictor” for this turn and goes on to steps 3 and 4. (In the comparison with rummy-style games, this is also the discard a card step)
3. **Correcting:** Depending on which plan the predictor picked, they may get to exchange cards from their hand with cards from their bundles.
4. **Suggesting:** Depending on which suits are on the plan the predictor picked, they may get to add cards from their hand to their bundles.
5. **Declarations and Game End:** If the current predictor has created enough focused bundles and has a small hand, they may choose to end the game by declaring a prediction. But be careful! The Fistolarvena will examine how many omens each player has left unexplained, and the player who chose to end the game might not win after all!

### Draw Phase

Each player, starting with the “best student,” decides whether to take the top card off of their opponent’s discard or the top card of the deck. If the deck is empty, shuffle all but the top card of each player’s discard together to form a new draw deck.

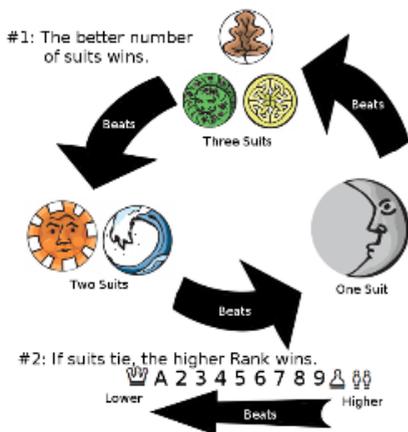
**Ties** If the *previous* round ended in a tie, both players must take the top card of the deck and cannot take the top of their opponent’s discard.

## Planning Phase

Each player chooses a card to discard and places it face down in front of them. Both players simultaneously reveal and compare discarded cards, placing them on top of their discard pile. The player with the winning card is declared the new predictor, given the title of “best student,” and may perform corrections and suggestions. The loser does nothing.

### Comparing Plan Cards

As the Fistolarvena wisely says, “As two plans are better than one, so three plans are better than two. But then again, one plan is definitely better than three.”



The cards, when used as plans, follow a rock-paper-scissors relationship, where a card with two suits beats a card with one suit, and a card with three suits beats a card with two suits, but a card with one suit beats a card with three suits.

If both cards have the same number of suits, the card with the higher rank (and thus the higher value) wins.

If the cards have the same rank (and thus also the same number of suits), the two cards tie.

**Ties** In the event of a tie, both players are given the title of “co-predictor” (which is not the same as “predictor”) and perform both the corrections and the suggestions phases. The “best student” goes first (the “best student” is the player who most recently won a planning phase, without tying). The Declaration phase is skipped if the players tie, so the game can never end on a turn where the players tied.

### Focused and Unfocused Bundles

As the Fistolarvena wisely says, “A good prediction fits the data you have. If your data does not support your conclusion, get rid of it.”

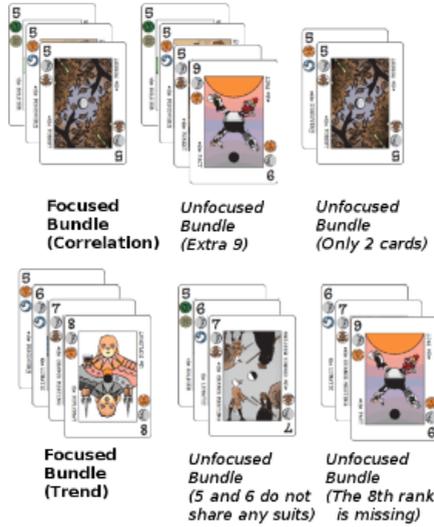
Each player has three piles in front of them that represent their three bundles. Bundles cannot be created or destroyed, but they can grow (though they cannot shrink). Though the player can add a card to any bundle they choose (provided they follow the rules for suggesting or correcting cards), their goal is to create “focused” bundles.

A bundle is focused if there are at least three cards in the bundle and all the cards in the bundle can be arranged to form a single “correlation” or a single “trend.”

A **Correlation** consists of three or more cards of the same rank.

A **Trend** consists of three or more cards that can be arranged in order of consecutive rank, and so that each consecutive card shares at least one suit with

the card before it. Note that, because many cards have two or more suits, the first card and the last card in the same trend might not have any suits in common.



### Corrections Phase

The predictor, or co-predictor, may swap cards (“corrections”) between their hand and their bundles based on what card they won or tied with. Note that cards may never be swapped between two different bundles directly, they must be swapped into the hand first.

- One suit: The predictor or co-predictor may swap any single card from their hand with any single card from any single bundle.
- Two suits: The predictor or co-predictor may exchange a card from their hand with a card from one of their bundles as long as at least one of the two cards is the same rank as the winning (or tying) plan card. They may make a second swap if it includes another card of the same rank, but any single card may never be involved in more than one swap on the same turn.
- Three suits: No swapping is possible.

*Example:* Alicia wins the planning phase with the A♠. She then swaps the ♠♣♥ from her hand with the 7♣ in her first bundle. The next turn, Milfred wins the planning with the 9♣. She swaps the 9♣ in her first bundle with the ♣ from her hand, then swaps the 9♣ from her hand with the 2♣ in her second pile. She cannot make any more swaps, because each 9 has been used in one swap already. On the third turn, Alicia wins planning with the ♠♣♥. She regrets her earlier decision and wants to swap out the ♠♣♥ from her first bundle, but she cannot because planning cards with three suits do not allow for any swapping.

# SUGGESTIONS PHASE

The predictor or co-predictor may add cards (suggestions) from their hand into any of their bundles as long as the cards they add share at least one suit with the winning (or tying) plan card.

*Example:* Alicia wins planning with the ♠♣♦♠. Her third bundle only contains the 8♣♦. She adds to her third bundle the 8♣♠ from her hand. She would like to add the 8♣♥ as well, but she cannot because it does not share any suits with the ♠♣♦♠.

## Declarations Phase

The predictor (but not a co-predictor) may declare a Hypothesis or a Proof if they meet the necessary conditions, which ends the game. If they do not make a declaration, they are given the title of “best student,” and another turn is played.

**Hypothesis** If the predictor is left with three or fewer cards in their hand and has at least one focused bundle, they may declare “I have a hypothesis!” They must then state a hypothesis, which must somehow include all the names of the cards in one of their focused bundles.

After the predictor has declared a hypothesis, their opponent may add any cards they wish from their hand to their own bundles. If the opponent has any focused bundles, they may state a competing hypothesis using the names of the cards in one of their focused bundles.

Then both players count the total unexplained omens in their hands and their unfocused bundles (cards in focused bundles are considered explained and are worth zero unexplained omens).

If the predictor’s hand and bundles add up to a smaller total of unexplained omens, they score the difference plus an additional ten points for making a good hypothesis. If their opponent has a lower total value, they score the difference. Ties go to the predictor, who only scores the bonus ten points.

*Example:* Milfred declares a hypothesis with the following bundles:

First Bundle	Second Bundle	Third Bundle
2♣♥/3♣♥/4♣♦/5♣♦/6♣♥	♣♥/♣♥/♣♥	♣♥♣♥/♣♥♣♥

She also has the ♣♥♣♥, A♣♥, and 4♣♥ in her hand. Her first and second bundles are focused, so they amount to 0 omens. Her third bundle is unfocused, with 20 unexplained omens. Her hand has 15 omens. Thus, she has 35 unexplained omens.

Alicia, Milfred’s opponent, has the following bundles:

First Bundle	Second Bundle	Third Bundle
4♣/5♣/6♣/8♣/9♣	A♣/A♣	9♣

She also has the 7♣, ♠, and ♠ in her hand. Because Milfred declared a hypothesis, Alicia can add the 7, ♠, and ♠ to her first bundle to make a trend, and the two aces from her hand to her second bundle to make a correlation. She then has two focused bundles valued at 0 omens, a third, unfocused bundle valued at 9 omens, and no cards in hand.

In this example, Alicia has the total unexplained omens, so she scores 35 omens – 9 omens = 26 points. She does not score any bonus points because she did not make the declaration.

**Proof** Sometimes a predictor can do better than declaring a hypothesis. If an predictor has focused all three of their bundles (either as three correlations or as three trends, or a combination of both) and three or fewer cards left in hand, they may declare “I have a proof!” They must then state what they have proven, including all of the names of the cards in one of their bundles in their proof.

If the predictor declares a proof, their opponent is not given the opportunity to add cards from their hand to any bundles. However, if their opponent has any focused bundles they may state a reason that their opponent’s proof is invalid, using all the names of the cards in one of their bundles.

Both players total the unexplained omens of the cards in their hands and in their unfocused bundles (note: in this case, the predictor will always have 0 unexplained omens in their bundles). If the predictor has a lower total, they score the difference plus an additional twenty for successfully completing a proof. Otherwise, their opponent scores the difference, but does not score any bonus points (because disproving a proof is sad for everyone involved). Ties go to the predictor, who only scores the bonus twenty points.

*Example:* Milfred declares a proof with the following bundles:

First Bundle	Second Bundle	Third Bundle
2♣/3♣/4♣/5♣/6♣	♣/♣/♣	♣/♣/♣/♣/♣

She also has the A♣ and 4♣ in her hand. All of her bundles are focused, so they have a value of 0 unexplained omens. Her hand has a value of 5 omens. Thus, her total value is 5 unexplained omens.

Alicia, Milfred’s opponent, has the following bundles:

First Bundle	Second Bundle	Third Bundle
4♣/5♣/6♣/7♣/8♣/9♣	A♣/A♣	9♣

She also has the ♠, ♠, A♣, and A♣ in her hand. Because Milfred declared a proof, Alicia cannot add anything from her hand to her bundles. Her first bundle is focused and has a value of 0 unexplained omens. Her other two, unfocused bundles are valued at (1+1)+(9) = 11 omens. Her hand is valued at 10+11+1+1 = 23 omens.

In this example, Milfred has the lower number of unexplained omens, so she scores 34 omens – 5 omens = 29 points, plus an additional 20 points because Milfred won the proof she declared, for a total of 49 points.

# MULTIPLE GAMES

It is suggested to play multiple games of *Fistellavates*, keeping track of each player's score. Players should play for the first to two hundred points. A higher point goal will make for a longer session, and a lower goal will make the session shorter.

## VARIANTS

### Once Through the Deck

To guarantee a short game and prevent some stalemates, players can choose not to reshuffle the deck. If no player has made a declaration by the time the deck runs out, players total up their unexplained omens (with no chance to play any extra cards) and the player with the lower total scores the difference. Ties go to no one, because the difference is 0 and there are no bonus points.

### Three Player Variant

*Fistellavates* can be played with three players, with a few modifications to the rules.

**Bundles and Hands** With three players, each player gets two bundles and eight cards in their hand.

**Drawing Phase** Rules for drawing are the same as the rules for two players, except now there are two piles of opponent's discards to choose from. If one of the discards runs out (which can happen if one player keeps dropping cards the other two both want), then no one can take a card from the empty discard.

When reshuffling the deck, collect all but the top card (if any) from each player's discard before shuffling.

**Planning Phase** During the planning phase, each player should compare their plan card with that of the player to their left to determine if they are a "predictor" or a "co-predictor." Because of this there can be one, two, or three "predictors" on the same turn and one or three "co-predictors" on the same turn.

**Turn Order** If there is more than one predictor or co-predictor on a turn, players should act in order of the rank on their plan cards, highest first. If there are three co-predictors, use the turn order from the previous turn.

**Ending the Game** In turn order, each player is given the option to end the game according to the rules described in the declarations phase for two players. However, a "proof" only requires two focused bundles (because players only have two bundles). Three or less cards left in the hand is always required.

A co-predictor may never attempt to end the game, even if they are the only co-predictor that turn.

**Scoring** If the declarer, the player that ended the game, has the lowest total number of unexplained omens, or is tied for the lowest total, they score the difference between their value and the next lowest value plus any bonus for a proof or hypothesis. Otherwise, every opponent who had a lower total scores the difference in their number of unexplained omens and the declarer's total.



# FOLLOW THE AUTHOR

*a battle for lexicographical superiority for 2 players, by Mycake.*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Courts)

**Extra material:** Something to keep score with (e.g., pencil and paper)

## GAMEPLAY

The game is made up of a number of rounds, with each round consisting of two hands, the alpha hand and the omega hand. After each round the player who dealt the omega hand last round deals the alpha hand the next round.

Play is for a set number of rounds (which should be even, so each player deals first in the round the same number of times). 8 rounds is recommended, but this can be adjusted for a shorter/longer game as desired.

Dealer deals each player 11 cards, and place the remaining cards to one side, they will be used for the omega hand of the round. Each player should have space for a pile where they can put cards that they have won, which will be referred to as their 'store'. Before play commences, each player should select a card from their hand and place it face down in their opponent's store.

Play begins with non-dealer, who selects a card from their hand and places it face up between the players. Play then alternates, with a player on their turn placing a card from their hand slightly overlapping the previous, so that the name, rank and suits of all cards played so far can be seen, with the constraint that the title of the card played must come later alphabetically than the previous (but note Section Aces). Certain points are scored during play of the hand, these are detailed in Section Scoring.

Play continues in this fashion until one player cannot lay any card, at which point the other player can continue playing legal cards (if they chose to). When they have played all the cards they wish, all cards played to the table are placed face down in that players store. That player then starts a new sequence by playing any card face up to the table.

A player wins the hand as soon as they play the last card in their hand. They immediately place all cards played in the current sequence in their store, and can examine all cards left in their opponent's hand, choosing to place any they wish into their own store. Cards they do not wish to add to their store are placed to the side face down. They will take no further part in the round.

After the alpha hand, each player secretly selects one of the six suits to be their Scoring suit for the round (see Section Scoring). This can be done by writing it down on a piece of paper which is kept face down until after the omega hand, or by secretly taking a suit chip from a stash of many of them and concealing underneath a cup or some such thing.

Each player then secretly selects one of the six suits to be their opponent's Danger suit for the round (see Section Scoring). This is done in much the same fashion, taking care not to mix the two up.

There is no restriction on the choices made by either player.

The player who didn't deal alpha hand deals for omega hand. Dealer deals 11 more cards to each player from the leftover deck to each player. There should be one card left over, place this to the side.

This hand then plays as the previous, beginning as before with players adding a face down card to each other's store. When the hand is finished the winner of the hand can examine the one remaining card in the same fashion as their opponent's unplayed cards, choosing to either add it to their store or discard it.

The round is then scored.

## Aces

If during a hand a player holds an ace, they may play this on any card, so long as the ace is of a suit belonging to that card. The next player then has two choices. The first is to terminate the sequence, in which case the player laying the ace puts cards played in their store, and leads to the next sequence. Alternatively, they may choose to continue the sequence by playing any card (except another ace), with play then continuing as normal. A player may not lead an ace unless they have no other option, in which case the usual rules for following an ace apply.

# SCORING

## During the round

Certain points can be earned during play of the hand:

- If a player plays a card of the same rank as the previous card played they score a point. If it's the same as the previous two cards they score two points, and so on.
- If a player plays a card such that the last three or more cards are ranked in a consecutive run (although not necessarily in order), they score on for each card in the run. For instance, if the last three cards played were 9, 10, 8, then a player laying a ♠ will score 4 points.
- The first player to play all the cards in their hand scores a point.

## After the round

After the round, players reveal their scoring suit and the suit they have selected as their opponent's danger suit. If a player's danger suit is revealed to be the same as their scoring suit, they do not have a danger suit for this round.

Players then each go through their store, counting every card that have neither their scoring suit nor their danger suit (except for the Excuse). Whoever has the least such cards scores a point for Sagaciousness. If the count is the same neither player gets this point. These cards are then placed to the side, taking no further part in scoring.

They additionally discard any card that has both their scoring suit and their danger suit.

The remaining cards are then examined and points allocated as follows:

- If a player has the Excuse they score 2 points.
- Whoever has the most cards in their scoring suit scores 1 point for each of these cards.

- Whoever has the most cards in their danger suit *loses* 1 point for each of these cards, and additionally loses the value of the highest number card (2-9) they hold in that suit, if any.
- Either player having any pair of cards of equal rank in their scoring suit scores 3 points for each pair
- Whichever player has the longest run of consecutively ranked cards in their scoring suit scores 1 point for each card in the run.
- Whichever player has the most personality cards in their scoring suit scores 3 points for Sociability.
- If either player has three or more place cards in their danger suit they lose 1 point for each, for Vulnerability.

This table summarises potential points available:

Name	Points
<b>During Play</b>	
Same rank	1 for each card played consecutively of the same rank after the first
Run	1 for each card in run
Finish First	1
<b>End of the Round</b>	
Sagaciousness	1
Excuse	2
Most Scoring Cards	1 for each card
Most Danger Cards	- (number of cards + rank of highest <i>number</i> card)
Pairs	3 per pair
Longest Run	1 for each card in run
Sociability	3
Vulnerability	-1 for each place card

## EXAMPLE ROUND

*To come.*

# ORDERING REFERENCE

Follow the Author

The Author	(2 ♠ ♣)	The Journey	(3 ♠ ♣)
The Bard	(♣ ♠)	The Light Keeper	(♠ ♣ ♣)
The Battle	(4 ♣ ♣)	The Lunatic	(6 ♠ ♣)
The Betrayal	(8 ♣ ♣)	The Market	(6 ♣ ♣)
The Borderland	(♠ ♣ ♣ ♣)	The Merchant	(9 ♣ ♣)
The Calamity	(♣ ♣)	The Mill	(8 ♠ ♣)
The Castle	(7 ♠ ♣)	The Mountain	(4 ♠ ♣)
The Cave	(7 ♠ ♣)	The Origin	(2 ♠ ♣)
The Chance Meeting	(7 ♠ ♣)	The Pact	(9 ♠ ♣)
The Consul	(♠ ♠ ♠ ♣)	The Painter	(3 ♣ ♣)
The Darkness	(9 ♠ ♣)	The Penitent	(6 ♣ ♣)
The Desert	(2 ♠ ♣)	The Rite	(♠ ♠ ♣ ♣)
The Diplomat	(8 ♠ ♣)	The Sailor	(4 ♠ ♣)
The Discovery	(5 ♠ ♣)	The Savage	(3 ♣ ♣)
The End	(♣ ♣)	The Sea	(♣ ♣)
The Excuse		The Soldier	(5 ♣ ♣)
The Forest	(5 ♠ ♣)	The Watchman	(♠ ♠ ♣ ♣)
The Harvest	(♠ ♠ ♠ ♣)	The Windfall	(♣ ♣)
The Huntress	(♣ ♣)	The Window	(♠ ♠ ♣ ♣)
The Island	(♠ ♠ ♠ ♣)		

## VARIANTS

### Back and Forth

Play is the same as for the main game except that during the omega hand, cards must be played in reverse alphabetical order.

### Cribbage Finish

Play is the same as for the main game, but is played to a pre-decided score (e.g. 121). *As soon as a player crosses this threshold they win.*

Points gained during a hand (such as pairs) are added immediately. Points added after the round are added in the order listed in the table in Scoring. In categories where both players can score/lose points whoever dealt the alpha hand for the round scores points first.

# FORGET VENICE

*Forget Venice (FV) is a set collection game, by Andrew Watson. It uses a "divide the pie into three slices" mechanism to distribute cards to the players. Scoring, which takes place at the end of each half of the game, involves assessing your collection against three criteria. Most cards will score on more than one criterion.*

**Extra material:** Cheat Sheet and Player Sheet

## SETUP

Use the Extended Decktet, but remove the following three cards: Excuse; Island; Borderland. Shuffle the resulting 42-card FV deck and place it face down between the players.

The senior player should be player 1, and so Distributor for the first round of the first half. Senior here means most familiar with FV. (If all are equally (un)familiar with RV, it means most familiar with the Decktet. If all are equally (un)familiar with the Decktet, it simply means the oldest player.) The player to the left of player 1 is player 2, and the player to the left of player 2 is player 3.

Give each player a Player Sheet. The Player Sheet describes scoring. It is also a score sheet, and so useful to each player, however experienced. Write your player number (1, 2, or 3) in the space provided in the heading of the Player Sheet. Then focus your scoring criteria for the first half. For example, if you are player 2, criterion II means that you are aiming to have many more Moons than Wyrms, or vice versa.

## GAME PLAY

Give each player unfamiliar with FV a Cheat Sheet. The Cheat Sheet describes game play. It is only a single page, but is summarized here. There are two halves, each of six rounds.

Each round starts with the Distributor (D) taking the top 7 cards from the deck, then dividing them into 3 piles, each pile consisting of one or more cards. The player to the left is First Chooser, and so chooses one of the piles. The next player, again going leftward/clockwise, is Second Chooser, and so chooses one of the remaining two piles. D has no choice but to take the only remaining pile.

At the end of each round, the D role moves to the left, so that Player 2 is D for the second round, Player 3 for the third, Player 1 again for the fourth, and so on.

The end of the sixth round marks the end of the first half, as well as the end of the FV deck. Score the first half now, using the Player Sheets. There is an example of scoring on the back of the Cheat Sheet.

Collect and shuffle the cards for the second half. The second half is very similar to the first. The player with the highest first-half score is D for the first round of the second half. (Yes, first-half scores are public.) The D role moves to the left in each subsequent round of the second half.

After the second half comes final scoring: the addition of first and second half scores, and the comparison of the result among the three players. Highest sum

wins: first tiebreaker is score in second half; second tiebreaker is score in second half on criterion III.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

As noted above, the FV deck is the Extended Decktet, without three specific cards: Excuse; Island; Borderland. This means that the FV comprises 42 cards:

- All 24 two-suited cards
- All 12 one-suited cards (Ace and Crown of each suit)
- 6 of the 8 three-suited cards, omitting the two that do not span a FV suit pair
- 0 suitless cards, since Excuse is the only suitless card, and it is omitted

## VARIANTS

I have given the current version the number 0.99, since I believe it to be close to version 1 of a playable game. This may be optimistic, since the previous version (0.90) received only one playtest.

Beyond V1, there are several possibilities for variants, extensions, and the like.

- New scoring criteria.
- Secret scoring criteria. This was a feature of V0.90, but turned out to be a bug in that context. An improved implementation of secret scoring may reappear in a future variant/extension.
- Variants for different numbers of players. FV is a 3-player game. But it might be possible to devise variants for 4 or (more likely) 2 players.

# THE FOUR COURTS

*a set collecting game for 3 or 4 players and is recommended for younger players, by Greg James.*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Courts)

**Extra material:** tokens (7 in each of the Decktet's suits)

## DESCRIPTION

The 4 Court cards have tokens matching their suits placed on them to form the tableau. These tokens are being vied for each round and are worth 1 point each. When a player is the first to play 3 cards which match a suit with their Court, he immediately scores one of the chips on that card. Players are also awarded bonus points for having the most tokens of certain suits at game end.

## SETUP

Arrange the 4 Courts face up, widely spaced and staggered on the table. (If you don't have Court cards, just use the Pawns for this function). Leave enough room adjacent to each Court for a card to be played on each of its sides without touching the cards played on the next Court. The 4 Courts will remain in this position for the whole game.

At the beginning of the game, there should be one token matching each of the Courts' suits on each Court card. E.g., The Island () will have 3 tokens: 1 Sun, 1 Wave and 1 Wyrms.

Next, the "Most" goals are determined. Take one token of each suit and perform a blind draw which will yield 4 of the tokens. Set aside two tokens in each of these four suits off to the side in clear view. (Note: Remove two tokens in each of the suits that were left over from the blind draw – they are not used in the game.) These tokens represent the "Most" goals and are awarded to the player with the most suit tokens in these suits at game end. To qualify for the "Most" bonus, a player must have at least two tokens in the bonus suit. If two players are tied in a suit at game end, the bonus is shared between them and they score one bonus chip each.

When the setup is complete, there will be three tokens in each suit left in the supply. This forms the clock mechanism which will trigger the end of the game.

As all card play is performed simultaneously, it doesn't matter which player is the Dealer. The Dealer must deal out the entire deck evenly to all players at the beginning of each round. If the deck cannot be distributed evenly, set aside any extra cards so that all players have the same number of cards.

Aces are high in this game, scoring 11. Crowns score 10 and if you are using the Pawns, they are ranked above 9s and below the Crowns for determining turn order.

## GAME PLAY

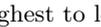
All cards played must match at least one suit with the Court it is played against.

To keep track of cards played during the round, the player on the South side of the table always plays his cards on the South side of each Court. Thus in a four player game, each Court will be the centre of a cross symbol. Players should slightly splay their cards as they add them to each Court so that all players can clearly see the number of cards in play on each Court.

All tokens in a player's take should remain visible throughout the game.

## SIMULTANEOUS ACTION

Each turn, players select one card from their hand and when all players are ready, cards are simultaneously revealed. The highest ranked card is played first (against the Court of the player's choice) and remaining cards are played in descending rank order.

Ties are resolved by following the order of the Decktet's suit hierarchy. The suits in rank order from highest to lowest are: . This is discussed on p. 12 of the Decktet Book and a card with this sequence is also included with each Decktet. Thus, if the Ace of Suns and the Ace of Waves were revealed on the same turn, the Ace of Suns would be played first. If *The Chance Meeting* 7  and *The Cave* 7  are played on the same turn, *The Chance Meeting* would go first, because its highest suit (Moons) is higher than *The Cave's* highest suit (Waves).

## SCORING TOKENS

When a player is the first to lay a card against a Court which gives him a total of 3 cards (regardless of what they add up to), that Court is immediately scored. The winning player will take 1 token of his choice from the Court and add it to his take. His cards on that Court are then removed from play and placed face down in the discard pile. Other players' cards against that Court remain in play. The second time the Court is scored, the winning player will choose 1 token from the two remaining tokens and then discard his cards from the Court. The final token is still up for grabs and is awarded to the next player to have 3 cards in play against that Court.

When a Court has been emptied of its last token, it is "reloaded" with 3 tokens from the (dwindling) original supply.

## END OF ROUND BUSINESS

After all cards from players' hands have been played, the round ends. All cards in play remain and are "carried forward" to the next round in their positions against their Courts. Tokens on Courts are also left in place for the next round. The discard pile is gathered, shuffled and dealt so that all players have an equal number of cards. Any left over cards are set aside to start the new discard pile.

## GAME END

If it should happen (and it will!) that a Court is cleared of its last token and there isn't a complete set of 3 matching tokens in the supply to "reload" it, the game ends immediately and scores are tallied.

For the purpose of tie-breaking, all cards revealed for the last turn remain on the table and are considered to be played. Players should keep any remaining cards in their hand in case they are needed for the tie-breaker.

Players first count the total number of tokens in their take. Next, they determine who qualifies for the “Most” bonuses and award the two bonus tokens to the player with the most chips of the bonus suit. If more than one player has the same number of tokens for a “Most” goal, they each score one point. The player with the most points wins!

If there is a tie, players calculate the number value of the cards remaining in their hands. Highest score wins. If this is still a tie, then the player holding the highest ranked card wins and if this is still a tie, the player holding the tied card with the highest ranked suit wins. If players have no cards in hand the winner could be determined by following the steps just described to the last card played by each player or the game could be called a draw (depending on your preference).



# FROGGER

*a racing game based on the famous videogame for 3–5 players by José Carlos de Diego Guerrero, translation by Jorge Arroyo*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra Material:** 30 frogs (6 pawns/coins in 5 colors)

## INTRODUCTION

This game is an attempt to freely mimic the famous 80's arcade videogame where you have to guide a small frog to its home across a traffic filled road and a dangerous river. Also, this game was inspired by Cartagena, from Leo Colovini.

Each player controls a group of 6 frogs which will try to reach their home safely through a dangerous path.

Frogger

## SETUP

- Each player chooses a color and takes the 6 corresponding tokens.
- Place the Excuse on the center of the table and all the frogs on it.
- Leave the 4 pawns on the side. Shuffle the rest of the cards and draw 8 cards. The corridor is built on the table from these 8 randomly chosen cards plus the four pawns. Shuffle the 12 cards and place them on a line starting at the Excuse. Cards should be placed so that only one half is visible, with the other half being covered by the next card (so only two suit icons from each card are visible).
- Deal 4 cards to each player. This is their initial hand.
- Take 6 cards from the deck and place them face up on the side. This is where players will take cards from. When every card is taken, 6 new cards will be placed again.

## GAMEPLAY

Turns go clockwise. The player that looks the most like a frog starts the game (this is not necessarily an advantage).

During a player's turn, they can make from 1 to 3 actions. These are the possible actions:

- Play a card and advance a frog.
- Move a frog back and take a card.

The actions can be made in any order but players must at least do one each turn if possible.

**Playing a card and advancing a frog:** First you must play a card from your hand. Then choose a frog and advance it to the first card on the path that shares one of its suits with one of the suits from the card played (your choice). The actual suit symbol on the path must be free of any other frogs. Then, place your frog on top of the matching symbol suit (effectively covering it up).

If there are no matching suit symbols on the whole line of cards, then just advance the frog to its home at the end of the path (right outside the end of the path of cards).

Note that only suit symbols are considered to be spaces where frogs can be moved to on a card. Numbers and Pawn or Crowns symbols are ignored on the path.

**Moving back a frog and taking a card:** Choose a frog and move it back to the first card that has at least one free symbol (with no frogs on it). Place the frog on one of the free suit symbols on that card.

When moving back, cards that are completely occupied are skipped over.

Afterward, choose a card from the 6 that were placed to the side and add it to your hand. This is the only way players can get cards. Note that you may not take a card that has the same suit as the one the frog landed on.

When all 6 cards are taken, deal a new set of 6 cards from the deck. If the deck runs out, just shuffle the discard pile to create a new deck.

Note that the Excuse card, is a valid space when moving back. If moving there, you may take any card from any suit.

**Blocked Players:** In the event that a player finds themselves in a situation where they've got no cards and all their frogs are either at the Excuse or home (no frogs on the actual path), then they're blocked (can't use a card to advance, and can't move back to take a card).

In this case, the player may use their whole turn to take a card.

Remember that as long as you can move a frog back (even to the Excuse card) you're not really blocked, and even if you move back to a spot where you can't take any card (because you're on the same suit symbol as every available card) you can keep using move back actions until you can take a card (if necessary, reaching the Excuse again).

**Crowns and Aces:** If you play a Crown or an Ace to advance a frog, any other frogs on the card you move your frog to are sent back to the Excuse card (devoured by crocodiles, hit by trucks, etc). The only frog that stays on the card is the one that just moved there.

## END OF THE GAME

The first player to take all 6 frogs home wins the game.

# GASP!

*a chaotic, extremely interactive trick-taking game for the Basic Decktet, a handful of its suited tokens and 2-5 players, by Greg James.*

Players are likely to gasp in astonishment as they watch their fortunes change with alarming frequency and rapidity.

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** Tokens, 10 in each of the Decktet's 6 suits (assemble your own or get the "basic" set)

## OVERVIEW

One token in the reigning suit is awarded after each trick and the winner will be the first player to acquire 2 tokens in each of the Decktet's 6 suits.

Gasp!

## SETUP

The game uses the basic Decktet: A, 2-9, ♣

A Token Dealer will be required for the job of distributing suited tokens at the end of each hand. If that person is the organized type, he will sort the tokens prior to the game into neat piles – or better yet – into individual bowls or containers. If he is the slovenly type, he'll just keep all of the tokens in a big heap and fish around for the right one when it's needed. Worse still, he may start with a big heap and then fidget with the tokens throughout the game – this type of Token Dealer is obviously to be avoided.

The player who can gasp the loudest is the Dealer for the first round, who will then deal 5 cards to each player. Cards are set aside as a remainder unseen for this round. The number of cards in the remainder for a 3 player game is 3. The remainder in a 4 player game is 4. In a 5 player game, the remainder is 1. The rest of the deck is placed face down within reach of all players and forms the draw pile.

## GAME PLAY

**Overview** Players each play one card per trick. The highest ranked card played which matches either of the lead suits wins the trick and is awarded 1 token of the victorious suit (details below).

Ranked cards score their number, ♠s score 10 and Aces are low with a score of 1 – unless its matching ♣ is played. In this case, it usurps the ♣ and is the highest card in play – 11 points.

*Note:* the Ace usurps the ♣ regardless of which card is played first in the trick.

**Choose a lead suit** To start the round, the player on the Dealer's left selects a card from his hand and plays it face up in front of him. He demonstrates which suit he is leading by orienting the card in one of two ways: If he plays it normally, with the narrow side pointing to the centre of the table, he has selected the top suit on the card. If he has chosen the bottom suit, he must rotate the card 90 degrees so that the long side of the card is facing the middle of the table. If he leads an Ace or ♣, its suit is obviously the lead.

**Follow suit or usurp suit** Continuing clockwise, players select a card from their hand and play it to the trick. All cards played to the trick must match at least one suit with the first card played. If a player does not have any cards that match a suit with the lead card, he must still play a card and will thus have no chance of winning the trick. The card led is the winning card on the trick until another card of equal or higher rank is played which shares one of its suits.

Therefore, the lead suit can be usurped by another player who plays a higher card in the other suit.

*Example:* You have led *The Mill* (8♠) and rotated the card 90 degrees to indicate that you are leading Leaves. Another player can play *The Darkness* (9♣) on this lead and take command of the trick in Waves. (Note that he could not change the suit to Wyrms in this example). All subsequent players can vie for control of this trick in either Waves or Leaves – their choice.

## TIEBREAKER RULE

In the event of a tie, the tying card (i.e. the second card of that rank played) is awarded the trick. Thus, if *The Merchant* (9♣) was played after *The Darkness* in the above example, *The Merchant* would win the trick and the winning suit would be Leaves. Likewise, if the ♠s of Waves and Leaves were both played to this trick, the second ♠ played would win the trick.

## SCORE A TOKEN

**1 Token awarded from the supply** When the dust settles on the trick, determine who has won and with which suit. The winner is awarded one token of this suit from the supply (but see rules below for exceptions). This player will also lead the next trick. Tokens in a player's take should always be clearly visible to all of the other players.

In the example above, if *The Darkness* prevailed as the winning card on the trick, that player would be awarded one Wave token from the supply. Hoarding tokens is not allowed because...

No player may hold more than 2 tokens per suit in his take.

**2 Exchange a token with another player** To continue the example, if the winner already has 2 Wave tokens, he is awarded another one for winning the trick, but must immediately give it to another player. If the receiving player has a token in his take of a suit that the donor needs, he takes it in exchange. This exchange cannot be refused by the victim. However, if a player has 2 Wave tokens in his take, he is impervious to this attack.

**3 Give a token to another player as a penalty** Thus, players should always be aware of tokens in the other players' takes. Continuing the example further still, let's say that two opponents have 2 Wave tokens in their take and the third opponent has a Moon token. *The Darkness* player already has 2 Wave and 2 Moon tokens of his own. He must still give the Wave token he won on this trick to the third player and he will get nothing in return. He should have thought of that before slapping down that 9!

**4 Return a token to the supply** Worse still, if *The Darkness* player won the trick in Waves and all players (including himself) have 2 Wave tokens already, he must return 1 Wave token from his own take to the supply as a penalty! This is a real danger as the endgame approaches.

## NEW TRICK AND END OF THE ROUND

After the trick has been scored, the cards are set aside face down in the discard pile and everyone (starting with the winning player and continuing clockwise) draws a card to replenish their hands to 5 cards. When the last cards from the deck have been drawn, play continues until all cards have been played.

If the victory condition has not been met, the new Dealer is the player on the old Dealer's left and he will shuffle all of the cards including the remainder. The first player in the new round will be the player on the new Dealer's left.

Gasp!

## GAME END

When a player accumulates 2 tokens in each of the Decktet's 6 suits, the game ends immediately and that player is declared the winner.

## PARTNERSHIP RULES

*Gasp!* can be played in partnership with players on each team sitting on opposite sides of the table. The winning team will be the first to acquire two tokens in each of the Decktet's 6 suits.

The rules are adjusted as follows: The lead player does not declare suit. Tokens are held by one player on each team. No team may hold more than two tokens of one suit. The token exchange rules are in effect as in the standard game. Thus, if both teams have 2 tokens of the same suit and a team wins a trick of that suit, they are penalized one token of that suit.

The point values of partner's cards played to a hand are added together for a combined score if they share a suit with each other that is in common with the lead card. A token in the highest scoring suit is awarded to the winning team.

*Example: The Author* (2♣♠) is the lead card. Team B's first player plays *The Pact* (9♣♠) and takes command in Moons. *The Author's* partner plays *The Betrayal* (8♣♠) and takes control of the trick again for Team A, but in Knots. *The Pact's* partner plays *The Castle* (7♣♠) as it is the only card in his hand which follows suit with *The Author*. Team A wins the trick with 10 points and is awarded 1 Knot token. *The Betrayal* player leads the next trick.

An Ace scores 1 unless its matching ♣ is in play. If partners play the matching Ace and ♣, the team scores 21 points and wins the trick. If the Ace and ♣ are played by opposing teams, the ♣ scores 10 and the Ace scores 11.

The tiebreaker rule remains the same, with the trick being awarded to the team that plays the card which ties the score.

The next trick will be led by the player who plays the highest ranked card in the winning suit. If both players play a card of the same rank and win the trick, the token is awarded in the suit of the second card and he will lead the next trick.

*Example: The Author* (2♠♣) is the lead card. Team B's first player follows with *The Pact* (9♠♣), which puts his team in the lead with a score of 9 in Moons. Team A's partner plays *The Castle* (7♠♣) which ties the score at 9 and puts them in a victory position in Knots. Team B's partner plays *The Merchant* (9♠♣), which ties the score at 9 again and thus wins the trick for Team B. Team B is awarded one Knot token and *The Merchant* player will lead the next trick.

## 2 PLAYER RULES

*Gasp!* can be played as a 2 player game by adopting and adapting the Partnership Rules. It becomes a bit more of a thinking game in this format and I think players will be surprised at how different the game play is from the standard game.

The victory condition remains the same: the winner will be the first player to acquire two tokens in each of the Decktet's 6 suits.

The rules are adjusted as follows: Players are dealt a 10 card hand and a remainder of 4 is set aside unseen for each round. The rest of the cards are placed face down to form the draw pile. The non Dealer leads the first trick. After each trick, each player draws 1 card to their hand. When the deck is exhausted, play continues until all cards have been played. If the victory condition has not been met, all cards are gathered and the non Dealer will be the new Dealer for the next round.

The lead player does not declare suit. Each player plays 2 cards on the same trick and play alternates A-B-A-B.

The point values of your cards played to a trick are added together for a combined score if they share a suit with each other that is in common with the lead card. A token in the highest scoring suit is awarded to the winning player. The winning player will lead the next trick.

*Example: The Author* (2♠♣) is the lead card. Player B's first card is *The Pact* (9♠♣) and takes command of the trick in Moons. Player A follows with *The Betrayal* (8♠♣) and retakes control of the trick in Knots with a score of 10. Player B plays *The Castle* (7♠♣) as it is the only card in his hand which follows suit with *The Author*. Player A wins the trick with 10 points and is awarded 1 Knot token. He will lead the next trick.

The Ace rules are adjusted as follows: An Ace scores 1 unless its matching ♣ is played by your opponent. Then it scores 11. However, if you play the Ace and ♣ together out of your own hand, the Ace will only score 1.

The tiebreaker rule remains the same, with the trick being awarded to the player who plays the card which ties the score. Likewise, the token exchange rules are the same as in the Partnership Game rules.

## 2P AND PARTNERSHIP SPECIAL SCORING CASE

It is possible for the lead team (or player in the 2p game) to win a trick with two cards bearing identical suits e.g. *The Mountain* 4(♠♣) and *The Diplomat* 8(♠♣). In this case, the lead player may choose the suit of their winning token from the suits on their cards i.e. either a ♠ or a ♣.

# GOBLIN MARKET

*a magical little auction game for 3 to 6 players, by P.D. Magnus.*

*Backwards up the mossy glen  
Turned and trooped the goblin men  
With their shrill repeated cry,  
“Come buy, come buy.”*

Dealing with goblins is always a struggle with temptation, leading through the loss of innocence, ultimately revealing the power of sisterhood. Yet goblins are oblivious to symbolism. For them, it is just a matter of economics.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Courts)

**Extra material:** coins

## INTRODUCTION

This Decktet game, inspired by Christina Rossetti’s poem of the same name, originally appeared in the Decktet Book. It is played as a series of auctions in which players buy cards on the goblins’ terms: They’ll give you coins for nothing, until you’ve won some auctions – but later, your only way to get more coins will be from your fellow players.

In addition to an extended Decktet, the game requires tokens. In the rules, the tokens are called ‘coins’. You can use chips, glass beads, pennies, or whatever you please. About twenty-five per player should be plenty.

## SETUP

Shuffle the basic deck; it forms the *Auction Deck*. Shuffle the ♠ and ♠♠; these comprise the *Goblin Deck*. (The *Excuse* won’t be used. If you don’t have ♠♠, just use the ♠.)

Each player starts with ten coins. The remaining coins should be placed together to form the bank.

Over the course of the game, players will use coins to buy more cards from the *Auction Deck*. Cards purchased in this way serve two purposes. First, cards are the primary way of scoring points at the end of the game; see **Scoring**, below. Second, cards may provide a source of further coins. If you buy a 7 and another player wins a later auction with a bid of *seven*, *seventeen*, or *twentyseven* coins, then you will profit by their win.

The youngest player starts the bidding in the first auction. In subsequent auctions, bidding starts with the player who won the previous auction.

## GAME PLAY

The game consists of a series of auctions. Each involves several steps. Here’s a summary first, with details following.

- A. A card is revealed from the Auction Deck to determine the size of the auction.

- B. Cards for auction are revealed from the Auction Deck.
  - C. Players bid until there is an unchallenged high bid.
  - D. The high bidder decides whether to take all of the cards or share them, and the cards are distributed.
  - E. Players who did not get cards from the auction may get coins if they already own cards that are at or just below the level of the winning bid; for example, if the winning bid is six coins and they own a 6, 5, or 4.
  - F. All players get a chance for a few coins, depending on a card from the Goblin Deck.
- A.** At the beginning of an auction, turn over the top card of the *Auction Deck*. This card determines the size of the next auction: If the card is an *Ace*, the next auction will be for one card. If the card is a number (rank 2–9), the next auction will be for two cards. If the card is a *Crown* ♔, the next auction will be for three cards.

The first card only determines the size of the auction. Set it aside. It will not be available for purchase in this game.

If there are three or fewer cards left in the *Auction Deck*, don't flip over a card to determine the size of the next auction. Instead, the remaining cards will be sold in the final auction.

**B.** Flip over the indicated number of cards (one, two, or three) from the *Auction Deck*. Put them in the middle of the table, so that everyone can get a clear look at them.

**C.** The first bidder may either pass or name any price, up to the total number of coins the player possesses.

The player on the left of the first bidder must then either pass or bid. If the first player bid, then the second bidder is only allowed to bid a higher number of coins. Bidding continues clockwise around the table. A player who has passed may not re-enter bidding.

If all players pass without bidding, then the card (or cards) are discarded and a new auction is held. Otherwise, bidding continues until there is an unchallenged high bid. The high bidder wins the auction.

**D.** The winning bidder may decide to take all of the cards which were up for auction. If so, they pay coins equal to their bid; other bidders pay nothing.

Alternately, if the auction was for more than one card, the winning bidder may decide to take only one of the cards. Then the second place bidder takes one of the cards; if the winning bidder was the only player to bid, the remaining cards are simply discarded. If the auction was for the three cards, then the third place bidder (if there was one) takes the remaining card.

Every player who gets cards must pay the amount of their bid to the bank. Cards from the auction go face up on the table in front of the player who won them.

In a three card auction, the winning bidder may not take two of the cards; the choice is to take all of them or pick one.

*Example:* The auction is for three cards. Elise opens with a modest bid of two coins. Morgan then bids seven coins, and Evan bids eight. This is too much for Elise, who passes. Morgan and Evan bid back and forth, until Morgan bids fourteen, Evan bids fifteen, and Morgan passes. Evan must pay fifteen coins to the bank. He decides to take only one of the cards. After he has chosen which card to take, Morgan must pay fourteen coins to the bank and choose one of the remaining cards. Finally, Elise must pay two coins and take the remaining card.

**E.** Players who did not get cards from the auction may earn coins. This ‘sisterhood money’ requires that other players bid amounts which match your cards.

Consider the last digit of the winning high bid: Players earn three coins for each card of that rank, two coins for each card of the rank below that, and one coin for each card of the rank two below.

*Example:* Shar wins an auction with a bid of nine coins. Because Shar’s bid ends in 9, other players collect three coins for each 9 they hold, two coins for each 8 they hold, and one coin for each 7 they hold. Because she won the auction, Shar collects no coins regardless of what cards she holds.

A bid ending in 1 pays out to players holding *Aces*. A bid ending in 0 pays out to players holding *W*s. For these purposes, ranks wrap around; *W*s are considered to be immediately below *Aces*.

*Example:* Tarrant wins an auction with a bid of eleven coins. Other players collect three coins for each *Ace* they hold, two coins for each *W* they hold, and one coin for each 9 they hold.

**F.** All players get a chance at a little ‘goblin money’, which represents the goblins’ enticements to buy next time. Once you’ve done too much business with them, they won’t make you offers like this.

Flip over the top card of the *Goblin Deck*. Players collect one coin from the bank for each suit on the *Pawn* or *Court* revealed that is not on any of the cards that they own. If this was the last card in the *Goblin Deck*, reshuffle the *Pawns* and *Courts* to replenish it.

*Example:* Raphael owns one card, . The *Goblin Deck* card is the *Harvest* . Raphael collects two coins.

## SCORING

The game ends when the *Auction Deck* is exhausted.

Players score points for cards in the three suits of which they have the most (one point for each card with that suit) and lose points for cards in the remaining suits (again, one point per card).

Score for both suits on each number card. This means that each number card is worth either +2, 0, or -2 points (depending on whether its suits are positive, mixed, or negative). Each **A** or *W* is worth +1 or -1 points.

The player with the most points wins. If there is a tie for most points, then the tie is broken by most *positive points* (points in a player’s three most numerous suits).

We must not look at goblin men,  
We must not buy their fruits;  
Who knows upon what soil they fed  
Their hungry thirsty roots?

# GONGOR WHIST

*a solitaire trick-taking game for the Decktet by P.D. Magnus*

**Extended Decktet:** No

## OVERVIEW:

Gongor Whist is a solitaire trick-taking game in which you try to win tricks against a dummy hand. The trump is randomly determined by flipping over an Ace, but with every trick you have the option of randomly determining a new trump. Each pass through the deck is two hands; you play a second hand (called the *aft hand*) without reshuffling the cards.

Gongor Whist

## SETUP

Make a score sheet with the numbers 0 through 7 on it.

Separate the Aces from the basic deck. Shuffle them together in their own pile and flip up the top card. This determines the initial trump suit.

Shuffle the rest of the deck together. Deal seven cards each into two face-down piles. One of these is your hand of cards. The other is the dummy.

Looking at your hand, decide how many tricks you think you will be able to take. This is your bid for the hand.

When you make your bid, check off that number on the score sheet. You may not bid that number of tricks again.

*Example:* You bid four tricks and make exactly four, check off 4. You may not bid four again.

## GAME PLAY

Flip up the top card from the dummy hand. You must play a card that shares a suit with the dummy's card, if you have one; otherwise, play any card from your hand.

After playing your card, but before resolving the trick, you have the option of *twiddling trump*. Flip over the next card in the Ace stack. That suit is now trump, instead of the suit of the previous Ace. The new trump determines whether or not you win this trick and remains in effect until you twiddle the trump on a later trick. If you twiddle the trump when there are no cards left in the Ace stack, then there is no trump for the remainder of the hand; with no trump, the highest card that shares a suit with the dummy's lead wins.

You win the trick if you played a trump and the dummy didn't, if you played a higher trump than the dummy, or if no trump was played but you followed suit with a higher card. Otherwise, you lose the trick.

Regardless of who wins the trick, start the next trick by flipping over the top card from the dummy hand. Continue until you have resolved seven tricks and depleted both hands.

If you won exactly as many tricks as you bid, then you go on. If you won either more or fewer tricks, you have lost.

Set aside the tricks from this hand and, without reshuffling, deal the aft hand.

### **The aft hand**

Leave the Ace pile as it is. Using the remainder of the deck, deal again: Seven cards to yourself and seven to the dummy. (There will be two cards leftover. Set them aside without looking at them.)

Bidding and game play for the aft hand are the same as for the fore.

After completing the aft hand, reshuffle both the Ace pile and the main deck. Continue with another fore hand.

Succeeding at four fore hands and four aft hands requires making all eight possible bids. If you can do that, you win the game. If you ever fail to make even one bid along the way, however, you lose.

## **THE EXTENDED DECK**

You are welcome to come up with your own ideas for adding extended deck cards to the game.

# HEAD SOLITAIRE

*a Decktet solitaire game that does not require a playing surface, by  
David L. Van Slyke*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

## SETUP

Shuffle a basic (not extended) Decktet and hold it in one hand face-down as a draw pile.

*Note:* You will soon be holding four piles, one upon another, in one hand. On top is a face-up hand of six cards. Behind it is the draw pile. Behind that, face-up and rotated ninety degrees, is the archive of melds. Behind that is the discard pile.

## GAME PLAY

**Definition** A *meld* is a set of cards fulfilling one of the following conditions:

- contains exactly one instance of each of the six suits (a suit-meld)
- a set of three or more cards of the same rank (a kind-meld)
- a set of three or more cards of consecutive ranks that all share a single suit (a run-meld)

Note that Aces and Crowns are not considered consecutive: the counting does not “wrap around”.

**Part One:** Turn over six cards and hold them face-up on top as your hand. If this group of six cards contains a meld, place the meld face-up and rotated ninety degrees directly behind the draw pile; then draw more cards to refill your hand to six cards. If the six cards contain no melds then re-order them as you desire and discard them face-up at the back of all the cards you are holding; then draw six more cards as your new hand.

**Interlude:** After exhausting the initial draw pile, the discard pile becomes the new draw pile. It stays face-up. Move it from behind the archive of melds to in front of the archive of melds. If you have a partial hand of cards then your hand is refilled to six cards from the top of this new draw pile. If you had no cards in your hand at this time you have the option of immediately discarding the top card of the new draw pile before drawing a hand of six cards.

**Part Two:** Go through the second draw pile as before but do not worry about sorting the cards you discard.

The game is over after you go through the second discard pile. Count the number of cards not in melds (in your third discard pile). This is your score: the lower the better. Keep track of your lowest score for the week.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If the extended Decktet is used then the Excuse counts as any single suit or rank and the Pawns have three suits but no rank.



# HERMIT

*You're a hermit who tries to avoid having people follow you home. So are all of your opponents. By P.D. Magnus.*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** None

The daily life of the hermits is represented by tricks of cards, and there will typically be more than one trick in play at a time. The goal is to avoid taking tricks with personality cards in them. Tricks that don't have personalities in them don't matter one way or the other.

There will typically be more than one trick in play at a time. Until it's completed, a trick is kept on the table in front of the player who played the highest card in the trick. When a fourth card is played on a trick, the player with the trick in front of them takes it.

The goal is to avoid taking tricks with *personality* cards in them. Tricks that don't have personalities in them don't matter one way or the other.

Hermit

## SETUP

Randomly pick a dealer for the first hand. In subsequent hands, the player on the old dealer's left is the new dealer.

The dealer deals out the entire basic deck. (Three players get 12 cards each. Four players get 9 each.) The player on the dealer's left takes the first turn.

## GAME PLAY

Here's an outline of what happens on your turn; details are provided below.

1. If there are no tricks in play, every player selects a card to start a new trick.
2. You (the player whose turn it is) must play one card on an existing trick if you can; a card can be played on a trick if it shares a suit with the last card played on the trick.
3. If the card you played controls the trick, move the trick in front of you.
4. If the card you played is the fourth card in the trick, the trick is complete. Whoever has the trick in front of them takes all of the cards. That will be you if you just took control of the trick.

### 1. Starting tricks

If there are no tricks in play, each player looks at their hand and selects one card with which to start a trick. Players reveal their choices simultaneously by flipping their card up in front of them. This makes one uncompleted trick per player.

Note that this will definitely happen on the first turn of the hand, and it will probably happen at least once more during the hand. The card you play to start a trick does not count as your card play for the turn.

## 2. Playing a card

You must play on an existing trick if possible. The new card should be stacked at a slight offset, so that everybody can readily see how many cards are in the trick.

A card added to a trick must share a suit with the last card played in the trick; only the most recent card matters for following suit.

If you do not have cards in the suits of any of the in-progress tricks, select a card from your hand and put it in front of you to start a new trick. This ends your turn.

## 3. Controlling a trick

If the card you add to a trick is the highest ranked card in the trick, move the trick in front of you. If it is tied for highest, move it anyway. If a trick is already in front of you when you control it, it stays there.

*Aces* are low, below 2s.

*Crowns* (♣) are ordinarily high, above 9s. The one exception is when the *Ace* and ♣ of the same suit are present in the same trick. In that case, the *Ace* cancels the ♣! A cancelled ♣ is lower even than an *Ace*.

An *Ace* may be played before or after the ♣ that it cancels.

## 4. Completing a trick

If you played the fourth card in a trick, then the trick is complete. The player with the trick in front of them, which will be you if you just played the high card in the trick, takes the cards from the trick and puts them in a scoring stack face down in front of them.

Play continues clockwise around the table.

# SCORING

The hand ends when all players' card have been played.

At the end of the hand, there may be unfinished tricks left on the table – tricks with three or fewer cards in them. Any cards in unfinished tricks are set aside.

Players score points for any personality cards in tricks that they took. (Personality cards are the ones done up as face cards, with two close-ups of a single figure.) Each is worth its rank. For example, the *Lunatic* 6♣ is worth 6 points. The two ♣ personalities (the *Bard* and *Huntress*) are each worth 10 points; they're worth 10 regardless of whether or not they were in the same trick as the matching *Ace*.

When a player reaches a predesignated target score, the game ends. For the sake of having an official number, I recommend playing until some player reaches a cumulative score of 66 points or more; with four players, this typically takes three to five hands. The player with the lowest score when the game ends is the winner.

*Example:* Here is the progress of one trick, although there will probably be others in progress at the same time. Buck plays a ♠, which is higher than the 3. This controls the trick, so he takes the cards and puts them in front of him:

| 3♣♣ | ♠♣ |

Maris plays an Ace. The Ace neutralizes the ♠. Since the Ace is lower than the 3, this does not control the trick. So the cards stay in front of Buck.

| 3♣♣ | ♠♣ | A♣ |

Jane plays a 5. Since the ♠ is neutralized by the Ace, the 5 is the high card. This controls the trick, so Jane takes the cards.

| 3♣♣ | ♠♣ | A♣ | 5♣♣ |

This also completes the trick (because it's the fourth card), so she moves the cards from in front of her into her scoring stack.

## HERMIT FOR FIVE

With five players, the game becomes more chaotic.

Each player is dealt 7 cards. This leaves one card leftover.

The remaining card is placed face up in the middle of the table on the first turn, when players start tricks for the first time. The card starts a trick which belongs to no one, at least initially. Higher cards will control it as usual. If the trick is completed without any player controlling it, then point cards in the trick don't count against anyone.

## HERMIT FOR TWO

Playing Hermit with 2 players follows nearly all of the basic Hermit rules but there are a few things added to provide tension that is often elusive in a 2 player trick taking game. The following is written as if you had a basic understanding of how to play Hermit.

**Setup** Shuffle and deal 4 cards off to the side (we'll call this pile The Cottage) and the rest evenly between the players; they should each have 16 cards.

**Gameplay** Follow normal rules with one exception: Whenever all the tricks are cleared from the table, each player selects one card from their hand and secretly adds it to the Cottage. They then proceed to start new tricks.

Note: This does not include the very first trick of the game

It is helpful to keep track of how many tricks each player takes as that will affect scoring.

**Scoring** Scoring works as normal except that the player who took fewer tricks will also score points for any personalities in the Cottage. If both players took an equal number of tricks the Cottage is discarded.

Lowest score after each player has dealt twice is the winner.

*Note: The Pleasant Company and House Party variants are not as necessary in the 2-player version. If you must include one it is recommended to use the House Party variant only with the following changes: If only one player takes points during the play, their opponent scores those points and the cottage is discarded.*

## VARIANTS

Some players prefer a longer game and play to 100 points.

**Pleasant company:** Certain groups of people are not so annoying if you can get them together.

If a player takes all four Moon personalities (2 🌙🌙, 6 🌙🌙🌙, 8 🌙🌙🌙, and 👑🌙), those cards are together worth zero points instead of 26.

If a player takes all four Sun personalities (3 🌞🌞, 6 🌞🌞🌞, 8 🌞🌞🌞, and 👑🌞), those cards are together worth zero points instead of 27.

A few points of strategy... If one player is going for Moons and another for Suns, they will both need the Diplomat (8 🌞🌙). And it may be worth taking the Author (2 🌙🌞) or the Painter (3 🌞🌞) just to stop them.

**House Party:** What's better than throwing a houseparty? Why, throwing it at someone else's house and not going of course!

If one player is the only one to gather any personality cards, they do not score the points as usual; instead, the points are split evenly between the other players. (Points for Moons and Suns are not zeroed out, even if the Pleasant Company variant is otherwise being used.) This may be achieved even if there are personality cards in unfinished tricks at the end of the hand.

## APPENDIX: PERSONALITY CARDS

the Author	2	
the Painter	3	
the Savage	3	
the Sailor	4	
the Soldier	5	
the Lunatic	6	
the Penitent	6	
the Diplomat	8	
the Merchant	9	
the Bard	👑 (10)	
the Huntress	👑 (10)	

# IF BADGER WAS A BUNNY

*An asymmetric climbing race game for two, by Justus Pang.*

The tortoise and the hare are staging a series of races!  
To be the champion just keep getting rid of your cards first.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## SETUP

The player who most recently held a bunny shuffles the basic deck, discards two cards (to introduce uncertainty) and deals one face up to each player to be their starting positions for their race tracks.

Take the remaining cards and deal them face down equally to each player (sixteen each). The hare then draws the top eight cards off his deck, while the tortoise draws none (zero). The hare starts first.

## GAME PLAY

As a “climbing game” the card play will consist of a player leading with a set of cards to his race course (the allowable plays are described in the following section). The second player may then play an equal or higher ranked set of the same type to her own race course. The second player must pass if she does not have a playable set. If the second player passes then the first player may then lead with a set of any type. If the second player follows with a set then the first player may then either play an equal or higher set or pass, giving the lead to the second player. *Note: unlike most traditional climbing games, players are not restricted to playing the same number of cards as the previously played set to continue the series.*

**Racin’** There are three types of sets: Singles, Multiples (groups of cards with the same ranks), and Straights (ascending consecutive ranks of two or more cards). The hare may play as many cards as he desires, but the tortoise may play at most two cards at a time. *Note: straights are not required to share a common suit*

A set must always be connected to the player’s race course. The first card played must either share a suit, or share the rank, or be of one higher rank than of the top card of his or her race course. Each player’s race course will always remain their own, they will never play cards on their opponent’s course.

*At the end of the race, each player’s course should be completely connected from beginning to end. It is suggested that the players announce their plays and mention how it is connected (such as “I play a 6,7,8 straight, the 6 is connected by the sun to the orange crown”)*

After the lead, the second player may either pass or play the same type of set and the final card must be of equal or higher rank than the first player’s final card (and yes, it must be connected to the second player’s course). Only the final card matters in determining the rank of the set. When a player passes, the series ends and the other player may then lead with any type of set on their race course. The newly lead series does not have any relationship to the previously played sets, but it must still connect to the player’s race track. A player that captures the lead

may pass his or her turn, and will still draw the appropriate number of cards from doing so.

*Because the hare and the tortoise may play different numbers of cards in a play, the amount of cards (aside from minimum of two(!)) in a multiple or a straight is irrelevant. Even though the hare must follow type, he may always play as many cards as he wishes to the play (ie 3-4-5-6 in response to a 5-6 straight played by the tortoise). Similarly, no matter how many cards the hare plays, the tortoise must merely follow type (ie she may follow four Aces with a pair of Aces or higher)*

**Drawing cards** As mentioned previously, the tortoise starts with an empty hand. However, she will draw two cards at the beginning of each turn until her deck runs out.

The hare does not replenish his hand regularly, he will draw cards only in three situations:

1. If he passes and has cards remaining in his hand, he will draw a single card.
2. If he passes and has no cards remaining in his hand then he will draw the remainder of his deck.
3. Finally, he will draw the remainder of his deck after the end of the series during which the tortoise draws her last card.

*The hare will never draw a card without following a pass. In the second situation, even if the hare won the series where he shed his last hand card, he will still have to pass the lead to the tortoise as he cannot play until he draws his cards. In the third situation, he will not draw the remainder of his deck until someone passes.*

**Winning** The first player to play all of his or her cards is immediately the winner of the race. If both players are unable to play their final cards, the winner will be whoever has the fewest cards remaining. If they are tied in remaining cards, then the race is declared a draw. The winner of the race scores 1 point for every card remaining in their opponents hand. In the case where neither player was able to empty their hand they score the difference in number of cards between the two remaining hands.

A full tournament of races would involve four rounds with the players alternating as the hare and the tortoise, and see who has the best record. If after four races, the series is a draw, then continue racing and the next winner is the champion badger.

*Example:* Jen plays her last card to her race track and is declared the winner. Brad has 3 cards left in hand so Jen scores 3 points.

*Example:* Angelina and Brad both pass because they have no legal plays remaining. Angelina has 2 cards left while Brad has 4. Angelina is declared the winner of the race and scores 2 points. (4-2).

## THE EXTENDED DECK

The pawns and courts could be inserted in the deck, they would rank between the nine's and crowns. As such the setup would still involve discarding two cards and starting with two cards, but instead of starting with eight cards, the hare would start with ten cards.

The Excuse has no rank and no suit and is considered lower than an ace. As such it can only be played as the very first card of a series (the one who plays it must have the lead) but it can be played onto any card and any card may be played to follow it. It counts as leading a series of Singles. If you use the Excuse, you should discard 3 cards at the beginning of the game.

**If Badger was a Bunny**

# IVORY TOWER

*a Decktet solitaire game, by P.D. Magnus*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Object of the game:** To complete the tower: a stack of cards all having a specific suit symbol, in order from Ace to Crown.

## GAME PLAY

You begin by turning over the top three cards of the deck, so that you can only see the third card. This packet is placed to begin the draw pile. In the beginning, the top pile of the draw pile is the only card you have available to play.

You may play cards to build resource piles and a tower.

Each resource pile starts with a Crown and contains cards in decreasing rank order. Adjacent cards in a resource pile must not share suit symbols. The lowest ranked card in each resource pile is available to play.

The tower starts with an Ace and contains cards in increasing rank order. The cards in the tower must all share a suit symbol. You win if you can play a Crown to complete the tower.

If at anytime you are unable to play, you may turn over three more cards from the deck. When you reach the end of the deck, turn over the draw pile and resume. You may recycle the deck in this way as many times as you like.

## THE TOWER

There is only one tower, but at the beginning of the game it is undecided what suit the tower will be. Once you play an Ace to start the tower, however, all the cards must have the suit of that Ace.

You are not required to start the tower if an Ace becomes available. For example, you may decide to pass on Ace if you have already buried some of the cards of its suit in a resource pile.

## RESOURCE PILES

If you have a Crown available and fewer than three resource piles, you may start a new resource pile. Once a resource pile is started, you may add a card to it with two restrictions: (a) The new card must be one rank less than the lowest card in the pile. (b) The new card must not share any suit symbols with the lowest card in the pile.

The lowest ranked card in a resource pile is available to play. You may move it to the tower or a different resource pile, provided it meets the rank and suit requirements.

*Example:* You begin a resource pile with the Crown of Waves. Later, you put the Pact (9 of Suns and Moons) on the pile. You may then place an 8 on the pile, but not an 8 of either Suns nor Moons.

Since you may have up to three resource piles, some of the Crowns become unplayable after the tower and resource piles have all been started.

## THE END

You win if you complete the tower. If you do not win, your score is the rank of the highest card in the tower.

Unlike some solitaires, Ivory Tower is not the sort of game that you can win every time if you are careful and attentive. Winning is pretty damn rare.

# JACYNTH

*a territory control Decktet game for 2–3 players, plus a solitaire variant, by P.D. Magnus*

Jacynth is among the oldest cities, and a map of its streets is a record of history. It is a haphazard maze of overlapping interests and neighborhoods, with intricate social bonds tying one block to the next. You could control the city if you could control a nexus in that maze of ancient intrigue, but first you would have to find it.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra material:** 8 markers in two colors

## COMPONENTS:

In addition to a Decktet, Jacynth requires four influence tokens for each player. You might use anything that can be placed on a card to indicate which player has influence over it: chips, stones, beads, coins, meeples.

## OBJECT OF THE GAME:

During a hand of Jacynth, cards are laid out to form a six-by-six grid that represents the city. Players claim areas by placing influence tokens on cards, aiming to control more of the city than their opponents.

## DISTRICTS

A *district* is a group of cards that share a suit symbol and are adjacent to one another. For example, three cards that have Sun suits laid in a row, one next to another, would form a district. The cards in a district need not be in a straight line, but each card must share an edge with another card in the district. Districts do not connect across diagonals or across open spaces that do not have cards in them yet.

A number card (since it has two suits) may be part of two separate districts; one for each suit.

A player controls a district when they have an influence token on a card in that district.

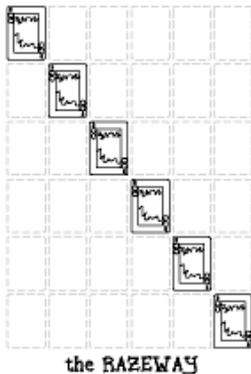
You cannot place an influence token in a district already controlled by an opponent, but it is possible that subsequent card play will connect what had been two separate districts. If this happens, then the player with whose token is on the higher ranked card controls the district. Crowns beat 9s; 2s beat Aces.

If you have more than one token in a district, the card ranks do not add together; only the highest ranked card counts for district control.

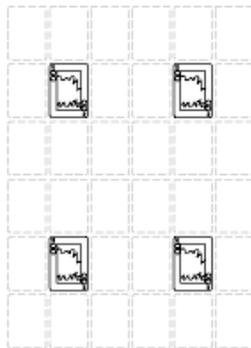
*Example of control: Aaron has a token on the 8 of Moons and Suns. Beryl has a token on the Crown of Moons. By a chain of Moon cards, the two cards become part of the same district. The Crown is the higher ranked card, so Beryl controls the Moon district. Beryl's token is not on a card Suns card, so Aaron still controls the Sun district that includes the 8.*

# SETUP

The dealer shuffles the deck, deals each player a three card hand, and deals cards face up to form the initial play area. There are three possible initial arrangements; with each, further cards are played around them so as to form a six-by-six grid.



the RAZEWAY



TOWERS



the OLD CITY

The *Razeway* is the simplest of the starting boards. Since there are no initial gaps between cards, it is easy to visualize the grid and recognize the boundary of the play area. The *Towers* the *Old City* allow for more strategic and aggressive play, at the cost of making the grid less obvious. (See below for a discussion of some ways to keep the grid straight.)

Each player starts with four influence tokens.

# GAME PLAY

Players take turns, starting with the player on the dealer's left.

On your turn, you begin by adding a card to the city. Then you may place an influence token, although you are not required to do so. Finally, draw a card.

**Explore the city:** Select a card from your hand and play it face up on the table, adjacent to one of the cards already in play. You must place it within the grid of the city.

**Exert influence:** If you have influence tokens remaining, you may place one on a card in play.

You may not place an influence token on a card that is part of a district controlled by another player. This restriction applies even if the card has another suit that also makes it part of second district, where only one of the districts in controlled. You may, however, place an influence token on a card that is part of a district you already control. This can be a good idea if the card is part of an uncontrolled second district.

You may not place more than one influence token per turn. You may place influence on the card you added this turn or on another card, even on one of the starting cards.

**Draw a card:** Drawing a card ends your turn.

After the deck is depleted, play continues until thirty-six cards have been played and the final player's turn is complete.

## SCORING

At the end of the game, you score points for each district you control: One point for each card that comprises the district.

There is no bonus or special advantage for having more than one influence token in a district, and no effect from unplaced influence tokens remaining at the end of the hand.

Note that a district may consist of a single card, if that card is not adjacent to any that share a suit with it. A single isolated Ace or Crown would be worth one point to a player who had a token on it. A single isolated number card comprises two single card districts, one for each suit, and would be worth two points.

## KEEPING THE CITY STRAIGHT

It can be hard to keep track of the grid, especially when playing with the Towers or the Old City starting boards. Here are some options.

1. Play on a surface with lines, like a tiled floor or plaid table cloth.
2. Put spare cards card face down in key places. For example, four cards in the center are enough to suggest the rest of the grid with the Towers. You can put the four Pawns face down (if you haven't shuffled them in) or documentation cards (if your Decktet has those).
3. Print out a Jacynth game mat. The file includes instructions for putting it together.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in the Excuse, the Pawns, the Courts, or some combination of these. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game.

**The Excuse:** The Excuse is a block card. It is not part of any adjacent districts, and no district may pass through it. You may not place influence tokens on the Excuse.

**Pawns and Courts:** These three-suited cards may be part of three different districts. You may not place influence tokens on a Pawn or Court.

## SOLITAIRE

As a solitaire, Jacynth is played against the city in an attempt to control as much as possible. The rules for the standard game apply, with the following changes:

- The city is a 4x4 grid. (If you are using the game mat, use the Towers starting configuration and place subsequent cards only on the mat itself.)
- Start by dealing a card into each corner of the city. Put your first influence token on one of the starting cards.
- When you play a number card (rank 2–9), immediately flip over the top card of the deck. If the flipped card is an Ace, Crown, or Pawn, then discard it and place your card as normal. If the flipped card is a number card of equal or higher rank than your card, then discard your card and place the flipped card in the chosen spot instead.

- When you play your fourth card (so that there are a total of eight cards in the city) you must place your second influence token if you have not done so already.
- When you play your eighth card (so that there are a total of twelve cards in the city) you must place your third influence token if you have not done so already.

Your final score in the solitaire game determines your rank in the hierarchy:

10 or fewer points	Outsider
11–14	Respectable citizen
15–18	Aspiring noble
19–23	Favoured courtier
24–26	Power broker
27–29	Mogul
30 or more	Prince of the city

# JIGGER

*a game for children (4 and up), by Greg James.*

*A “Go Fish” style Decktet game designed by and for younger players (or the young at heart). With more players and more decks, Jigger becomes the Decktet’s first party game.*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

## OBJECT OF THE GAME

To be the player at the end of the game with the most cards in your take.

## COMPONENTS

The entire 45 card Decktet, one deck for every three players

## SETUP

Shuffle the cards and deal each player a 5 card hand. The remaining cards are placed face down between the players to form the draw pile. The youngest player goes first.

## GAME PLAY

Each turn, the active player says “I demand . . .” and names a single suit that she thinks her opponents are holding. (For players unfamiliar with the Decktet, the suit colours may be used instead). Opponents who have cards bearing that suit in their hand must immediately surrender them all to the active player who places them in her take.

If an opponent(s) doesn’t have any cards of that suit, he calls out “Jigger!” and goes fishing for cards from the draw pile. He draws until he gets a card of the suit in demand and then surrenders it. All other cards drawn are kept. If more than one player calls “Jigger!”, then they draw from the deck in turn order.

Once all players have surrendered card(s) bearing the suit in demand, play then passes to the player on the demander’s left.

Cards in player’s takes are public information. Players may scan their opponent’s takes prior to making their demand, but actual card counting is discouraged.

Play continues in this fashion until the draw pile is empty. Note that a player’s turn may begin with them not holding any cards. That’s okay (provided there are still cards in the draw pile), because they will have to immediately draw when the opponent makes their demand. If the draw pile runs out while still trying to fulfill the demand, the game ends immediately. If the last card drawn fulfills the demand however, then there is still at least one more turn.

# THE EXCUSE

If you have The Excuse and the active player demands a suit which you don't have, you must surrender it rather than draw more cards to fill your hand. If you have The Excuse in your take at the end of the game, it counts as a card in your take and can win you the game if there is a tie.

## ENDGAME AND TIEBREAKER

At the end of the game, cards in player's takes are tallied and the player with the most cards wins. If there is a tie, then whomever of the tied players has The Excuse in their take wins. If this is also a tie, then the tied player with the most cards in hand wins. If it is still tied, then the game is a draw.

The player to the left of the old Dealer deals the next hand.

If you are playing with a competitive bunch, then use tokens of some sort or a score sheet to keep track of games won. The first player to win a target number of games leaps up immediately and dances The Big Jig to taunt their opponents.

Jigger

## PARTY TIME!

With more players and more decks, Jigger is the Decktet's first party game. With 4–6 players add a second deck; with 7–9 add a third deck and get jiggy with it! If you have even more players and enough decks, add a deck for every three players and fill the room with joyous noise.

## VARIANTS

This game is obviously open to a range of different rules if you wish to spice it up and/or broaden its appeal for older players. Here are some you could try in addition to devising your own:

**2 player handicap variant** If there is a great disparity in ages between the two players, then I suggest this handicap: The younger player's cards are hidden from the older player by placing them face down or behind a screen of some sort. An old gatefold sleeve from a vinyl album would be perfect (e.g. the old *Yes* albums have great covers, but tastes vary); use whatever you have at hand. The older player's take is still placed face up. When the youngster has a firm grasp of card counting and the memory component, then both takes can be placed face down for a more challenging game.

**Staggered demand fulfillment** An Ace and/or Crown may be surrendered to fulfill a demand in lieu of double or triple suited cards in your hand. Likewise, a triple suited card may be withheld from a demand if you have at least one double suited card to surrender. If the active player demands a suit which you actually do have, you may give them The Excuse instead if you have it.

**Book scoring** The scoring system can also be tinkered with to spice up the game for older players. In this variant, the object is to create sets/books of 4 cards in each suit. More than one book per suit can be scored. When the deck runs out,

the player with the most books wins, with ties going to the player with the most cards in hand.

Note that a card in a player's take contributes all of its suits to each set i.e. a Pawn or Court would score three times. The Excuse may be scored as a wild card of one suit.

**Example:** The Mountain 4☾☼, The Diplomat 8☾☼, The Pact 9☾☼ and The Harvest ♠☾☼☼ is actually 2 books: a 4 card book of Moons and a 4 card book of Suns. (The Harvest contributes to a Leaf set as well).

## TIPS FOR BETTER PLAY

Knowledge of the Decktet's structure is helpful when formulating your demand. Repeated plays will help reveal the deck's structure, but basically (and obviously) you want to avoid calling the same suit soon after someone else has. More subtly, you also want to avoid calling a suit that is often paired with the one just called. e.g. it's usually a poor call to demand Suns after someone has just demanded Moons. Therefore, you will likely wish to call for antipathetic suit pairings. There are 3 pairings of suits where there is no overlap in the basic deck. i.e. after someone calls Moons, it is often a good call to demand Wyrms, because there are no cards which share these suits in the basic deck. Suns/Leaves and Waves/Knots are the other pairings.

The Decktet is not so easily solved, so this advice should be tempered by the actual flow of the game you are playing. My 10yo is a shrewd card counter and can often call the plumpest suit that the rest of us are holding and it does not always follow the pattern I have described above.

## COMMENTS

This is a great little game for teaching the basics of card playing with the Decktet to young children. Card counting, memory skills and the beginnings of a killer tactical instinct are honed through repeated plays. Over time, the structure of the Decktet and its implications for game play are revealed. This of course opens the door to meatier Decktet games and I suggest The Four Courts as the next step after this one to introduce the concept of set building. Gasp! is a fairly non-confrontational game which is a fun way to introduce trick taking concepts. When math skills can be done fairly quickly in the head, then move on to venerable Decktet games like Biscuit, Jacynth and Thricewise to name but three.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The design and playtesting of Jigger has been a family affair. My 5yo daughter came up with the basic "I Demand a suit" concept for the game. I pieced together the nuts and bolts of it and my 10yo helped to refine the game play to the present form. If you have young kids, this game makes a fine alternative to Quäsenbö. I hope you enjoy it as much as we do.



# JOURNALISTS

*a game of investigative journalism, by Jeff Warrender*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

**Extra material:** 12 chips/player, about 50 cubes

Players are journalists, and have just received a lead to an important story. There are 12 hours (time chips) until press; each player must assemble the best story possible in that time, by gaining evidence (cards), and getting attestation (cubes) to support that evidence. Suits loosely represent the 6 categories (“who”, “what”, etc), and each player has a category in which he/she specializes (Aces). At the end of the game, the strongest story will be printed, and that player will be the winning journalist.

## SETUP

1. Remove the Aces from the Decktet. Shuffle and give one to each player; discard the rest. The players place their cards face-up in front of them on the table; this forms the first card in the player’s “evidence tableau”.
2. Shuffle the remaining cards together, along with the Pawns and (optional) the Excuse.
3. Draw the top six cards and arrange in a 3–2–1 “pyramid” in the center of the table.
4. Give each player 12 “time chips”, each representing 1 hour (these can be stones/beads/whatever – they don’t need to be different for the different players)
5. Randomly choose a Start Player

## GAME PLAY

Continue playing until all players have run out of chips from their supplies, or until the last card has been taken.

A player’s turn consists of taking one card, either from the “pyramid” display or from another player, as described below.

If the player takes a card from the display, he may either

- (a) place it on the rightmost end of his row of “evidence” cards, or
- (b) may take as many cubes as the rank of the card, and, moving from left to right, place one cube on each card to the right of the ace that has a matching symbol. Repeat this until all cubes have been distributed.

If at any time, a card has as many cubes as its rank, it is “complete”, and is moved to the left of the Ace, and all of its cubes returned to the supply. If all cards with a matching suit are complete before the player has run out of cubes, the extra cubes are simply discarded (or placed on the Excuse, see below).

Whether he chose (a) or (b), the player must pay time chips for the card. If he took the card from the row of 3 cards in the display, he pays 1 time chip; if he took it from the row of 2 cards, he pays 2 time chips; if he took it from the row having a single card, he pays 3 time chips. If he chose option (a), the chips are discarded; if he chose option (b), the card he chose is placed in front of him, above his evidence row, and the chips he paid are placed on the card; another player may, as part of his/her turn, take that card and place it in his/her evidence row.

Finally, the player must slide cards down in the display to fill blank spaces, and then reveal the top card from the deck and place it at the top of the pyramid.

If, instead of choosing a card from the display, the player chose a card from another player, he/she must discard one chip, and **must** choose option (a), adding the card to the rightmost end of his evidence row. The player who previously held the card takes back his chips into his supply.

This concludes the player's turn; the player on the left takes the next turn.

When the game ends, players add up their scores as follows:

- For each completed card, add the card's rank
- For each completed card that matches the player's Ace, +1 point.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

The rank of a pawn is equal to the rank of the player's highest-rank completed card. This means that the value of a pawn can change as the game progresses, and so the pawn should not be moved to the left of the player's Ace until the game ends. (The player's Ace is automatically considered complete, so the Pawn always has a minimal value of 1). Note that it is not permitted to add cubes to a pawn in excess of the highest completed card's rank, even if the player hopes to subsequently complete a higher card at a later time.

The Excuse, if placed in the Evidence row, has a value equal to the number of cubes placed on it. The player may only add cubes to the Excuse if, after placing cubes in action (b), he/she has extra cubes that could not otherwise be placed. If the Excuse has, at game's end, more cubes than the highest completed card the player holds, it is worth 0 points. If chosen for action (b), the Excuse may be used to complete any one card.

## VARIANTS

Instead of taking turns in clockwise order, the next player to get a turn is the one with the most remaining chips. If more than one player have the same number of chips, it is the player closest to the current player's left.

If you have different time chips for each player, then after using option (b) to add cubes to evidence cards, the card the player purchased can be placed in the center of the table with his/her chips on it, if players find this helpful in assessing their options.

# KITTYHAWK

*another olde style solitaire game for the Decktet, by Eskay*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** A double decktet

## OBJECTIVE

Organize all of the cards into 6 piles that share a single suit and are in ascending rank order from Ace to Crown.

## SETUP

From a double decktet, form a 60-card Myrmex deck, comprising:

- 6 Aces, one of each suit
- 6 Crowns, one of each suit
- 2 copies of each numbered card (48 total)

Deal out:

- 6 Tableau piles, each initially with 1 face-up card
- 2 Heap piles, each initially with 3 cards, squared with only the top card visible
- 1 Stock, initially with the remaining 48 cards face-down
- 6 Foundation piles, initially empty

## GAME PLAY

Move a single card at a time.

Foundation:

- You may move the top card of any stack.
- You should move an Ace into any empty Foundation pile.
- You may move onto any card that is 1 rank **lower**, if the moving card has the suit of **the pile's ace**.

The cards in any particular pile will all share one suit.

Tableau:

- You may look through Tableau piles.
- You may move the top card of any stack.
- You may move a card to any empty Tableau pile.
- You may move a card onto a card that is 1 rank **higher**, if the moving card shares a suit with **the target card**.

The Mill ♠♠ on The Merchant ♠♠ on The Windmill ♠♠ is a valid Tableau stack.

Heap:

- You may not look through the Heap.
- You may move the top card of either stack.
- Do not move cards onto the Heap except by dealing.
- Do not move cards into a blank space except by dealing.

Stock:

- You may deal. To deal, take 6 cards from the deck, then put 3 of them on each of the 2 Stock piles. You should only see the top card.
- Do not move cards from the Stock except by dealing.
- Do not move cards to the Stock.

When all 60 cards are stacked in the foundation piles, you have won.

## VARIANTS

- I like to put my Aces crosswise to the rest of the foundation pile, so they show me their suit no matter how many cards I've stacked on top of them.
- For a slightly easier game, try starting with the Aces already out in the foundation piles.
- With staggered stacking, it's possible to arrange the heap piles to show you all-and-only their cards you've seen.

# LIBTIS

*an area control game, by Andrew Watson*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra material:** Suit chips and cubes (13 in each of 5 player colors)

Libtis is an area control game with location cards representing areas, and personality cards enabling you to place cubes in those areas. At the end of each of the three rounds, suit chips are awarded. At the end of the game, each player's score is calculated as the sum of suit chip points and bonus points.

Suits have the standard Decktet ordering: Moon chips are the most valuable, and Knot chips the least. (For point values of suit chips, see Game End and Scoring below. For a rich thematic description of the game, see the Libtis Almanac, if I ever get round to publishing it.)

Libtis

## SETUP

Form the board by laying out the following location cards:

- 2  (Desert)
- 4  (Mountain)
- 5  (Forest)
- 6  (Market)
- 7  (Cave)
- 9  (Darkness)
-  (Window)
-  (Sea)

It may well be easiest to make the board a  $2 \times 4$  grid. Note that this is a board rather than a map; Libtis does not use spatial concepts such as “adjacent” or “distant”.

Have each player select a cube color. Give them 13 cubes in their respective colors (or 10 cubes, if there are 5 players). Select a start player somehow.

Form the deck from:

- The 9 2-suited personality cards
- The 6 aces
- The other 5 personality cards (if and only if there are 4 or 5 players)

Shuffle the deck, face down, and deal it out between the players. Thus, if there are 3 or 4 players, each gets a hand of 5 cards; if there are 5 players, each gets a hand of 4. These are the hands for the first of the three rounds.

The final setup step is the allocation of bonus cards. Shuffle together the following 6 cards, and deal one, face down, to each player. Place the remaining bonus card(s) back in the box, face down.

- : if you hold the Crown of Leaves, you get the bonus if you have the most  chips.

- : as above, but for .
- : as above, but for .
- : if you hold Pact, you get the bonus if you have the most complete sets of 6 different suit chips.
- : if you hold Harvest, you get the bonus if you have the most chips (summed across all 6 suits).
- -: If you hold the Excuse (which has no rank or suit), you get the bonus if you have most voids (suits in which you hold no chips).

Bonus conditions are checked, and bonuses awarded, at the end of the game (not at the end of the first or second round; so see Game End and Scoring, below, for details).

This account of Setup is for Standard Libtis. There are Quickstart and Advanced variants, described below. The main source of variation is the use of bonus cards.

## GAME PLAY

There are three rounds, followed by end game scoring (described in the next section). Each round proceeds as follows.

The start player plays a card from hand, face-up, to the table, then plays a cube from supply to one of the locations on the board. *The played card and the destination location card must match, in that they must share at least one suit.* Play then proceeds clockwise, with players taking turns to play one card and one cube according to the matching rule. Each card is played face up on top of the card played by the previous player.

For each player, the number of cubes is lower than the total number of turns. For example, if there are 4 players, each will start with 13 cubes, and each will have 15 turns (5 turns to play a card in each of the 3 rounds).

So each player must, on at least 2 turns, move a cube from one location to another, rather than move a cube from supply to a location. The location from which a cube is moved has no effect on the rules for placing that cube. The same matching rule still applies, and that rule refers to only two cards: the one played from hand, and the destination.

Card play for the round continues until all cards have been played. Passing one's turn is not an option.

Suit chip allocation follows card play. Consider the locations in the order of the list in Setup above. The player with most cubes at a location gets a chip in the highest suit on the location card. If there is a second suit on the card, the player with second-most cubes gets a chip in that suit. If there is a third suit on the card, the player with third-most cubes gets a chip in that suit.

If there is a tie for highest suit chip, each of the tied players gets a chip in the second suit. To use the example of the first location, (Desert): if there is a tie for first, each player involved in the tie gets a ; if there is a clear first, and a tie for second, the first player gets a , and none of the players involved in the tie for second receives a chip. A tie for second results in the awarding of chips only if there is a third suit at the location.

Ties may result in the need to award more chips in a suit (most likely Wyrms) than the 10 provided in a set of Decktet chips. If this happens, simply use coins

(or whatever else works and is to hand) as extra chips; do not deprive a player of an earned chip.

Awarding of chips is of course public. As you are awarded chips for a round, stack them so that other players can see them. When all players have received their chips for the round, and have had the opportunity to make a *mental* note of chips awarded to others, you may hide your chips.

If it is the first or second round: pick up the deck from the table; turn it face down; shuffle it; and deal out the cards for the next round, for which the start player role moves clockwise. If it is the third round that has just finished, it is time for end-of-game scoring.

## GAME END AND SCORING

If you meet the condition on your bonus card, score 12 points. If you are tied for the condition, divide the bonus by the number of players involved in the tie. For example, if 3 (i.e. you and 2 other players), are involved, you score 4 points. Note that neither of the other players scores for that bonus card, since neither of them held that card. (In the unlikely event of all players in a 5-player game being involved in a tie, the player holding the card scores 3 points.) If you do not meet your bonus condition, you score no points.

Score points for the chips you hold as follows.

- 6 for each 🎲.
- 5 for each 🌟 or 🌀.
- 4 for each 🐉 or 🟢.
- 3 for each 🟡.

Your final score is the sum of your bonus points and chip points. There is one tiebreaker: number of chips.

## VARIANTS

Quickstart: don't use the bonus cards.

Advanced: use an extra bonus card (8🟢🟡, Betrayal), and allocate bonus cards differently, as follows.

The player who will play 3rd in the 1st round (and so will play 1st in the 3rd and final round) takes the 7 bonus cards, shuffles them, randomly selects one, and places it face down in the box without looking at it. That player then looks at the remaining bonus cards, privately chooses one of them, and passes the remaining bonus cards to the left. Players choose and pass bonus cards until each has one bonus card. The last player to take a bonus card return the unused bonus card(s) to the box, face down.

You may look at your hand for the 1st round while choosing your bonus card.

If you hold Betrayal, you score bonus points according to the failure of other players to achieve their bonuses. For each other player (OP), you score points as follows.

- You beat OP on the bonus condition (e.g. you finished with more 🟢 chips than the player with the Wyrms bonus card): 9 points.

- You were involved in a tie with OP on the condition: 6 points.
- OP beat you on the condition, but did not score for the condition due to being beaten by yet another player: 2 points.
- OP beat you on the condition, and tied for the condition with yet another player (or players): 1 point.
- OP achieved the bonus condition (and did not tie for it): no points for you.

# LITH

*a game of betting and bluffing for scoundrels, rogues and blaggards for 2 to 10 players, by Mycake.*

**Extended Decktet:** Recommended (Pawns and Courts), Optional (Excuse)

**Extra material:** Chips/betting tokens

## EQUIPMENT

Single decktet, preferably with pawns and courts but can be played without. Chips or markers of some kind to be used for betting.

## RULES

Although this is a game of betting, it by no means has to be played for real money. Players start with some collection of chips or tokens, the winner being the player to collect them all, or whoever has the most after some pre-agreed period of play.

The ranks and suits follow the usual ordering; from highest to lowest these are ♠♥♦♣98765432A &



For the purposes of this game, interpretive types are Person, Location, and Event. Aces are considered to have no interpretive type.

The main feature of the game is a comparison of hands composed of three cards, with players betting that their hand will be ranked highest. One way to achieve this is described here; variations in betting rounds/hand construction are given at the bottom of the page.

Choose a player to deal first. After each hand the deal passes to the left. Before each deal, every player puts one chip into the pot. Three cards are dealt to each player, and players may then inspect their hand before a round of betting occurs, starting with the player to the left of dealer, with betting rounds working as in poker. (Subsequently any references to players is assumed to be referring only to those players that remain in, unless specified otherwise. Players who fold are not obligated to show their hand, and certainly may not do so before the conclusion of the hand.) After this first round players *may* place one of the cards from their hand face down in front of them (discarding it), starting with player to the left of dealer, and continuing round until everyone has either done so or chosen not to. Now starting with left of dealer, and then moving round clockwise, each player that has discarded will do one of two things:

- If the player to the left of them has discarded, they take up that discard into their hand.
- If the player to the left of them hasn't discarded, they are dealt the next card from the deck, to be taken into their hand.

Note that this means the only player to know whether or not they will get a fresh card from the deck when deciding whether or not to discard is the last to decide (the dealer if still in). Any discarded cards not taken up by players are placed at the bottom of the deck. There is a second round of betting, and a second

opportunity for players to change one card, using the same procedure as before. Any player is still free to discard, regardless of whether or not they did so the first time. Finally, there is a third round of betting, after which any players left in must display their hand to all other players. These are compared (see below), and whoever has the highest ranked hand wins the pot. The next round is dealt by the player to the left of the previous dealer, and this process continues until whatever pre-agreed finishing condition is fulfilled.

## HAND RANKINGS

Hands are formed of exactly three cards, and are ranked as follows, from highest to lowest. (Note: some hands are not possible without the extended decktet)

Lith

Examples of each are given below their description. In each case the top example beats the lower example, and the cards in each hand are listed in order from high to low according to how they would be evaluated in a tie (see below).

(Hands always count as the highest ranked category whose description they fit)

**Doubly Kindred** All three cards share two interpretive types.

The End (♣♣), The Market (6♣♣), The Origin (2♣♣).

**Running Twin Flush** (Run + Impure Twin Flush)

All three cards share two suits, and have consecutive ranks.

The Island (♣♣♣), The Borderland (♣♣♣), The Darkness (9♣♣)

The Harvest (♣♣♣), The Pact (9♣♣), The Diplomat (8♣♣)

**Running Totum** (Run + Totum)

Exactly one instance of each of the six suits is present, and the cards have consecutive ranks.

The Merchant (9♣♣), The Diplomat (8♣♣), The Cave (7♣♣)

The Diplomat (8♣♣), The Cave (7♣♣), The Market (6♣♣)

**Pure Twin Flush** All three cards share two suits, and no other suits are present.

The Pact (9♣♣), The Diplomat (8♣♣), The Mountain (4♣♣)

The Betrayal (8♣♣), The Soldier (5♣♣), The Battle (4♣♣)

**Full Spread Trio** (Full Spread + Trio)

All three cards share a rank, and exactly one of each suit and interpretive type is present.

The Diplomat (8♣♣), The Mill (8♣♣), The Betrayal (8♣♣)

The Forest (5♣♣), The Discovery (5♣♣), The Soldier (5♣♣)

**Totum Trio** (Totum + Trio)

All three cards share a rank, and exactly one of each suit is present.

The Journey (3♣♣), The Painter (3♣♣), The Savage (3♣♣)

The Author (2♣♣), The Desert (2♣♣), The Origin (2♣♣) *Note this is not a Full Spread Trio as there are two instances of a location*

**Full Spread Pair** (Full Spread + Pair)

Two of the cards share a rank, and exactly one of each suit and interpretive type is present.

The Betrayal (8♣♣), The Mountain (4♣♣), The Sailor (4♣♣)

The Castle (7♣♣), The Journey (3♣♣), The Savage (3♣♣)

**Full Spread** (Totum + Fortune)

Exactly one of each suit and interpretive type is present.

The Watchman (♠♣♠), The Origin (2♣♠), Ace of Suns (A♠)

The Darkness (9♣♠), The Chance Meeting (7♣♠), The Painter (3♣♠)

**Impure Twin Flush** All three cards share two suits, but other suits are also present.

The Consul (♠♣♣), The Watchman (♠♣♠), The Author (2♣♠)

The Island (♠♣♣), The Penitent (6♣♠), The Desert (2♣♠)

**Totum Pair** (Totum + Pair)

Two of the cards share a rank, and exactly one of each suit is present.

The Merchant (9♣♠), The Lunatic (6♣♠), The Penitent (6♣♠)

The Forest (5♣♠), The Discovery (5♣♠), The Battle (2♣♠)

**Trio** All three cards have the same rank.

The End (♣♠), The Calamity (♣♠), The Windfall (♣♠)

The Consul (♠♣♣), The Island (♠♣♣), The Window (♠♣♣)

**Totum** Exactly one of each suit is present.

The Pact (9♣♠), The Battle (4♣♠), The Origin (2♣♠)

The Light Keeper (♠♣♠), The Savage (3♣♠), Ace of Moons (A♠)

**Running Single** Flush Run + Single Flush

All three cards share one suit, and cards have consecutive ranks.

The Sea (♣♠), The Island (♠♣♣), The Borderland (♠♣♣)

The Forest (5♣♠), The Sailor (4♣♠), The Savage (3♣♠)

**Kindred Pair** (Kindred + Pair)

Two of the cards share a rank, and all three cards share an interpretive type.

The Huntress (♣♠), The Bard (♣♠), The Merchant (9♣♠)

The Castle (7♣♠), The Cave (7♣♠), The Mountain (4♣♠)

**Single Flush Pair** (Single Flush + Pair)

Two of the cards share a rank, and all three cards share a single suit.

The Island (♠♣♣), The Window (♠♣♣), The Desert (2♣♠)

The Harvest (♠♣♣), The Borderland (♠♣♣), Ace of Leaves, (A♠)

**Kindred Single Flush** (Single Flush + Kindred)

All three cards share a single suit and an interpretive type.

The Calamity (♣♠), The Rite (♠♣♣), The Battle (4♣♠)

The Diplomat (8♣♠), The Lunatic (6♣♠), The Author (2♣♠)

**Run** The three cards have consecutive ranks.

The Painter (3♣♠), The Origin (2♣♠), Ace of Suns (A♠)

The Cave (7♣♠), The Lunatic (6♣♠), The Forest (5♣♠)

**Fortune Single Flush** (Fortune + Single Flush)

All three interpretive types are present exactly once, and all three cards have one suit in common.

The Bard (♣♠), The Castle (7♣♠), The Discovery (5♣♠)

The Rite (♠♣♣), The Diplomat (8♣♠), The Forest (5♣♠)

**Fortune Pair** (Fortune + Pair)

Two of the cards share a rank, and all three interpretive types are present exactly once.

The Consul (♠♣♣), The Window (♠♣♣), The Journey (3♣♠)

The Lunatic (6♣♠), The Market (6♣♠), Ace of Waves (A♠)

**Kindred** All three cards share an interpretive type.

The Windfall (♣♣), The Betrayal (8♣♣), The Chance Meeting (7♣♣)  
The Merchant (9♣♣), The Soldier (5♣♣), The Savage (3♣♣)

**Fortune** All three interpretive types are present exactly once.

The End (♣♣), The Watchman (♠♣♣), Ace of Moons (A♣)  
The Darkness (9♣♣), The Chance Meeting (7♣♣), The Penitent (6♣♣)

**Single Flush** All three cards have one suit in common.

The Calamity (♣♣), The Battle (4♣♣), The Desert (2♣♣)  
The Pact (9♣♣), The Journey (3♣♣), The Author (2♣♣)

**Pair** Two of the cards share a rank.

The Diplomat (8♣♣), The Mill (8♣♣), The Origin (2♣♣)  
The Pact (9♣♣), The Forest (5♣♣), The Discovery (5♣♣)

**Void** None of the above.

The Consul (8♣♣), The Painter (3♣♣), Ace of Wyrms (A♣)  
The Borderland (♠♣♣), The Castle (7♣♣), The Discovery (5♣♣)

**Ties** If two hands fall into the same category, any hand which is kindred beats any hand which is fortune beats any hand which is neither.

If they still cannot be ranked, the ranks are compared, starting with the highest card (except for hands containing a pair, in which case the rank of the pair is evaluated first), and proceeding down through each card if there is a tie.

If the hands still cannot be ranked, the suits of the highest ranked card are compared, starting with the higher ranked suit.

## VARIANTS

### The Excuse

The excuse can be included in the deck if desired, in which case it can take on a number of different roles. The role it is to take should be agreed by players before the start of the game.

**As beggar:** When acting as the beggar, it has no value, merely being dead weight in a hand. In any comparison it loses to any other card.

**As imposter:** When acting as the imposter, it takes on the rank, interpretive type and suit(s) of any real card in the deck that is not already in the hand it is a part of.

**As demon:** The demon is mischievous, and can be either kind or cruel. When acting as the demon, when the hands are shown at the conclusion of a round, one of them containing The Excuse, a coin is flipped. If the result is heads, the card acts as the imposter. If it is tails, it acts as the beggar.

# MAGNATE

*a game of city building, by Cristyn Magnus*

The Grand Duke, who has no heirs, has decreed that his throne will go whoever does the most to lift up and develop the duchy. You are a successful but common merchant, aiming to buy a noble title by impressing the Grand Duke. His health is failing, so you need to hurry.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra material:** Two ten-sided dice (D10s) and one six-sided die (D6), fifty tokens (if possible, of six different kinds)

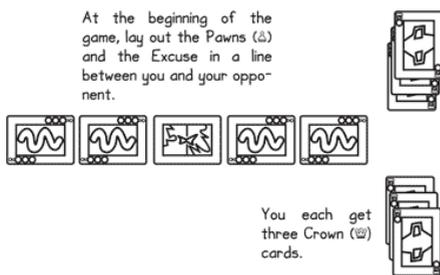
## COMPONENTS

In addition to an extended Decktet, the game requires resource tokens and several dice.

**Tokens:** Resource tokens represent goods of various kinds that can be used to secure deeds or develop property. In the game, there are six kinds of resource: one for each of the six Decktet suits. You'll need about 10 or so of each kind. See below for some suggestions regarding tokens.

**Dice:** You'll need two ten-sided dice (d10s) and one six-sided die (d6).

## SETUP



Separate the Pawns and Crowns from the deck.

Set the four Pawns and the Excuse in the middle of the table. Each represents a district of the duchy.

Shuffle the Crowns and deal three to each player. These represent your personal resources. Each player starts with three resource tokens, one matching each of their Crowns.

Deal three cards to each player. The first player takes a turn, and play

alternates.

## GAME PLAY

Each turn, do the following in order: (a) roll for and collect resources, (b) play a card, (c) draw a card. Along the way, you may trade resources and/or develop properties to which you have a deed.

### a. Roll the dice:

Roll both ten-sided dice. If either die is a 1, immediately resolve taxation. Then, both players collect resources based on the higher of the two dice.

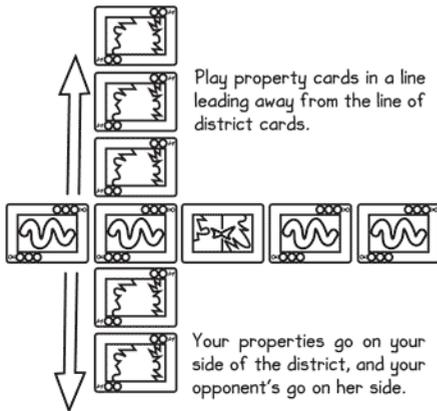
**Taxation:** Roll the six-sided die to determine which resource is taxed: 1 Moons, 2 Suns, 3 Waves, 4 Leaves, 5 Wyrms, 6 Knots. (These are the suits in the usual order of priority.) Any player who has more than one of that resource must immediately discard all but one. Note that resources already spent to develop properties are not affected. Resolve taxation before collecting resources.

**Collect resources:** Look at the greater of the two die rolls; if the dice are doubles, you still just collect resources once.

- If a 10 is rolled, each player collects one resource matching each of their Crown cards; three resources in all.
- If a number between 2 and 9 is rolled (as the higher die) you collect resources for each property of that rank that you have in play. If the property is fully developed, you collect a resource matching each of its suits. If you own a deed to the property but it is not fully developed, you collect one resource token matching one of its suits; your choice. Your opponent collects resources similarly. A player who has no properties matching the number rolled collects no resources.
- If a 1 is rolled (a pair of 1s) then players collect one matching resource for each Ace property they have in play.

### b. Play a card:

Either completely develop a new property, buy a deed for a new property, or sell a card. You must do one of these each turn, and you cannot do more than one.



### Completely develop a property:

In order to play and complete a property on the same turn, you must discard a number of resource tokens equal to the rank of the card. All the resource tokens must match one of the card's suits, and at least one of each suit must be included. For example, the Mill (4 of Waves and Leaves) could be developed with 1 blue resource and 3 brown resources, 2 blue and 2 brown, or 3 blue and 1 brown.

When you develop a property, you must put it in one of the five districts of the duchy. When it is your first property in the district, the property card must share at least one suit symbol

with the Pawn that represents that district. If you already have a property in that district, then the new property must share at least one suit symbol with the immediately previous property. You may play any card as your first property in the district represented by the Excuse; subsequent cards must still match the previous property.

Once you have placed a property, you may not move it to a different district. If there is no district in which you could place a property, then you may not develop it at this time.

Developing an Ace costs 3 resources that matches the suit of the Ace.

Note that you may not develop a new property in a district if you have the deed to a partially-developed property in that district; you must complete development on that property before you can develop a new one there.

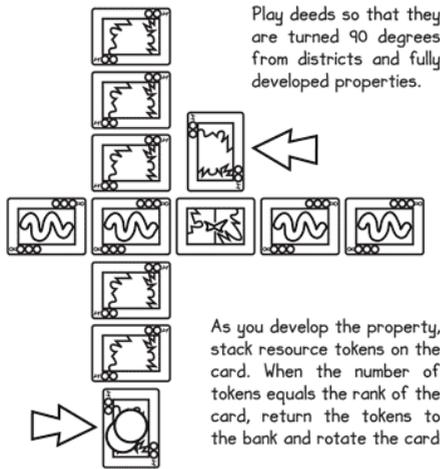
**Purchase a deed:** If you cannot afford to completely develop a property this turn, you may purchase the deed for it and develop it over time. The property will not count toward victory if it is not completed before the end of the game. In order to buy a deed, you must spend two resources; one matching each suit on the card. These resource tokens are paid to the bank.

A deed must be placed in a district, with the same restrictions as developed properties; the deeded property must share at least one suit symbol with the Pawn (if it is your first property in that district) or the previous property (otherwise). Once you have a deed to a property, you may not put another deed in that district or develop another property there until the deeded property is fully developed.

You may spend resources to partially develop a property on the same turn you purchase the deed.

Buying a deed can be a good idea for high rank cards. The property may provide some income while you are developing it, and resources spent on it will be safe from taxation. However, buying a deed ultimately adds two to the resource cost of the property. You should not purchase a deed for a rank 2 card, because you could fully develop the property for the same cost.

**Develop properties:** At any time after collecting resources, you may spend resources that match one of the card's suits to develop a deed. If the resources are not enough to complete development, put them on the card. When the total spent in development equals the rank of the card, then the property is fully developed.



*Example:* A deed for 4♣ costs 1 ♣ resource and 1 ♠ resource; developing the property will require a total of 4 resources that each may be either ♣ or ♠.

Resources placed on a deed when it is partially developed are not affected by taxation.

**\* Sell a card:** You may discard a card from your hand and collect two resources tokens, one matching each

suit on the card. If you discard an Ace, then you collect two tokens matching that Ace.

Note that you must play exactly one card on your turn. As such, you may not sell a card in the same turn that you develop a property outright or buy a deed. Conversely, if you do not have the space or resources to buy any of your cards as properties or deeds, then you must sell one of them.

**Trade:** At any time during your turn, after resolving die rolls but before drawing a card, you may trade resources with the bank. 3 of any one colour of resource may be traded for 1 of any other colour. You may make multiple trades if you have the resources and desire to do so.

### c. Draw a card:

Draw one card; this ends your turn.

The first time the draw pile is exhausted, shuffle the discard pile and draw from that. The second time the draw pile is exhausted, each player gets one final turn. After that, the Grand Duke dies and the game ends.

## VICTORY

When the game ends, discard the cards remaining in your hand (you should have two left). Discard any deeded properties which you did not finish developing and any resources spent to partially develop them.

In each district, each player totals up the ranks of their developed properties. An Ace counts as one per property with its suit that you have in that district.

*Example:* Shar has built the Ace of ♠ and it is the only ♠ property she has in that district; it counts for one. She has built the Ace of ♣ in another district where she also has the 3, 5, and 8 of ♣; the Ace counts for four.

The player with the higher total for that district scores 1 victory point. If the totals in a district are the same, neither player scores for that district. The player with more districts becomes Grand Duke and wins the game.

If there is a tie in districts: Each player totals the ranks of their developed properties in all districts. The player with the higher total wins.

If there is a tie in total properties: The player holding the greatest number of remaining resources wins.

If this is still a tie, then the game is a draw. Both players get to be the next Grand Duke, on alternate days.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

**Courts:** If you decide to use the Court cards, shuffle them into the deck as additional property cards. A player may sell a Court to collect three resource tokens, one matching each suit on the Court card. A player may develop a Court as a property by spending 10 resource tokens matching any of the three suits. A developed Court card never provides income, but it counts as rank 10 for purposes of determining victory at the end of the game. A deed for a Court would cost three resource tokens.

## APPENDIX: RESOURCE TOKENS

- There are Decktet suit chips available for purchase.

- Alternately, you can use any tokens that come in six different colors. For a long time, we used plastic stacking counters that come in the Decktet suit colours. Before we got those, we used poker chips.
- You can print and cut out resource tokens, but cut paper won't be very substantial.
- With just one kind of token – such as go stones or a single color of poker chip – you can let token placement indicate which kind of resource each token represents. You can print out game mats for this purpose.
- With just one kind of token and no extra equipment, you can set up in this way: Line up your Crowns in the middle, to the right of the Pawns (see below). Placing a token next to a Crown then indicates that you have a resource in that suit.

If you just have one colour of token, put the Crowns in line with the Pawns. By placing tokens in front of the matching Crown, you can track different kinds of resource.



You still only control three of the Crowns, for purposes of collecting resources. Yours are the three on your right.



# Moco!

*A Decktet version of the card game Wildlife Safari, by Ralph T*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra material:** 30 suit chips (5 for each suit)

## SETUP

Moco! is played with the standard Decktet deck plus the Pawns. With 5 players, the Excuse is also used.

Take out the Aces in each suit. Use the Aces to set up the game board (six cards face up in the center of the playing area).

Remove 2 random cards in a 2 or 4 player game, and 1 random card in a 3 player game. In a 5 player game, no cards are removed, but the Excuse is added in and counts as a wild card of any suit.

Shuffle the remaining cards, and deal them evenly to all players.

Sort the 30 chips by color and place them in the playing area beside the relevant Ace cards.

The player to the left of the dealer starts.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn you must play one card onto a pile. One of the suits of the card you play must match the Ace at the bottom of the pile. A pile cannot change suits.

After you have played your card, take a chip in any color. (Special two player rule: You cannot take a chip in the color of the suit you just played).

The game ends when there are six cards (excluding the Ace) in any one suit. Alternatively, if there are not six cards in any suit, the game ends when the last card is played.

**Scoring** : Every chip you've collected scores. Each chip is worth the value of the final card placed on its suit pile. Pawn cards are value one. Crown cards are value 10. The Excuse is value 0. Number cards are the value of their rank.

The total value of your chips is your score.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

This game uses the Pawn cards. The Excuse card is only used in a 5 player game.

## VARIANTS

Play as many games as there are players, with each player taking turns to be the dealer. Scores are recorded after every round. At the end of the final game, add up each player's score. The player with the highest total score wins.



# MONSTER DAY

a game for 2 mad wizards, by P.D. Magnus.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional

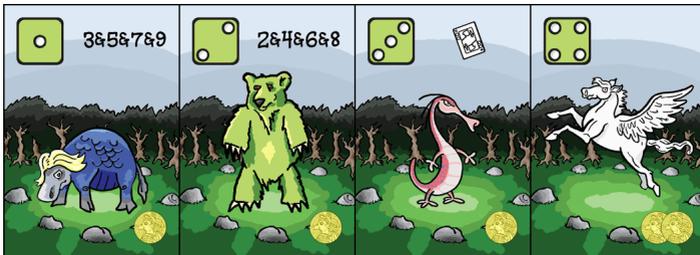
**Extra material:** 2 dice, monster tokens

You are a mad wizard who wants to collect monsters. You can't just tell the villagers that this is what you want, or they'll be at your door with pitchforks to drive you out of town. So you manipulate forces in the world, subtly enticing monsters to come to you. Unfortunately, the mad wizard in the next county is trying to do the same thing.

Monster Day

## COMPONENTS

You need a Decktet, two ordinary six-sided dice, and the four monster tokens.



## SETUP

Remove the Aces, Pawns, Courts, and Excuse from the Decktet. The Aces are used to make the game board. The extended deck cards won't be used.

Shuffle the Aces together and deal them out one next to another in a line between you and your opponent. Leave a gap large enough for the monsters between the third and fourth Ace; all the monsters start there. For example:



Each Ace represents part of a village. The three spaces nearest to you are in your village, the three spaces on the other side of the gap belong to your opponent.

Shuffle the remainder of the deck. Deal three cards each to yourself and your opponent, and put the rest in the middle of the table face-down as a draw pile.

Roll a die to determine start player. High roller goes first.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you take each of these steps in order: (a) exert influence, (b) take your chances, and (c) draw a card.

**Exert influence:** Play one card from your hand next to one of the spaces on the board. You may only place a card next to a space that matches one of its suits. For example: If you play the 8♣♠, you may play it next to A♣ or A♠.

If there is already a card next to that space, then the new card completely covers the old one. The new card must match the Ace, and an extra suit on the card already there makes no difference. Covered cards have no further effect on play.

You may play cards in your own village or in your opponent's village, as allowed by matching suits. Sometimes good cards will only match your opponent's side of the board or bad cards will only match yours, but that's life.

**Take your chances.** Roll both dice. Die results of 1–4 make monsters move. If both dice give the same result, just move the indicated monster once. 5s and 6s have no effect; if both dice are 5 or 6, then no monster moves this turn.

1. **The Catoblepas:** Each player totals the ranks of odd-numbered cards in their village. If you have no odd-numbered cards, then your total is zero. (Ranks 3, 5, 7, and 9 count; ♣s do not.) Move the Catoblepas token one space closer to the player with the higher total.
2. **The Dire Bear:** Each player totals the ranks of even-numbered cards next in their village. (Ranks 2, 4, 6, and 8 count; ♣s do not.) Move the Dire Bear token one space closer to the player with the higher total.
3. **The Questing Beast:** Each player totals the ranks of any personality cards in their village. (Personalities are the cards done up like face cards, with two close ups of a single figure. ♣ personalities count as 10.) Move the Questing Beast token one space closer to the player with the higher total.
4. **The Winged Horse:** Each player totals the ranks of all cards in their village. ♣s count for 10. Move the Winged Horse token one space closer to the player with the higher total.

Tokens move to a space nearest the gap the first time they move. After that, they skip over the gap and will always be in one of the villages.

If both players have the same total, then the monster does not move.

If a monster is already in the space closest to a player when the result that would move it closer to them, leave it where it is.

**Draw a card.** If there are any cards left in the draw pile, draw one. If not, gesture as if you were drawing a card. Your turn is over either way.

Play alternates until the end of the turn in which the very last card is played.

## VICTORY

You score points for each monster in your village when the game ends. The Catoblepas, Dire Bear, and Questing Beast are worth one point each. The Winged Horse is worth two points.

For scoring purposes, it does not matter where a monster is in your village. All that matters is that it's yours.

## VARIANTS

You can add in some or all of the extended deck cards. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game.

**The Excuse:** The Excuse can be played on any space and counts for zero.

**Pawns and Courts:** When you need to know the rank of a Pawn or Court, the player whose space has the Pawn or Court on it rolls both dice. The card's rank is counted as the sum of the dice. Roll every time the card's rank is relevant to a monster moving.



# MOONSCROWN

*an attempt to adapt Red7 by Carl Chudyk and Chris Cieslik to the Decktet, by Johannes Hüsing.*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** None

The nobles of Jacynth are in a permanent race to impress each other. Be it the number of knots holding together their waistcoat, be it the number of waves in their hairdo. In order to maintain a permanent competition, the unwritten laws of fashion change by the week. Therefore it is not only important to stay on top of aristocratic style but to help redefining it. Can you make others to fail to impress before you fall behind?

## SETUP

Take the standard Decktet. Put the Ace of Moons in the middle of the table, starting the *pile*. Deal a hand of seven (four players: six) cards to each player. Place one card face up before each player. This is the start of their *display*.

## GAME PLAY

### Objective

Players display must meet one or all winning conditions defined by the pile at the end of their turn. They are eliminated from the current round if they fail to do so. The last player remaining wins the round.

### The pile

During the game, cards are added to the pile so that only the top card is visible. Only the visible suits are important. They define the current winning conditions:

- Moons : highest card
- Suns : most cards of a suit
- Waves : most even cards (2, 4, 6, 8)
- Leaves : most different suits
- Wyrms : most cards of one type (places / personalities / events / aces)
- Knots : most cards below 5 (Ace, 2, 3, 4)

### Turn sequence

Player with lowest card in her display starts the game, other players follow in clockwise order.

## Actions

During her turn, a player can perform one of the following actions:

1. Add a card from her hand to her display. At the end of her turn, her display must meet at least **one** winning condition with her display.
2. Place a card from her hand on the pile. At the end of her turn, her display must meet **all** winning conditions.
3. Place a card from her hand on the pile **and** add a card from her hand to her display. At the end of her turn, her display must meet **all** winning conditions.
4. Fold: Put display and hand face down before herself. Player is eliminated for the rest of the round and from now on skipped in the clockwise turn sequence.

A player with no card in hand may only fold. A player may fold even if she could choose another action. This may be the best move to cut opponent's gains (see Scoring).

Any card from the display may meet several winning conditions.

If there's a tie on a winning condition, the highest card in the respective subset (first rank, then suit) breaks the tie.

## Scoring

If at the start of her turn, a player is the only one left in play, she wins the round. She may choose a card from her display and put it aside, face up. This card must be part of any subset of the display meeting a current winning condition. Numbers score points according to their value, Aces count as 1, Crowns as 10.

A subset meeting the Leaves winning conditions must be minimal in the sense that the winning condition is not met if any card is removed from it. It needn't be the smallest subset fulfilling the condition. For example, both (Author (2♣♠), Cave (7♣♠)), Chance Meeting (7♣♠)) and (Author (2♣♠), Calamity (♣♠), Sea (♣♠)), Chance Meeting (7♣♠)) are viable subsets, but if you add Market (6♣♠) to any of the sets you must remove Author or Chance Meeting from it.

## End of game

The game ends after seven rounds. Highest score wins.

## VARIANTS

Initially, all unused cards go into a face-down draw pile. If you add a card to the pile, draw one card less from the draw pile than there are suits on the card. It is *really* recommended to play this variant to have some incentive in not adding to your display.

# MOVING DAY

*a game for 2 players, using the Decktet, by P.D. Magnus*

You and your roommate have lived together for years, so your collections of geek totems have become hopelessly intermingled. There are shelves full of rare anime, cabinets full of prized board games, and so on. But now neither of you can say which is whose. Today you are both moving out and heading your separate ways, and all of your friends are here to help you pack. You want to take as much as possible, but you can't let your roommate see you packing the contested collections. With some manipulation and a little luck, though, your friends will pack them for you. It's only a short time before the moving vans arrive!

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra material:** 2 six-sided dice and 4 collection tokens

This game was created for the August 2008 Game Design Showdown at the Board Game Designers Forum. In November 2013, Moving Day was rethemed as Monster Day so as to better fit the idiom of the Decktet. The new one has the same game play, but is niftier looking.

## COMPONENTS

You need a Decktet, two (ordinary, six-sided) dice, and four collection tokens. The collection tokens are marked 1 through 4; they represent the anime collection, the comic books, the action figures, and the board games (respectively).

## SETUP

Remove the Aces from the Decktet. Shuffle them together and deal them out one next to another in a line between you and your opponent. Leave a gap large enough for the collection tokens between the third and fourth Ace; all the collections start there. For example:



This forms the game board. Each Ace represents a moving box. The three boxes nearest to you are yours, the three boxes on the other side of the gap belong to your opponent.

Shuffle the remainder of the deck. Deal three cards each to yourself and your opponent, and put the rest in the middle of the table as a draw pile.

The player who has lived in the most different places during their life takes the first turn. If there is a tie, roshambo for it.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, (1) wheedle the packers, (2) take your chances, and (3) draw a card.

**Wheedle the packers.** Play one card from your hand next to one of the boxes on the board. You may only place a card next to a box that matches one of its suits. For example: If you play the 8 of Wyrms and Knots, you may play it next to the Ace of Wyrms or the Ace of Knots.

If there is already a card next to the box, then the new card completely covers the old one. Covered cards have no further effect on play.

You may play cards next to your own boxes or next to your opponent's boxes, as allowed by matching suits. Sometimes good cards will only match your opponent's boxes or bad cards will only match yours, but that's life. Getting geeks to help you move can be like herding cats.

**Take your chances.** Roll both dice. Die results of 1-4 make the packers to move one of the collections. If both dice give the same result, just move the indicated collection once. 5s and 6s have no effect; if both dice are 5 or 6, then nothing moves this turn.

1. Each player totals the ranks of *odd-numbered cards* next to their boxes. If you have no odd-numbered cards, then your total is zero. (Ranks 3, 5, 7, and 9 count; Crowns do not.) Move the *anime* token one box closer to the player with the higher total.
2. Each player totals the ranks of *even-numbered cards* next to their boxes. (Ranks 2, 4, 6, and 8 count; Crowns do not.) Move the *comic books* token one box closer to the player with the higher total.
3. Each player totals the ranks of any *personality cards* next to their boxes. (Personalities are the cards done up like face cards, with two close ups of a single figure. Crown personalities count as 10.) Move the *action figures* token one box closer to the player with the higher total.
4. Each player totals the ranks of all cards next to their boxes. Crowns count for 10. Move the *board games* token one box closer to the player with the higher total.

Tokens move to a box nearest the gap the first time they move. After that, they skip over the gap and will always be in one of the boxes.

If both players have the same total, then the token does not move.

If a collection is already in the box closest to a player when the result that would move it closer to them, leave it where it is.

**Draw a card.** If there are any cards left in the draw pile, draw one. If not, gesture as if you were drawing a card. Your turn is over either way.

Play alternates until the end of the turn in which the very last card is played.

## VICTORY

You score points for each collection in one of your boxes when the game ends. The anime, comic books, and action figures are worth one point each. The board games are worth two points.

For scoring purposes, it does not matter which of your boxes has a collection in it. All that matters is that it's yours.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add some or all of the extended deck cards. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game.

**The Excuse:** The Excuse can be played on any box and counts for zero.

**Pawns and Courts:** When you need to know the rank of a Pawn or Court, the player who owns the box with the Pawn or Court on it rolls both dice. The card's rank is counted as the sum of both dice. Roll every time the card's rank is relevant to a collection moving.

## VARIANTS

**Tetrahedra:** This game was originally designed to use four-sided dice. It may add more geek cred to play that way. If you roll doubles using d4s, then nothing happens. If you roll two different numbers, then move both collections.



# MUSE

*a game of art and influence, by Jesse Millikan*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (untested)

**Extra material:** 12 (11) chips of each suit, 4 (3) action squares

You are a dedicated artist of the sultanate of Muse, a tiny island trade port in the middle of the sea of Muse surrounded by six other nations. Muse has a strange local economy; there is no local currency and a very limited amount of each of the other six nations' currencies. Since it's about all the islanders think of, all the art looks like one or more of the six currencies!

Your goal is to be the greatest artist on muse, which is to say, the one who has the most artworks in the sultan's palace.

Muse

## SETUP

Place the initial **economy** near the middle of the table. For four players, this is 8 coins of each currency. For three players, this is 7 coins of each currency. Set aside the other 4 coins of each currency – they will be added later in the game (See Drawing, Discarding and Economic Growth).

Muse is played with the basic decktet. Shuffle all of the cards and deal a 4 card hand to each player, then place the remaining cards in the middle as a draw pile with space for a discard pile.

Each player also gets a one-sided action square. These can be printed on card stock or made by hand – only the name of each main action is necessary. (See links.)

## GAME PLAY

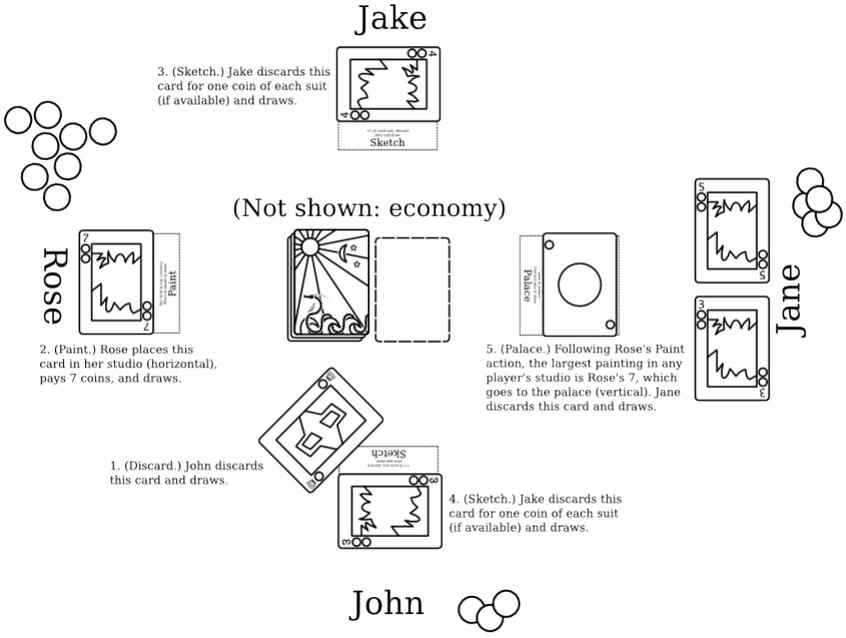
Each player's hand represents ideas for artworks which players will act upon in different ways across multiple rounds. In addition, each player may have in front of them currency of the six types, horizontal cards representing paintings in their studio, and vertical cards representing that player's paintings in the sultan's palace.

### Rounds and Actions

The game is played in complete rounds in which each player will take one action with one card (not counting discards), and the game ends at the end of a complete round (see Palace below). Each round, each player will pick an idea card from their hand, an action on the action square (by covering the other three with the idea card), and put them together face down on the table ready to be flipped. Once everyone has selected, each player reveals by turning the action card and idea card over. In addition, players may select one card to discard at this point, by saying "discard" and placing one idea card to be discarded on one corner of their action card.

Then, all players' actions (including discards) occur in order by the size of the idea cards, from biggest to smallest. (This is decktet rank and then suit order; for details see "Card Order" below.)

Muse



Here are the actions in detail:

**Sketch:** You sell sketches on the street for change.

*Details:* The idea card is discarded. The player then receives one of each currency on the idea card from the economy, subject to availability; if the economy is out of a currency, the player does not receive it. The player then draws a new card.

**Paint:** You pay for paint and canvas to make a magnificent painting.

*Details:* The idea card becomes a painting (face-up horizontal card) in their "studio" area, at a cost of the rank of the card in any mix of currencies. The player then draws a new card.

**Patron:** A foreign patron of the arts visits the artist's quarter and buys the biggest painting he can.

*Details:* The single biggest painting in any artist's studio, that the economy can afford in one of the painting's currencies (from top to bottom), is bought from that player. The price is the rank plus the number of suits (of the painting). (See Patron for details.) The idea card is not used except for order of actions; it is discarded and the player draws a card.

**Palace:** The sultan makes a rare visit to the artists quarter and appropriates the most glorious painting.

*Details:* The biggest single painting of any artist goes from the artist's studio

(horizontal) into that artist's gallery in the palace (vertical and placed above the artist's studio). The idea card is not used except for order of actions; it is discarded and the player draws a card. **If a player has reached four paintings, this signals the end of the game at the end of this round.**

**Discard:** The player discards the idea card and draws a card.

After all actions including discards have occurred, the round is over; players retrieve their action squares, and all players should have a hand of four cards, having drawn during their actions. If the game is not over, players can immediately begin making their selection for the next round.

*(Note: After you reveal your idea cards, actions and possible discard, there are no other decisions to be made except what currency a player will spend during the "paint" action. The rest of the round is procedure.)*

## Card Order

The order of actions is determined by the size of the idea cards played with them, and the painting affected by each patron or palace is determined by the size of the painting. The "size" of each card is the rank, where ace is considered rank 1 and crowns rank 10, and then (to break ties) the suit of each card. The order of the suits are (from biggest to smallest) moons, suns, waves, leaves, wyrms and knots.

## Patron

The patron action is at the center of the game; you should make sure to execute it correctly. If you have any doubt about the rules, follow this section methodically. After a few times, it should take only a few seconds.

Take these steps when the patron action is resolved by any player:

1. Identify the "biggest" painting in any studio (by rank and then suit order).
2. Determine the "price" of the painting, which is the rank plus the number of suits. (Aces cost 2; crowns cost 11; rank card cost their rank plus two.)
3. If the economy can "afford" the painting in the painting's top suit, the economy buys it from the player who painted it for the price, in coins of the top suit. Then the card is discarded and the patron action ends.
4. If the painting has another suit, then the same applies to the next suit – if the economy can afford it, it is bought entirely in that suit and discarded. (Then, if playing with the courts/pawns, the third suit.)
5. If that painting was not purchased, find the next biggest painting in any artist's studio and go back to step two. If there are no paintings left, then nothing is bought and the patron action is over.

## Drawing, Discarding And Economic Growth

All discarded cards go into the discard pile face up. Whenever the draw pile becomes empty, shuffle the discard pile to replace it.

The first four times the draw pile becomes empty, add 1 of each currency to the economy.

## End of Game and Scoring

At the end of a round where any player has at least four paintings in the palace (vertical), the game is over and a winner is determined.

The winner is the artist with the most individual paintings in the palace. In the event of a tie, the tie is broken by the number of paintings in the artists' studios, and then by total currency.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

The game is written so that it can be played with extended Decktet, though I haven't yet tried it; the currencies are vaguely balanced around the basic deck. The pawns and courts should be rank 10, but courts rank above pawns rank above crowns for resolution.

# MYRMEX

*an olde style solitaire game for the Decktet, by Greg James.*

*An ant colony is a place of feverish activity, where workers endlessly toil for the greater good of the superorganism. You are a worker ant, constantly moving detritus and foodstuffs from chamber to chamber. The problem is that other workers are bringing in more goods faster than you can sort out the old stuff! At the end of the day, the best that you can hope for is a chance to do it all over again tomorrow.*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Courts)

**Object of the game:** Organize all of the cards into 6 piles that share a single suit and are in descending rank order from Crown to Ace.

**Components:** A modified double Decktet

Myrmex

## PREPARING THE DECK

For the basic “minor worker” game, form a 60 card deck comprised of:

- 6 Aces, one of each suit
- 6 Crowns, one of each suit
- 2 copies of each numbered card (48 total)

For the “Major Worker” game, add two copies of each of these 3 Pawns: *The Borderland*, *The Harvest* and *The Watchman*.

For the “Queen Level” game, in addition to adding the Pawns, also add two copies of each of these 3 Courts: *The Consul*, *The Island* and *The Window*.

## SETUP

Form a tableau by dealing out a row of 8 cards face down near the top of your playing surface. Deal out more cards so that each pile has 4 cards. The top cards of the piles will be face up – these piles are the materials already in the ant colony which need to be sorted into their 6 proper chambers. The remaining cards are incoming materials and comprise the draw pile. These are placed face down nearby to be used later. It is time to get to work!

## GAME PLAY

The top card on each pile is available to play. Cards follow their usual rank order Crown, 9 . . . 2, Ace. A card may be moved onto another pile provided that it is of immediate lower rank than the destination card. e.g. Any 7 may be moved onto any 8. Groups of cards may be moved in this fashion provided that they are in descending rank order and share a common suit. e.g. *The Castle* 7<sup>♠</sup>8<sup>♠</sup>, *Penitent* 6<sup>♠</sup>7<sup>♠</sup> and *Discovery* 5<sup>♠</sup>6<sup>♠</sup> may be moved onto any 8 as a 7–6–5 group of Suns.

When the last face up card of a foundation pile is moved, the top card of that pile is then flipped face up and is available to play. When the final card of a pile

is moved, any available card or group may be moved to fill the void. When you feel that you have exhausted all of the useful moves or are satisfied with your arrangement of the tableau, restock the tableau from the draw pile by flipping one new card face up onto each pile. There will be 3 such restocking deals of 8 cards in the game and a final partial restocking deal of 4 cards to the first 4 slots.

When you complete a suit sequence from Crown to Ace with no gaps, that entire sequence is removed from play and is placed above the tableau. This represents one chamber of the colony which is safely filled with the correct material.

The game ends when you have no more moves available and the draw pile has been exhausted.

## EVALUATING YOUR GAME

If you failed to complete a single suit sequence, this means that because of your feeble efforts there has been a massive cave in. Nobody bothers to dig you out. A total loss.

If you completed 1–5 sequences, you are clearly not up for the task at hand, despite exerting considerable effort. You are evicted from the colony and are devoured by a spider in the garden. A partial win.

If you completed all 6 sequences, your day was a success. You may now enter the Queen's chamber and start mucking it out. A full victory!

## EVALUATING YOUR WIN

*Easy win* – 15 minutes or less

*Working up a sweat* – win in 16–25 minutes

*Brain Buster* – win in 25+ minutes

## EASIER VARIANT

**Larval Stage** If you are having trouble getting going, you may try this easier variant: At setup, deal out all of the initial tableau cards face up and slightly splayed down so that you may see each card in the pile, then play regularly.

## TOUGHER VARIANTS

While it is true that not every hand of Myrmex can be won, it is also true that as your skill at the game increases, your winning percentage will markedly increase. When this happens, you may wish to try a tougher version of the game.

**Minor worker level** – the basic game as described above.

**Major worker level** – Major workers in an ant colony are made for bigger things. Players at this level add in the Pawns to the start deck. Only 6 Pawns are required and I recommend removing both *Lightkeepers*. At setup, the first six piles will have 5 cards in them. The final two piles in the row will have 4 cards as in the basic game. Deal all of the initial cards face up and splayed so that their values and suits are visible. Pawns are ranked between Crowns and 9s as usual and the regular rules of the game apply.

**Queen level** – The Queen ant can mobilize her colony to defend against almost any danger. Players at this level add in both the Pawns and Courts. Before you do this, remove both *Lightkeepers* and both *Rites* to form your deck. When dealing out the initial tableau, deal out 32 cards as in the Minor Worker game, but face up and splayed so that their values and suits are visible. Courts are ranked between Crowns and Pawns as usual and the regular rules of the game apply. Good luck!

For an even greater challenge, you may play the Major Worker and Queen level games with closed stacks at initial setup as in the Minor Worker game.



# NATURAL ORDER

*A game of wits against the Gods, by Richard Skifton*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

**Extra material:** suit chips and something to keep score

When wandering the countryside one can't help but feel a sense of awe at the natural order of things. The Gods must truly be in control when everything flows so nicely. Little is known about the world from behind the scenes, but it is far from natural. The Gods need to supply the world below with various natural commodities seen day by day (suits from the cards). Unfortunately, it's a hard knock life for you as an assistant to the Gods... they are always bickering over how it's to be done.

Natural Order

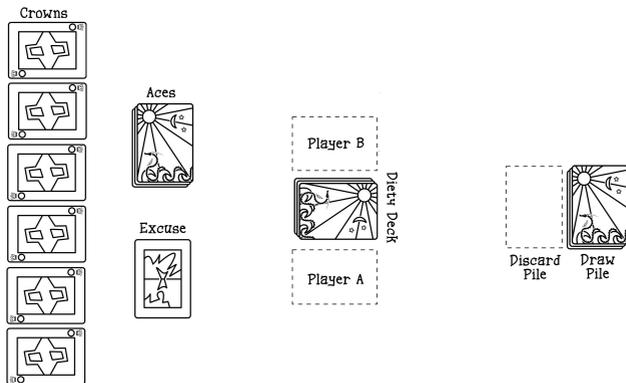
## SETUP

Remove the Excuse (placing it face up on the table) from the extended deck and shuffle the pawns and courts together. Deal one card from this mix to each player, face up. This is your *Influence*. Each player receives three suit chips; one matching each suit on their Influence card. The remaining extended deck goes face down in the center of the table. This forms the *Deity Deck*.

Remove Aces and Crowns from the Decktet and shuffle the remaining cards. Deal 5 cards to each player, and the remainder forms a draw pile to the side.

The Aces are shuffled and placed face down, opposite the draw pile (to avoid confusion of which is which). This forms the *Wrath Deck*.

The Crowns are placed face up, on display, and spread out (near the already displayed excuse card).



## GAME PLAY

You are an assistant to the Gods, and trying to form the longest system of piping from the heavens above to the world below. Unfortunately, the Gods are bossy,

superstitious, and very picky. On occasion you can please them and they will bless you.

The pawn or court handed to you is your *Influence*, and is the Influence you have on the world below. These three suits are what you will receive blessings (points) for if you channel them down to the world below. You may acquire more suits if you have the means, or even form a power suit of one you already own.

Cards will be placed face up from your hand starting near the *Deity Deck* and coming back in the general direction towards yourself. The first card played (on its side) is the *Foundation Card* on which your piping will flow and has two outlets (one matching each suit on the card). All Foundation Cards are played on their side to signify that it has the two outlets to play from (more on this below). Subsequent Foundation Cards firmly set the pipes above them – never to be broken.

Piping/flow of various suits will come and go as your network progresses. This is fine, as long as the immediate previous card has a matching suit.

## The Turn

On your turn you must do the following:

- Place a card on your piping network. If it's your first turn, pick any card you think reasonable to be your Foundation Card. Every turn after that, you must match one of the suits on the previous card. If you happen to play another Foundation Card (matching rank as your first Foundation Card) then you may turn it sideways to split the branch of the piping into two and bring you more options of flow.

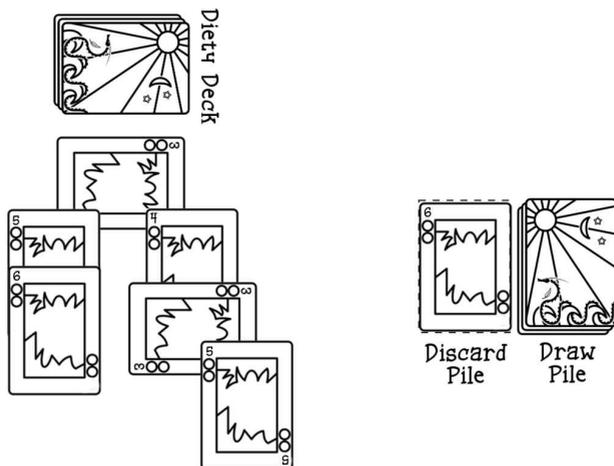
If you can't play a card onto your piping network, then you must discard one face up onto the discard pile.

- Draw a card. You draw one card from either the designated draw pile or from the top card of the discard pile.

To avoid turn confusion, the drawing of a card signifies the end of your turn. Make sure your turn is completed before you draw a card.

Optionally, you are allowed to do as many of the following options, but each individual option can only be played once per turn:

- Pay tribute to the Gods. Pay 1 suit chip to the general supply and flip over a card from the Deity Deck (see below for further instruction).
- Purchase the excuse for 2 of any kind of chip. If someone already owns the excuse, then you can purchase it from them (they may not restrict this action). To do so you give one chip to the current owner of the excuse and one to the general supply (see The Excuse below).
- Purchase a Crown from the supply. Each crown is worth 3 suit chips of it's suit – i.e. Crown of Waves = 3 wave chips. (see below)



## THE GODS

If, at any time you place a card on your piping system and it satisfies one of the following situations, it is resolved in this order:

1. The rank of the card played sums to exactly 13 with any other **ending to a pipe** (and only the ends) on the table (you and your opponents' pipes), the Gods are angry with everyone and the top ace is flipped over from the *Wrath Deck*. If the Wrath deck ever runs out, simply reshuffle it.
2. The ranks are in consecutive order (up or down), you're individually blessed with a suit chip of the matching suit used to play the card.
3. The rank of the card played sums to 7 with any other **ending to a pipe** on the table (including your opponents), the Gods are pleased with everyone's work and a Deity card is flipped over. If the Deity deck ever runs out, simply reshuffle.

Resolve all possible 1's, then 2., and finally all possible 3's

If after resolving 1. you end up removing another 1., or a 2. or 3. then you don't resolve it if it was removed.

## THE WRATH

If at anytime, someone plays a card down and it sums to 13 with any other pipe's end on the table – the Gods lash out with anger. Flip over an ace from the Wrath Deck and the lowest ranked card that matches that suit on the entire table will be broken and all cards below this (if any) will be discarded. Simply wipe upwards from the bottom of the pipe until you reach the broken card and set all these in the discard (i.e. the broken pipe will be on the bottom as it's set on the discard).

There is a way from keeping your pipe from breaking, see **The Foundation Card(s)** later.

It may happen that no pipes match the suit of the ace flipped over, this is fine. Just carry on.

## THE CROWNS

You can increase the number of suits you Influence by purchasing Crowns for 3 matching chips of that Crown's suit from the supply. If someone already owns that Crown, then it is not for sale. This also gives you an option to buy one you already have on your Influence Card to form a *Power Suit*. In the case of a Power Suit, you score two points for each matching suit in your pipe if/when the Deity Deck supplies your network with flow. There is a chance a Deity Card is flipped over and you will score zero points... in this way it is very advantageous to buy Crowns.

## THE FOUNDATION CARD(S)

It may be nerve wracking to have a low ranked card at the top of your current pipe you've been building and only one or two Aces are left in the Wrath Deck that you know will match it. If you happen to have a card that matches the rank of your original Foundation Card (at the top of your system) you can place this card next (if it matches a suit, of course). It will serve as two purposes for you:

- It firmly sets all the cards above it to never be broken by the Wrath of Gods
- It has two paths to then go from to branch out your piping even further, one path to match each suit.

Just place the Foundation Card sideways to you normal piping to signify it is a Foundation Card and that it has two outlets.

Both sides of the Foundation Card(s) are used to check for sums of 7's and 13's.

It should be said then, the original Foundation Card can never be broken by the Wrath of Gods.

## THE EXCUSE

If you don't have the means of a Foundation Card to protect your precious work, you may purchase the *Excuse Card* to behave as one. The card may not be built upon (i.e. no card below it) and may be purchased away from you by other players. It may also be subsequently returned to the side at no cost or penalty.

## THE END GAME

When the Draw pile is gone, the discard pile is ... well, discarded. This leaves only the cards in your hand to finish the game. The game continues as before, without the drawing of cards at the end of your turn, naturally.

Before this, the end of your turn was signified with the drawing of a card. Now the turn must be verbally handed over after the check of 7's and 13's.

# BLESSINGS (SCORE)

In order to win, you must attract the most attention from the Gods. This is accomplished by scoring points when flow is issued through your piping. Flow can be accomplished in two ways:

- You pay tribute to the Gods on your turn and flow is issued through your network *individually*.
- Anyone plays a card that sums to 7 with any other end of a pipe, flow is issued through everyone's pipe, and all score *together*.

You score points when a Deity Card is flipped over and matches suit(s) with your Influence Card. You then sum up how many of that specific suit is in your network. Crowns increase the number of Influence you have and can even turn a suit you have into a power suit, where that suit is counted twice for each one in you network if supplied by the Gods.

I find it easiest to use a 20 sided dice (D20) to keep score. Just roll it up each time you score.

# STRATEGY

- Use the 13's to your advantage, by watching your opponents branches carefully. Especially, when the wrath pile is short and you think you know what the next suit is going to be.
- I tried paying tribute every time I had a token, and my wife still beat me. So... that doesn't really work.

# QUICK RULES

- On your turn:
  1. Play a card on your piping network
  2. Draw a card
- Optional moves:
  1. Pay tribute to the Gods
  2. Purchase the Excuse
  3. Purchase a Crown
- The Gods:
  1. Pipe ends add to 13 – Initiate Wrath
  2. Pipe rank is in consecutive order – You individually are blessed
  3. Pipe ends add to 7 – Everyone is blessed

# FAQ

- When a card is played, is the rank added to each individual card in the piping networks?

No, just the ends – including the foundation cards – are added to the current card played to check for 7's and 13's.

- Can you play cards below the Excuse?

No, this card is only used if you need to quickly (and temporarily) set your pipe to avoid any Wrath of the Gods.

# NONESUCH

*a trick-taking curio for 3 or 4 players, by P.D. Magnus.*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Excuse)

## SETUP

Randomly decide who will deal the first hand. Subsequent hands are dealt by the player on the old dealer's left.

The dealer shuffles the basic deck plus the *Excuse* and deals cards out as evenly as possible to all players: 12 each with three players; 9 each with four players. This will leave one card left over; it's dealt face up in the middle of the table.

If the up card is an Ace or Crown, then its suit will be the trump for this hand. If the up card is a number rank, then one of its suits will be trump; the player holding the Excuse will decide after bidding is complete. If the up card is the Excuse itself, then there will be no trump suit.

## BIDDING

After looking at cards but before play begins, players each make a bid. The player on the dealer's left bids first, then each player clockwise around the table bids. There are three possible bids.

A bid of **Some** means that the player expects to take at least one trick. The player scores one point at the end of the hand for each trick they've taken.

A bid of **Most** means that the player expects to take at least half the tricks. If the player does, they score two points for each trick they've won. If not, then they lose one point for each trick less than half that they've taken.

A bid of **None** means that the player hopes to take exactly zero tricks. If they do, they score a number of points equal to the number of tricks in the hand; 12 in a three-player game, for example. If not, they lose one point for each trick they've taken.

Once every player has bid, the player who has the Excuse reveals it and discards it. If the up card is a number rank card, then that player decides which of its suits will be trump. In any case, they take the up card into their hand to replace the Excuse.

## GAME PLAY

The player on the dealer's left leads the first trick.

You may not lead a card with the trump suit until a trump card has been played in the hand, unless you have nothing but trumps in your hand.

When a card is led, the player who led it must select and announce one of the suits on the card. If the lead is an Ace or Crown, there is no choice; just say what the suit is. For number cards, you need to select which suit other players will be required to follow.

Clockwise around the table, each player plays a card that has the named suit. Players who have no cards of the named suit may play any card from their hand.

If no trump was played, then the highest card of the named suit wins the trick. If any trumps were played, then the highest trump wins the trick. Aces lose to 2s, and Crowns beat 9s.

For the purpose of following suit, all that matters is the named suit. But a card counts as trump if it has the trump suit, even if trump is different from the named suit.

The winner of the trick leads the next trick. Once someone has played a trump, it is permissible to lead with a trump card.

## SCORING

After the last trick, calculate scores based on players' bids and the number of tricks they've won. The player on the dealer's left deals the next hand.

For the sake of having an official number, I recommend playing until some player reaches a cumulative score of 31 points or more. The player with the highest cumulative score is then the winner.

# OFF-LABEL

*a cutthroat game of marketing pharmaceuticals to doctors, by Jonah O.*

**Extra material:** suit chips, dice

The players represent pharmaceutical sales reps attempting to market their products to doctors. The goal is to make as much money as possible (side-effects be damned), but watch out! If the Department of Justice catches you marketing off-label, you'll have to pay up. Recommended for three or four players. There's nothing really stopping you from having more, so long as there are enough non-Personality cards for everyone to have a hand of three.

**Materials:** You'll need one Decktet, a full set of 60 tokens (10 in each suit), two 6-sided dice per player, and one more 6-sided die. Feel free to include The Excuse and Crowns, but Pawns can be a bit much.

Off-label

## SETUP

Separate the deck into two piles: Personalities (henceforth Doctors), and everything else (henceforth Drugs). Shuffle each pile, and deal a hand of three Drugs to each player. Arrange the tokens into piles by suit in the middle of the table, and agree on an ordering of those suits from 1 to 6 (e.g. the usual Moons-Suns-Waves-Leaves-Wyrms-Knots, or however the piles are arranged on the table). Give two dice to each player, and place the leftover die in the middle near the chips. The player who takes the most prescriptions leads the first round.

**Theme Stuff:** A Doctor's rank represents his prestige, and the suits represent his specialties. A Drug's rank represents its cost, and the suits represent the conditions which the FDA has approved the Drug to treat. Aces (representing generics) are 1, Crowns are 10, and Courts (if you're using them) are 11. The Excuse is a 0 and is approved to treat nothing; it's a placebo that your company is selling for some reason. The six specialties/conditions are:

- ☾ Moons: Insomnia
- ☀ Suns: Melanoma
- 🌊 Waves: Incontinence
- 🌿 Leaves: Allergies
- 🐉 Wyrms: Anxiety
- 🌀 Knots: Back pain

## GAMEPLAY

**1. Marketing** At the beginning of each round, a Doctor is flipped over from the deck for all to see. One by one, starting with the leading player, the sales reps choose one or more Drugs from hand to market to the Doctor. Doctors will often prefer cheaper Drugs, but more expensive ones will earn you more money. Whether or not the Drug is approved to treat any of the appropriate conditions is beside the point, and will only matter when the DoJ investigates in Step 3. If a player has earned tokens in previous rounds (see Step 4), she may lay some down with the

Drugs now to spend money on research & development. This makes them more expensive, but can modify what conditions the Drugs treats: each token acts as an XOR on the Drugs' suits, canceling out a symbol if it is there or adding it if it isn't.

**2. Selection** Now comes the time for the Doctor to decide which drug he'll prescribe. His preferences are a mix of the following principles:

- Cheaper drugs are better than expensive drugs.
- Companies with a history of treating a particular condition are favored over those w without such a history.
- Drugs that entered the market earlier are favored over those that entered later.
- Whee, randomness!

These principles will determine each Drug's rank in the Line of Treatment. Each player rolls her two dice, adds them to the cost (rank) of the Drugs and number of R&D tokens she played that turn, and subtracts the number of tokens in her supply (NOT counting those used for R&D this turn) that match any of the Doctor's suits. The Drugs of the player with the lowest total will be prescribed first, with ties broken in favor of the player who went first this round.

**3. Investigation** But wait! Now that you're earning boatloads of money and catching the attention of the Feds, are your Drugs approved to treat exactly the right conditions? If not, there's a chance you'll get in trouble: roll the spare six-sided die to determine one of the six conditions. If that condition is treated by both your Drug and the Doctor, or by neither, then you're fine. But if it's treated by either one but not the other, your CEOs are indicted and the company loses billions in a settlement. Return all tokens of that suit to the supply. Remember to factor in R&D, so the rules are as follows: you are indicted if the rolled suit appears in 1 or 3 of the following locations, but safe it appears in 0 or 2 of them: suits on the Doctor, suits on your Drugs, and suits on your R&D tokens spent this turn. If you were indicted, begin Step 3 again with the next-lowest player in the Line of Treatment (as determined in Step 2). If there is no next player, just skip to the cleanup phase; nobody earns money this round. If you made it past the watchful eye of the DoJ, you earn profits! Go to Step 4.

**4. Payment and Cleanup** The player who successfully made it out of Step 3 earns money. Take tokens equal to half (rounded down) the sum of the Doctor's rank and the Drugs' cost (including R&D) in any combination of the Doctor's suits. (You can't take tokens from an empty pile.) Then return all R&D tokens used that turn (even on drugs which weren't prescribed) to the supply, discard all Drugs played, set aside the Doctor for the rest of the game, and deal everyone back up to three cards in hand. If the Drug deck runs out, shuffle the discards. Now begin a new round, led by the winner of this round.

**Game End and Scoring:** The game ends after all Doctors have been played. Whoever has the most tokens wins!

## EXAMPLE ROUND

Lauren, Ibsen, Dolores and Ahmed are in the fourth round of a game. Lauren won the last round, so she leads. This time the Doctor is The Painter (3 of Suns and Knots).

Lauren begins by playing The Window (The Court of Suns-Leaves-Knots; like Windex, it cures a lot of things). It's pretty expensive, but she's got four Knot tokens already from selling to The Soldier last round, and the overlap between suits is pretty good. She has no Leaves, but probably wouldn't spend money on R&D anyway since the risk is already so small.

Ibsen plays the Ace of Knots, and kicks in a Sun token for R&D. He's looking pretty good—his Drugs only cost 2, and the DoJ can't possibly find fault with him! He also has one more Sun token in his supply.

Dolores has an awful hand of two Courts and one Crown, and she's sick of getting skipped for cheaper Drugs! She dumps all three of them at once, hoping to get better cards with the next deal.

Ahmed plays The Excuse. He has three Sun tokens from earlier rounds, but decides not to use them.

Next, the Line of Treatment:

- Lauren rolls a 1 and a 3, for a total of  $1+3+11-4=11$ .
- Ibsen rolls a 1 and a 4, for a total of  $1+4+1+1-1=6$ .
- Dolores rolls a 5 and a 6, and with the other cards she's played nobody blames her for not wanting to do the math. (42, for those of you playing at home.)
- Ahmed rolls a 2 and a 5, for a total of  $2+5+0-2=1$ , so the Doctor prescribes his drug!

Unfortunately, Ahmed then rolls a 6 (Knots) in the Investigation phase, and so catches the watchful eye of the DoJ (because Knots are on the Doctor card but not his Drugs). On the bright side, he has no Knot tokens to lose, so play just passes to Ibsen, next in line.

Now Ibsen rolls for Investigation and gets a 2 (Suns). That's one of the Doctor's suits, but fortunately those are covered by his R&D, so he's okay! Ibsen then gets paid  $\text{floor}((3+1+1)/2) = 2$  tokens, chosen between Suns and Knots. He takes two of the latter because he knows the Decktet card distribution so well, and in particular that there are more chiropractors than oncologists left in the Doctor deck. Then everyone discards his or her drugs from that turn and draws back up to 3 cards, and Ibsen leads the next round.

## NOTES

The designer writes:

I came up with this last summer 2011 after a conversation about jobs that are underrepresented in board game themes. It's mostly a filler push-your-luck game and has some kinks to be worked out, but it's short and sweet and utilizes most of the properties of the Decktet in an interesting way.

Hey, I warned you it was light. There's a ton of luck here, and a bit of a runaway winner phenomenon, but the game is also short enough that it's not a huge problem. Some reasonable changes would be a more interesting final scoring system and a less swingy way of determining the Line of Treatment, but for now I'm pretty happy with the simplicity. And it's, like, the third game I've ever designed, so I've got to get a few more under my belt before I expect anything that's particularly good.

# Oh Quay

*a fast-playing game of raft building for 2 players, by P.D. Magnus and Cristyn Magnus.*

In a river town east of the Sapphire ports, you manage a canal where rafts of cargo are lashed together before being launched into the current and sent downstream. Your opponent manages a parallel canal. If your luck and skill are enough, you can clear your canal and get to the pub while he is still sorting boxes.

**Extended Decktet:** No

## INTRODUCTION

*Oh Quay* can be played without any table space, with the players holding all of the cards in their hands. So it's a game you can play while standing in line, sitting in the back of a car, or with your feet dangling off a pier.

Rules for the game were introduced in *The Decktet Book*.

## SETUP

Shuffle the deck and separate it into four equal stacks of nine cards. Each player takes two of the stacks.

Without looking at the cards, turn one of the stacks widthwise and hold it so that it faces away from you. This stack is a *dock*, and it will serve as a draw pile during the game. Your opponent should be able to see the top card in the dock.

Take the other stack, turn it upright, and spread the cards out so that you can see them. This is your *canal*, and the cards represent barges of cargo. You are not allowed to change the order of the cards in your canal. During the game, you will have the chance to insert cards into the series and take cards off from the front **but** you may not re-arrange the cards.

It may take a little practice, but it is possible to hold the dock and the canal together in one hand.

## GAME PLAY

Decide in some amicable way who will take the first turn. Players alternate turns, until one player has no cards left in their canal.

On your turn you **Add Cargo** (draw a card and put it in your canal) and then **Launch a Raft** (remove one or more cards from the front of your canal). You must do these in order.

**Adding cargo:** Draw the front card from one of the docks. Your choice is between a card you can see (the one on the dock your opponent is holding) and a card you can't see (the one on the dock that you are holding).

Put the card somewhere in your canal. You may put it anywhere in the sequence: as the front card, the back card, or anywhere in between.

Although unlikely, it is possible that one of the two docks will run out cards. If this happens, then you must draw from the remaining dock.

**Launching a raft:** Remove either a single card or a raft of cards from the front of your canal.

A *raft* is a group of cards that all share a single suit symbol and are arranged in rank order, with the lowest card in front. This represents a cluster of similar cargo that can be lashed together.

The cards in the raft must be in order, but they need not be consecutive. The front card must be the low ranked card.

When you remove cards from the front of your canal, show them to your opponent.

Then, if you took just one card, put it at the bottom of the dock that you are holding. (The bottom is the side closest to you.)

If you took a raft, you and your opponent each take a card from the raft and put it at the bottom of your respective docks. If the raft was three cards or longer, this will leave some cards left over. Put these left over cards in your score pile. You can keep your score pile behind your canal, with the cards facing away from you. If this is too much to hold, you can keep your score pile in your pocket.

If your canal is empty, then the game ends.

## SCORING

Players score one point for each card in their score pile. The player with an empty canal scores one bonus point for each raft remaining in their opponent's canal.

If you are playing another game, the loser of this game takes the first turn in the next one. You can either play each game as a separate contest or add up scores over a series of games.

## STRATEGY

Without making rafts, you will never be able to empty your canal. But two card rafts score no points. So you will often face the choice between completing a two card raft with a card from the dock you can see and taking the card you can't see in hopes of adding to a longer raft.

Each turn, the docks are replenished with single cards or parts of rafts. If the first nine cards in the dock have been drawn, then the rest are cards you've seen before.

# OLD JANX SPIRIT

*a Decktet rummy game for two people by David L. Van Slyke*

*“Oh won’t you play one more game of that Old Janx Spirit,  
Oh won’t you play one more game of that Old Janx Spirit,  
For my luck will show, my melds will go, my victory you’ll know, and  
I will crow,  
So don’t you play me one more game of that sinful Old Janx Spirit”*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

## SETUP

Shuffle a basic (not extended) Decktet and deal ten cards to each player. The remaining cards, face-down, become the draw pile.

## GAME PLAY

**Definition:** A *meld* is a set of cards fulfilling one of the following conditions:

- contains exactly one instance of each of the six suits (a suit-meld)
- a set of three or more cards of the same rank (a kind-meld)
- a set of three or more cards of consecutive ranks that all share a single suit (a run-meld)

Note that Aces and Crowns are not considered consecutive: the counting does not “wrap around”.

## PLAY

Each turn draw one card and discard one card. On the first turn the draw must happen from the draw pile. On subsequent turns the draw can happen from the top of either the draw pile or the discard pile.

Take turns until, after discarding, all ten cards in your hand are part of melds. Lay down the melds face-down to flaunt your victory. The player who does this scores one point; play again.

**Note:** There are many different types of winning hands. Here are a few examples:

1. Two three-card suit-melds in which each card has two suits, and a kind-meld of four aces.
2. A four-card suit-meld consisting of two Threes and two aces, and a run-meld of six cards all having Knots
3. A single ten-card run-meld in which all cards have Waves

**Note:** This game has more luck in the initial deal than traditional Gin Rummy, which is why “knocking” is not allowed and scoring is based only on who can “go out” first.

# THE EXTENDED DECK

If the extended Decktet is used then the Excuse counts as any single suit or rank and the Pawns have three suits but no rank.

# PAUNTEL'S GOT TALENT

*a talent television show game, by Kenny VenOsdel.*

It is the first season of “Pauntel’s Got Talent” and the competition is really ramping up! You are a badger, attempting to impress the 6 judges in order to get them to vote for you. It’s not as easy as it seems though because the judges are also competing against each other to see which of them gets the most influence over the competition. Make sure you get the right judges on your side or you don’t stand a chance!

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Excuse)

**Extra material:** 10 color markers in each of the 6 suits

Pauntel’s Got Talent is an indirect trick-taking game largely inspired by Trimvirate designed by Travis Worthington (this may be a bit of an understatement). During each hand the players will play to tricks which will determine which of the judges, represented by the 6 suits, gains influence for that round. At the end of each hand player’s can pledge one card face down. The player who pledges more cards to any given suit wins the favor of that judge and any influence, or points, they are worth.

## SETUP

Place 10 markers in each of the Decktet suits off to one side of the playing area to form a supply. Place the Excuse, or any alternate mat to hold tokens to the other side, this will represent the influence each judge has over determining the winner of the competition.

Remove the Pawns and Courts, if applicable, and shuffle the deck. For the first hand only, deal 8 cards to the side and all remaining cards to the 2 players. All subsequent hands you will deal 6 cards to the side and the rest evenly between the players.

## GAME PLAY

Each hand will contain several tricks; a trick consisting of each player playing exactly one card to the middle of the table. Cards played to a trick will determine which judge gains influence.

**The Tricks** For each trick the non-dealer begins by playing a card to the middle of the table. The other player may follow either suit on the card, but if they choose not to their card will not be used to calculate influence. After each trick is played, calculate the total value played for the suits shown on the cards. Cards played count their value for all suits that they show. The suit with highest total value gains two markers for this hand. The suit with the second highest value gains only one. Place these markers near the trick that they were gained from.

Note: Again, if a card played does not follow suit, its value is not used to calculate markers gained this trick.

- If the player following the lead does not follow suit, the person who lead may choose which of their suits gains two markers.

- If a card is played that matches both suits of the lead card (ex: The Cave, 7 W/Wy, followed by The Darkness, 9 W/Wy) then the player who played the higher value card may choose which suit gains 2 markers.
- If the led card was an ace or crown (and is not followed) only that suit gains two markers with no suit receiving 1.

Whichever player played the highest value card (irrespective of following suit) leads the next trick. If both players play the same rank, the same player leads to the next trick.

Note: The only exception to high card leads next round is if a matching Ace is played to a led Crown. In this case the Ace steals the lead.

**Gaining Influence** Continue playing tricks until at least one suit has gained at least five markers in the middle of the table. The suit that gained the most markers places two influence (markers) on the Excuse. The suit with the second most places one. If there are ties, the suit that has the largest valued card that was played first wins the tie.

**Pledging** Once influence has been calculated return all remaining markers to the supply. Leave the tokens on the Excuse. These will accumulate round to round. Players may now pledge one card face down near the Excuse in their own pile. They may only pledge one card per hand, and a maximum of five cards per game. They may choose not to pledge and may reference pledged cards at any point.

Players retain any cards not played this hand. Pass the dealer, shuffle the cards played and the set aside cards together, and deal 6 to the side and the rest evenly between the players.

**Game End** Play continues as described above until one suit gains its fifth influence marker. It is possible for more than one suit to satisfy this requirement.

**Scoring** At the end of the game, each suit is worth as many points as it has influence on the Excuse. The player who has pledged the most cards (not the most value) of that suit collects those points. If players are tied in number of cards played, the player who pledged the largest card wins the suit. The player with the most points wins! If there is a tie here then players add the value of all cards played with the higher value winning. If there is still a tie then I'm dumbfounded.

# POWER SUIT

*a card-driven strategy game of tailoring, by Kevin Garnica*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** 72 suited ships

Players are trying to influence high-end tailors in order to have them make sports jackets, pants, dress shirt and ties according to each of the suits. After three rounds, the winner will be the best dressed player in all the land.

## SETUP

- Power Suit requires the basic Decktet (aces, 2–9, crowns)
- Each player takes 5 tokens of each suit, which forms their supply. Place the remaining 12 tokens off to the side. They will be used in future rounds.
- Randomly lay the six aces in a horizontal row, creating the central play area. Players play on either side.
- Shuffle the remaining cards and deal 14, face-down, to each player. The final 2 cards are not used. Place them aside without looking.
- Each player draws a hand of 5 cards.

## GAME PLAY

Power Suit is played over three rounds. Each round consists of three parts:

- A Influence
- B Suiting up
- C Scoring

### A. Influence

*Players try to persuade the suit tailors to give them more samples than their opponent.*

Players alternate turns. A turn consists of playing one card and carrying out its effect, and then drawing one card, bringing a player's hand back up to 5. After the final card is drawn, continue playing. The round is over when both players have exactly one card left in their hand.

Players play their first card adjacent to the ace, on their side. After that, each subsequent card is played staggered so as to reveal the rank and suits of their previously played cards. All cards played must have a suit that matches the suit of the ace.

A card can be played in one of 4 different ways: for its suit-power, as an "event", a "location", or a "personality".

**1. Playing a card for its suit-power:** *giving the suit tailors money for their trouble.*

- Play a card face-up (regardless of rank) and place one corresponding token from your supply on top of the ace, or on top of previously placed tokens – creating one stack.
- If a player doesn't have any tokens that match the suit, the card must be played differently.

**2. Playing a card as an “event”:** *tragedy strikes!*

- Play a card face-down, declaring its use as an “event”.
- Take the lowest-numbered face-up card from the opposing side of the ace and remove it from the round.

**3. Playing a card as a “location”:** *the money changes hands!*

- Play a card face-down, declaring its use as a “location”:
- Take the lowest-numbered face-up card from the opposing side of the ace and place it on your side (face-up)

**4. Playing a card as a “personality”:** *a wily character has stolen some of the garments!*

- Play a card face-down, declaring its use as a “personality”:
- Take the top token off the stack and place it directly in your supply.

A player can only have ONE face-down card, per ace, on their side.

All cards played face-down can never be moved or discarded during a round.

*Note: the Origins, the Market, and the End can be played as an “event” OR a “location”.*

Play continues until both players have played all but one card. After that, it's time to suit up!

## B. Suiting up

Players resolve each ace individually. Disregarding any face-down cards, add the ranks of the face-up cards and the player with the higher total takes all the tokens on top of the ace and adds them to his supply. Crowns are considered the high rank (10).

In case of a tie, players take back their original tokens (check against how many face-up cards are showing on either side). If there are more tokens than face-up cards – yet the total on both sides is still tied, the player with the greater number of *total cards played* (face-up and face-down) wins the extra tokens. In the rare event of a tie still, flip over the face-down cards and compare ranks. The higher rank wins the tokens.

## C. Scoring

Players compare the heights of their stacks for each suit. The player with the higher stack scores the *difference* between the two stacks. Continue this way, adding up points between the different suits.

## THE FOLLOWING BOUNDS

At the start of the second and third rounds, take one matching token from the set-aside pile of 12 during *setup* and place one matching token on each ace.

Collect *all* cards played and any cards that were discarded or not used in this round, and shuffle them. Deal 14 cards to each player, again discarding the final two cards.

Play as before and add up scores. The player with the higher total after 3 rounds is the winner. In case of a tie, players share the victory.



# QUÄSENBÖ

a Decktet game for 2 or more players by Jens Alfke and Ricci Adams

Quäsenbö was a popular game at the court of the badger Charlemagne. Its name means 'too many.' The theme is thought to reflect political issues of royal succession in the many small kingdoms of the Empire; although some feminist historians believe it instead derives from the quäsenbö pan, a cast-iron skillet capable of turning out vast numbers of spätzle at a time.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

**Pronunciation:** Most English speakers pronounce it "QUAY-zen-bow", but the correct Germanic pronunciation is more like "KVEH-zen-ber".

**Object of the game:** To end your turn with no cards in your hand.

## SETUP

Shuffle the Decktet. Deal each player seven cards, and turn up the top card of the deck to start the play pile.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you must play a card that has either a suit or a rank in common with the top card of the play pile. Put the card on top of the play pile, but slightly offset, so the previous two cards can still be seen.

*If you cannot play any card*, you must draw cards from the deck, one by one, until you draw one you can play. (If the deck runs out, take all but the top two cards of the play pile, shuffle them, and use them as the new deck.)

If the card you played has a suit in common with the previous *two* cards of the play pile (that is, if it causes the same suit to appear three times in a row), you have *committed a quäsenbö*, and must draw a card as a penalty. In the spirit of the game, you and/or the other player(s) should call out 'Quäsenbö!' when this happens. Repeated *ranks* do not cause a quäsenbö, however.

It may happen that in playing your *final* card, you commit a quäsenbö and have to draw another one. This means you have *not* won the game, since you did not end your turn with zero cards!

## TACTICS

Aces and Crowns, having a single suit, are valuable because they form a bottleneck that limits what cards can be played next. Moreover, if you play an Ace by following suit, then the next player will commit a quäsenbö unless she can play a different Ace. And similarly for a Crown.

The quäsenbö rule makes it hard to get rid of multiple cards of the same suit, which balances out the way that multi-suited cards make it easier to play a matching card.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in the Excuse, the Pawns, or both. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game.

**The Excuse:** The Excuse can be played at any time. When you play it, you get to decree which (single) suit it has. The next player must follow the decreed suit.

**Pawns:** Pawns can be used according to the usual rules. Because Pawns have more suits than other ranks, it is possible to follow rank by playing a Pawn on a Pawn but still commit a quäsenbö for following suit too many times.

## HARDCORE VARIANTS

**Double Quäsenbö:** Increase the penalty to two cards if a suit repeats four times in a row (and three cards for five times, etc.)

**For historical verisimilitude:** Throw spätzle at a player who commits a quäsenbö. A player committing a double quäsenbö (if you play with that variant) should be dragged from the room and thrown headfirst into the moat.

# QUINCUNX

*a tableaux-filling Decktet game for 2 to 4 players, plus a solitaire variant  
by Chris DeLeo*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and Excuse)

## OVERVIEW

The game is played on a five by five grid (the *spread*). On your turn, you add one card to the spread, score points depending on the connections between the played card and nearby cards, and possibly draw cards depending on those connections. You are penalized for any cards left in your hand at the end of the game.

**Object of the game:** To score points by placing cards.

## SETUP

Shuffle the deck, deal cards face up into the spread, then deal a hand of cards to each player.



fig. A



fig. B

With two players, deal 5 face up cards: one card in each corner of the spread and one in the center. (See fig. A) Then deal each player a 10 card hand.

With three players, deal 4 face up cards: one card in each corner of the spread. (See fig. B) Then deal each player a 7 card hand.

With four players, deal 5 face up cards: one card in each corner of the spread and one in the center. (See fig. A) Then deal each player a 6 card hand.

Play begins with the player on the dealer's left and continues clockwise.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, take one card from your hand and place it into an opening in the spread. Each card you place in the spread may score points in several different ways. Total points any for basic scoring, pairs, sequences, and power plays. If the balance is negative, then you lose points for the turn.

## SCORING THE PLAY

**Basic scoring:** Consider this card (the one you played) with respect to each horizontally or vertically adjacent card. If this card is at the edge of the spread or is next to an empty space, it does not score on that side.

Add the rank of the two cards together; Aces are 1, Crowns are 10, and other cards are as numbered.

- If the sum is 9 or less, one of the cards is an Ace, and the other card has a suit matching the Ace: Add points equal to the sum of the two cards.
- If the sum is 9 or less, without a matching Ace: Lose points equal to the sum of the two cards.
- If the sum is exactly 10, score zero points.
- If the sum is exactly 11: Draw a card.
- If the sum is between 12 and 19: Add points equal to ten less than the sum; e.g. a sum of 14 scores 4 points.
- If the sum is exactly 20: Draw a card.

Note that card draws are cumulative.

*Example:* Boris plays a Crown adjacent to an Ace, another Ace, and another Crown on three different sides. His Crown plus each Ace add to 11, and his Crown plus the other Crown add to 20. So he draws three cards.

**Pair bonus:** If this card is the same rank as an adjacent card, add 5 points. If this card matches more than one adjacent card, score for each pair.

**Straight bonus:** If this card completes a continuous line of *three* or more cards that are in rank order, add 20 points. Straights may be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.

Aces count as before 2, Crowns count as after 9, and straights may not wrap around. If you make more than one straight, score for each.

**Three of a Kind bonus:** If this card completes a continuous line of *three* or more cards of the same rank, add 30 points. Threes of a Kind may be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal.

If you make more than one three of a kind, score for each. Cards that contribute to three of a kind may not be scored as pairs.

Although it is possible to score several bonuses, they must be in different lines. Playing in the middle of four card straight does not score the straight bonus twice; it doesn't count as two overlapping three card straight. Playing so that your card completes two straights in two different directions does score twice (for 40 points).

**Power Play:** If this card is an Ace or Crown and you play it adjacent to an Ace or Crown of the same suit, then you score a power play. Add the total value of all other cards of showing suit in the spread. This may be as little as zero (if there are no other cards of that suit in the spread) or as many as 44 (if all the other cards of that suit are in the spread.)

Since the Ace and Crown sum to 11, you will draw a card as part of basic scoring when you make a power play.

## END OF THE ROUND

The round ends when all 25 places in the spread have been filled. If you drew cards as the result of play during the round or if you are playing a four-player game, then you will have at least one card left over at the end. You lose points for each card left in your hand: Subtract the rank of each number cards, subtract 10 for each Crown, and subtract 15 for each Ace.

A new round then begins, with the new dealer being the player on the old dealer's left. Since there is a definite advantage to going first and a disadvantage to going last, a game consists of one round with each player as dealer.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to spice up the game, you can add in the Excuse, the Pawns, or both. Just shuffle them in at the beginning of the game. (The Excuse adds something to the game. The rules for Pawns really don't work out so well.)

**The Excuse:** The Excuse counts as a blank. It scores zero points when played in a spread, accrues no basic scoring when cards are played next to it, and exacts no penalty if still in hand at the end of the round.

**Pawns:** For the purpose of basic scoring, Pawns are counted as being rank 1. However, they also work like Aces; if a card and a Pawn sum to 9 or less, the points are *added* if the card and the Pawn share a suit but *subtracted* only if they do not. For the purpose of straights, Pawns are between 9s and Crowns. A Pawn in your hand at the end of the game costs 10 points.

## VARIANTS

**Flush bonus:** In this variant, there is a bonus for completing a configuration of four or more cards that share a suit. A flush may be in a straight line (including diagonals) or in a two-by-two box. This scores 10 points. It is possible to score for multiple flushes with a single play.

Note that cards in a flush will also have other suits that they do not share, but there must be one single suit that they all do have.

**Muggins:** Players must explicitly announce what their play is worth after a card play. If a player fails to claim points to which they are entitled, other players who notice the extra points may steal them.

**Blank slate:** As an alternative way to setup and play the game, begin by dealing 24 cards equally among the players (6 each to 4 players, 8 each to 3 players, 12 each to 2 players) and dealing only 1 card face-up to the table. All cards played to this "blank slate" grid must be orthogonally adjacent to a card already on the table (beginning with the 1 face-up card, of course). The game will still end when a 5x5 grid is complete, but the bounds of that grid will not be determined at setup, but by play.

If the tableau of cards is already 5 cards tall or 5 cards wide, a player may not play a card that would make it taller or wider (respectively)—that dimension of the grid is set. Until the tableau reaches 5 cards tall or wide, cards may be played that would extend it in any direction. As a result, the starting card may ultimately be anywhere in the final grid: in the center, on a side, or in a corner. This dynamic grid shape and the adjacency rule provide for a game experience more focused on long-term planning.

(In the *Revised and Expanded Decktet Book*, starting with one card is the default rule, and starting with five cards already in play is listed as a variant.)

# SOLITAIRE

As a solitaire, Quincunx is played against the tableaux in an attempt to earn as many points as possible.

The solitaire game is played on a 4x4 grid. Starting cards are dealt in each of the four corners. Deal yourself an 8 card hand. Scoring is as per the usual rules, except that Straights and Threes of Kind may not be scored on diagonals.

If you run out of cards before completing the spread, you lose. This means that you will need to arrange basic scoring for 11 or 20 several times. Don't do it too many times, though, because cards in your hand at the end still count as a penalty.

# RANSOM TRUMP

*a trick-taking game for 2 to 4 players, using the Decktet by P.D. Magnus*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Object of the game:** To take as many tricks as possible.

## SETUP

With two or three players, each player is dealt 10 cards and the remainder are set aside. With four players, each is dealt 9 cards.

## BUYING THE TRUMP:

Each player picks one card from their hand and plays it face down in front of them as ransom. Once everyone has played a ransom card, flip them over. The highest-ranked ransom card determines the trump suit for the hand. (Aces are ranked below 2s; Crowns are above 9s.)

If there are two or more cards tied for the highest card, then ignore those and look at the highest cards among the remaining cards. If there is a tie here, too, then ignore those and look again. If there are no remaining cards, then there is no trump for the hand.

If the winning ransom is a Crown, then its suit is trump. If the winning ransom is a number card (that is, if it has two suit symbols) then the player who played it decides which of the two suits will be trump.

Once trump has been determined, the ransom cards are set aside. They do not count as a trick, and the player who played the winning ransom gets no points just for having done so.

The player who won the ransom leads the first trick.

*Example:* In a four-player game, Alice plays the Huntress (Crown of Moons), Bob plays the Calamity (Crown of Wyrms), Charlie plays the Pact (9 of Moons and Suns), and Doris plays the Lunatic (6 of Moons and Waves). The highest rank card played is Crown, but since Alice and Bob both played Crowns those cards are ignored. The highest remaining card is the Pact. Charlie may pick either Suns or Moons as trump. Since Alice played the Crown of Moons, Charlie know that Alice would like Moons to be trump. So he picks Suns instead.

## GAME PLAY:

Clockwise around the table, each player plays a card that matches a suit with the card that was led. If you have no cards of the suit led, you may play any card from your hand.

In order to follow suit, a card need only match one suit.

*Example:* If the Diplomat (8 of Moons and Suns) was led, then each subsequent player must play a card with a Moon or Sun on it if they can. They are not especially required to play a card with *both* a Moon and Sun, even if they have one.

If no trump was played, then the highest card that follows suit wins the trick. If any trumps are played, then the highest trump wins the trick.

The winner of the trick leads the next trick.

**Ties:** In a game with three or more players, it is possible that two cards will be played that both follow suit and that are of the same rank. If two cards in a trick would tie for highest rank (and no trump was played) then look at the suits on the card that was led: One of the two symbols is higher up, closer to the card rank (number) than the other. The card that follows that suit is considered higher than the other for purposes of resolving the trick.

## SCORING:

Each trick is worth 1 point.

When playing repeated hands, points are added up.

## VARIANTS

Many of the alternate rules for Ace trump would work in Ransom trump.

# REVELATION

*a trick-taking game for 2 to 4 players, from ten years old, by José Carlos de Diego Guerrero, translated from Revelación by Jorge Arroyo*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

## GOAL OF THE GAME:

To be the player with the smallest score, trying not to take pawns and crowns. Play a card from your hand on one of the branches of the Tree of Life, following the Decktet suits. If once placed, all the cards from that branch add up to more than 12 points, then you'll have to take a number of those cards, from end towards the beginning, until they add up to at least 13 points. You've got to try to take the least number of cards, but if you've got to take many, at least try to have the most cards possible from that suit, that way you can be immune to its power. There are 8 poisoned cards (4 pawns and 4 crowns) that spoil the branches and lower your score. Try not to take them.

Revelation

## SETUP

Place the 6 aces on the table in a straight line to the side of the table. They'll be used to mark which player has the most number of cards of a given suit.



Place the Excuse, face down, in the middle of the table. From this card, the two main branches of the Tree of Life will grow.

Choose a player to deal the cards and start the first hand. In following hands the deal will go to the next player on their left.



When starting each hand, the dealer shuffles the deck and deals 4 cards, one by one, to every player. If there are only two players, deal only 3

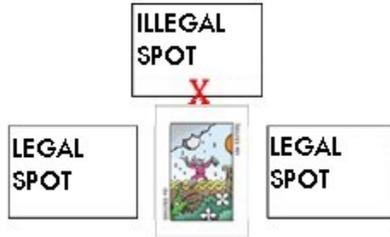
cards to each one.

## GAMEPLAY

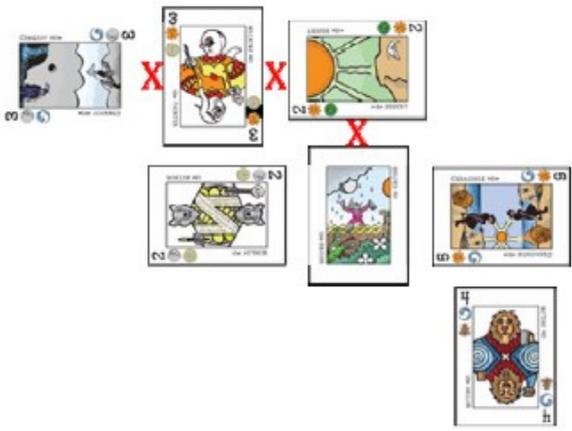
The player to the left of the dealer starts the game and then turns pass clockwise to each player.

**Tree of Life:** During their turn, players must play one of their cards to a legal spot on the Tree of Life

A legal spot is: A free spot near the long side of any card on the Tree so that once placed only connects to one card. The card placed must also share at least one suit with the one it's connecting to.



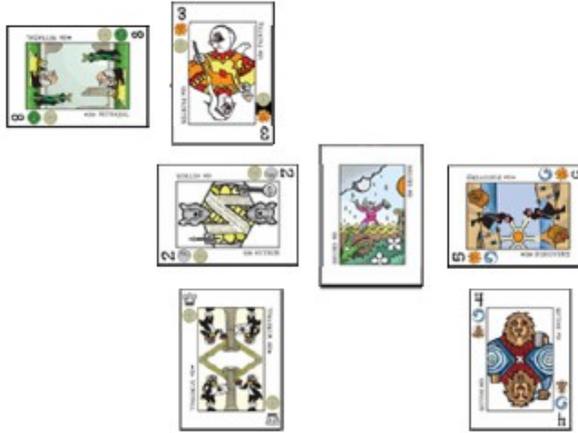
*Example 1:* The Excuse is the heart of the Tree of Life and it's special. The picture shows how it's legal to place cards on its left or right (its long sides) but not on top of it (one of its short sides).



*Example 2:* The Journey, even though it's placed near the long side of a card and on a free spot, was not legally placed because it doesn't share a suit with the card it connects to. The Desert is not valid either because it connects to more than one card. The other cards are ok because they fulfill the three conditions stated above.

**Suffocation** If a player is unable to place a card on their turn (no legal spots available) then they must show their hand to the other players. Then the player must discard a card on top of the Excuse and take a card from the deck. The cards remaining over the Excuse will be added to the next trick.

**Tricks** In this game the numeric value of the crowns and pawns is 1. If a player plays a card that causes the addition of the ranks of all the cards on its branch to exceed 12 points, then a trick is triggered and the player must take cards, starting from the last one on that branch towards the Excuse until the cards taken add up to at least 13 points. Afterwards, any card that became isolated, must also be taken. All the cards taken are placed on a pile in front of the player for scoring purposes at the end of the hand.



*Example 3:* When The Betrayal is placed, this causes that branch to add up to 13 ( $2 + 3 + 8$ ). The player must take cards starting with the 8, towards the Excuse. In this case they take the 8, the 3 and the 2, as they add up to 13 points. After that, the player must take the Crown because it became isolated.

**The Excuse:** The Way the Excuse is placed determines who takes the cards on top after a trick is triggered. If the Excuse is front side up, the player that took the trick must deal the cards on top of the excuse to all other players. If the Excuse is face down, then the player triggering the trick must take all the cards.

Those players who got cards during a trick must check, for every different suit on the cards taken, how many cards they have of that suit. They announce those numbers and every player checks who's got the most cards of each of those suits. The player who has the most of a given suit takes the Ace of that suit.

After the trick ends, the Excuse is turned around, so if it was face up, it becomes face down and viceversa.

## Scoring

A hand ends when all the cards have been played.

At that point players examine all the cards they took. Each suit on a card scores 1 point, but if a player has an Ace, the matching suits will score 0 points. After that, each crown scores 1 point and each pawn 2 points. These last points are unaffected by the aces the player might have.



*Example 4:* In this case, the Knots don't score because the player has the corresponding Ace. The total score is 15 points (0 from the Ace, 2 from the 2, 2 from the 3, 1 from the 8, 1 from the 2, 5 from the first pawn and 4 from the second pawn).

Each player takes a note of their score for the hand and a new hand is started.

## END OF THE GAME

After playing one hand per player in the game, the total score is calculated and the player with the lowest score wins the game.

## TIPS

Each time a trick is triggered, the Excuse changes its status. This makes every card in your hand important. Sometimes higher cards will be more important than lower ones but not always because some times you want to take the trick to get one of the majorities or so your opponents have to take cards. It's vital to adapt your play to the Excuse's status.

Plan ahead for the last four turns. Note that when the deck runs out you won't be able to take cards so you'll be forced to play the last 4 cards you have in your hand. Those cards can sometimes cause you to gain too many points. It can be good to save lower cards for those last turns so you're not forced to take any tricks, but the Excuse may force you to change your plans.

Try not to take pawns and crowns. They always give you points. Try to use the Excuse to give those cards to your opponents.

# ROYAL PYTHON

*a game of racing to the head of the snake and back to its tail, by  
Roxanne Clark*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Excuse)

**Extra material:** Board and Cards available on the BGG entry plus Suit coloured/marked player tokens

**Aim:** To get a higher score than your opponent. Score by having counters on the snake, those nearest the head score highest, but by promoting a piece to royalty you can score even higher by racing back to the tail again, knocking your opponent's piece off along the way.

Royal Python

## SETUP

Each player chooses a suit and takes the set of relevant tokens. Use six tokens each in 2-player games or 3-player games but reduce this to five each for 4-player games, and down to four pieces per player in 5 or 6-player games. Shuffle the decktet and place on the table face down with room for the discard pile. If you have room, deal the Cobra cards to a 3x3 grid face down rather than in a pile.

## GAME PLAY

The player who last saw a real snake goes first. (Alternatively the one that can do the best snake impression).

In each turn a player must:

1. Take enough cards from the main deck to make their hand size up to 4. (Whenever the drawing deck is exhausted simply shuffle the discard pile and place it face-down again as the new deck).
2. Select the token that you will move this turn.
3. Spend at least one card to move the selected token.

**Starting a Token** Your first token always enters the board for free (ensuring that players always have a move available to them). Place your token on the unspotted tail of the snake and play any card as a movement card (see movement) to enter the board. Subsequent tokens will require the payment of a card to get onto the tail and then, in the same turn, another card with a matching suit to enter onto the board. The tail end is not a valid space, no token can be left there between turns.

**Movement** To move a token expend your chosen card to the discard pile.

Cards with a number on them move the number of spots on the board indicated by the card's rank. A player must declare which of the suits upon the card they are spending when they discard it. An Ace counts as a 1 for movement, a Crown counts as a 10. The excuse card can be used to move your token any number of spaces between 2 and 9.

If the expended suit matches the suit of the player's tokens the player may immediately draw another card from the top of the deck to replace it.

If the player has another card in their hand matching the suit that they have just spent they may play this too in order to move the same token again. A player may do this as many times as they can/are able to do (freshly drawn replacement cards can be used immediately if valid). Since the Excuse has no suit it cannot follow or proceed any other card during your turn.

No player may move a token onto the head until all of their available pieces are on the board. The first player to get their token onto the head must do so by an exact number but subsequent tokens simply have to reach it by at least the required number. Once on the head the token can be crowned (see Crowning). The head is a safe zone, any number of tokens may occupy it at once.

**Cobra Spots** If you land on a special cobra space you must take a Cobra Card. The first 9 times that this happens the player will need to choose from one of the face-down cards in the grid, obey it's instructions and then place it back into the grid face-up. Once all of the cards have been turned over, players may choose which of the face-up cards they wish to obey and then place the card, face-down, onto a discard pile. If the grid is exhausted again simply begin the cycle again reshuffling the cards and then re-dealing then onto the grid face-down.

When a player takes a swapping card but no such token exists the player's token stays where it is and the player's turn continues. Unless the card says otherwise continue your turn if you can.

**Encountering Other Tokens** If, when moving on the board, your movement would mean that you would land on an occupied spot the following rules apply:

Landing on one of your own tokens (or on a Crowned piece) – the moving token leaps over into the next available empty spot along, this may be several spots along if lots of tokens are bunched up and even enemy tokens are leaped over if they occupy spots behind the token that you would have landed on.

Landing on an enemy token “dances” it back to the spot that you have just left (only one cards worth though!)

**Crowning** A token on the head may be “Crowned” by the player spending a crown card (that may be in the same turn as moving in if the suits match) – turn the token upside down or mark it in some other way to indicate that this has happened.

Only Crowned pieces may move off of the head and then move from the head to the tail. In encounters with other tokens Crowned tokens – dances only with other Crowned pieces, jump friendly uncrowned tokens, and knocks opponent's uncrowned tokens completely off of the board (to be kept as a trophy by the moving player). The game ends when one of the tokens leave the snake at the tail using an exact card expenditure. Scoring takes place.

**Scoring** Each uncrowned token on the board scores the number of points indicated on its spot.

Each Crowned token scores 15 minus the number of points indicated by its spot (in this way the crowned token that has come off of the tail is worth the full 15 points)

Each trophy piece held by a player scores 0.1 (in case of ties).

# VARIANTS

**Nom Nom** Crowned pieces can move both forwards and backwards. Only one Crowned token is allowed per player. A Crowned token leaves if it has no subjects (uncrowned team mates) left on the board. Last one standing wins. (Designer Note – this is untested as yet)



# RUMOURMONGERS

*a majority game where personalities may be used as special actions, by Johannes Hüsing.*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns and courts)

**Extra material:** scorekeeping tools

The townsfolk of Jacynth gather in groups to spread rumours about the six houses. The larger the crowd, the more likely the rumour will stick, and the crowd disperses.

## SETUP

With three players, use the base deck. With four, add the pawns and courts.

## GAME PLAY

### Shuffle

Shuffle the discard pile (on turn one, the whole deck).

### Deal

Starting with the player left to who scored least points during the last turn, deal shuffled cards one by one clockwise until the pile is exhausted.

### Gather

Each player, starting with the one who received the first card, takes any number of cards from his hand and places them face down before him. All cards must share the same lower suit.

### Meet

Each player turns his cards face up and places them along with his other open cards (from previous rounds). Cards are grouped by their upper suit.

### Gossip

Points are assigned for the player with the largest group from Knots (1 point) to Moons (6 points). If there's a tie, no points are claimed for the current suit. A player who gained points places the group of cards onto the discard pile.

## END OF GAME

The game ends after seven rounds. Player with most points wins.

# SUITS

Suit on aces and crowns counts as lower and upper suit. The middle suit on pawns and courts may count for the lower suit during Gather. Pawns and Courts may not form crowds of one during Meet, however.

## THE PERSONALITIES

### Usage

Every personality card may be removed from hand (and from game) onto the discard pile to invoke its personal action.

### Huntress

Point at target: Pick one card from the discard pile. Usage: after Gossip.

### Bard

If no one talks, sing: If, during Gossip, no cards of a suit are open, gain the points of the suit. Usage: during Gossip.

### Diplomat

Negotiate stalemates: If there's a tie, pick the winner. Usage: during Gossip.

### Lunatic

Confuse: Void the action of a personality card just played. Usage: immediately after card is played, even after its use is specified (for instance, the Huntress has chosen her targets). Both voided card and Lunatic are discarded.

### Sailor

Shanghai: Place another card face down from your hand before you, disregarding suit. Usage: after Gather.

### Savage

Wild: Turn one of your open cards face down, naming a suit. This card assumes the named suit until Gossip has resolved. It is discarded if you win the suit. Usage: after Meet.

### Penitent

Request offerings: Every other player has to discard two cards of their choice from hand. Usage: after Gossip.

**Author**

Retell the tale: Repeat the Gossip phase for a suit of your choice using the remaining face-up cards. The Author can retell a rumour even if it was forfeited by the Watchman during the Gossip phase. Usage: after Gossip.

**Merchant**

Way with numbers: Put down a row of cards (any subsequence of ace, 2 . . . 9, pawn, court,crown) instead of set of matching lower suit. Usage: before Gather.

**Painter**

Repaint: During the following Gossip phase, cards will be scored according to their lower instead of their upper suit. Usage: after Gather.

**Soldier**

Occupy: All players (including yourself) discard all their Location cards from hand. Usage: after Gossip.

**Consul**

Repute: Gain 3 points. Usage: after Gossip.

**Light Keeper**

Remain in light: During one rumour you win you may leave half of the cards (rounded down) in front of you, discarding the rest. Usage: during Gossip.

**Watchman**

Inhibit the rumour: Skip the Gossip phase for a suit of your choice. Usage: during Gossip.

phase	timing	cards
Shuffle	during after	
Deal	during after	Merchant
Gather	during after	Sailor, Painter
Meet	during after	Savage
Gossip	during after	Bard, Diplomat, Light Keeper, Watchman Consul, Author, Soldier, Penitent, Huntress



# RUTA

A game for two players, in which you are a merchant attempting to claim as many trade routes throughout the kingdom as you can, by Gene Moore.

**Extra material:** 20 tokens in 2 colors (10 of each color, suit chips may be used)

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Excuse is optional)

## SETUP

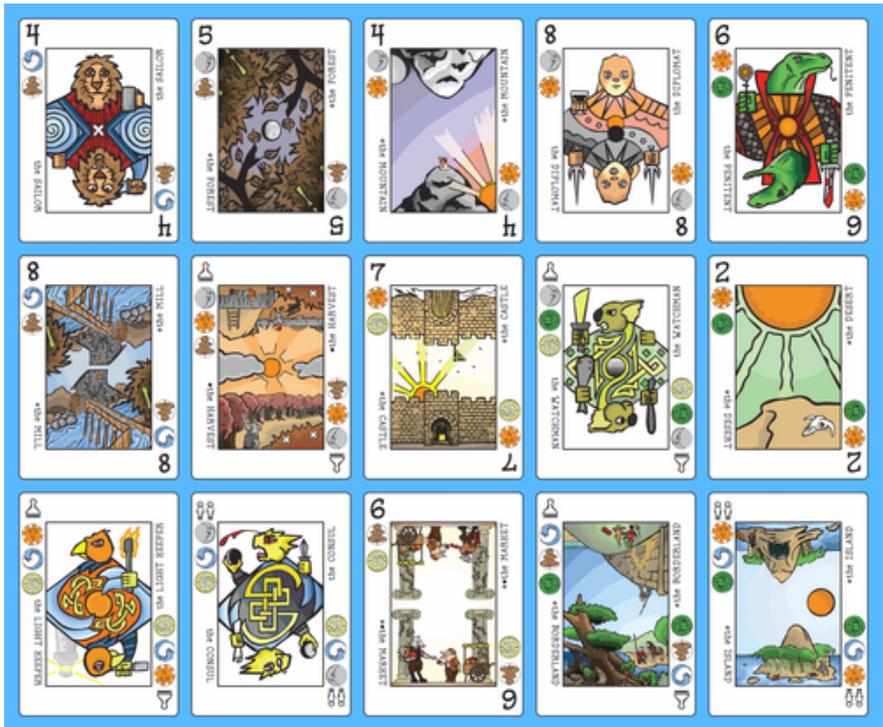
This game uses the extended deck. You may choose whether or not to include the Excuse; see below for a description of how it is used in the game.

Create a map of the kingdom by removing the following 15 cards from the deck, and arranging them in a 5x3 grid on the table. These cards represent the people and places with which you are trying to establish trade routes.

1st Row: the Sailor, the Forest, the Mountain, the Diplomat, the Penitent

2nd Row: the Mill, the Harvest, the Castle, the Watchman, the Desert

3rd Row: the Light Keeper, the Consul, the Market, the Borderland, the Island



With the remaining cards in the deck, deal 2 to each player, then turn 2 cards face up on the table to create a draft board. Form a draw pile with the rest.

# GAMEPLAY

During a player's turn, one of two actions may be taken:

1. Take a card
2. Claim a trade route

## TAKING CARDS

Ruta

A player may choose to take a card either from the draft board or the draw pile. Cards taken from the draft board are replaced by the top card of the draw pile. During the game, a discard pile will be started. When the draw pile is empty, shuffle the discard pile and turn it face down to become the new draw pile.

There is one alternative to taking from the draft board or the draw pile. If a player plays *The Excuse*, they may take any card they wish from the discard pile, and add it to their hand. *The Excuse* is then discarded.

## CLAIMING TRADE ROUTES

A trade route is any orthogonal connection between adjacent cards on the map. To claim a route, a player must play from their hand enough cards to equal or exceed the total rank of the two cards in the route, and in a common suit (or suits) between them. Aces count as 1, and Pawns, Courts, and Crowns all count as 10.

For example, to claim the route between the Consul (10♠10♣) and the Harvest (2♠2♥2♦), a player must play at least 20 Moons from their hand; the Pawn and Court add up to 20, and Moons is the only common suit. To claim the route between the Mountain (4♠4♥) and the Diplomat (8♠8♥), however, they can play any combination of Moons and Suns which add up to at least 12, since both Moons and Suns are common suits.

When claiming a route, the cards that are played go into a discard pile, and the player places one of their tokens in the area adjoining the cards on the map. Only one player may claim each route.

## EXACT CHANGE

If a player is able to claim a route by matching the indicated rank exactly (for example, playing exactly 14 Suns to claim the Diplomat/Penitent route), then the player gets an extra turn. There are no restrictions on additional turns, and if another route can be claimed with exact change, then the player gets another extra turn.

## ENDING THE GAME

The game ends when one player is out of tokens.

# SCORING AND WINNING

Each route claimed by a player earns that player 1 point.

In addition, each player's longest continuous route earns bonus points for that player according to its length. A continuous route is a path of one or more tokens, which can be traversed without backtracking. A 5-token path, for example, would score 5 bonus points).

The player with the most points wins.

## VARIANTS

### Aces

Aces can be bothersome on the draft board. While they have a small amount of use for making exact change, it is often not advantageous for a player to take one. To mitigate this problem, *one* of the following rules may be used during the game:

1. At any time during a player's turn, they may remove an ace from the draft board by giving it to their opponent, and then replacing it with the top card from the draw pile.
2. If a player chooses to take an ace from the draft board, they may take an extra card in the same turn (after replacing the ace).
3. Remove the aces during setup, and deal three of them to each player. When claiming a route, an ace may be used to subvert the route's suit requirement. As long as the ace is of the correct suit, the remaining cards used to claim a route need only to fulfill the rank requirement. The ace is not counted in the total rank. (For example, the Consul/Harvest route can be claimed with the Ace of Moons and any other cards adding up to at least 20.) Each ace may be used once per game, and is removed from play after use.



# SALDO

*A game of ending border tensions, by Jacob Valdez.*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** None

*This game is in development.*

According to an online translator, Saldo is Finnish for "balance."

I hadn't seen any games yet making use of the antipathic suits, although I did see it used to determine the color of a second tower in an Ivory Tower variant.

Initially, I thought of a climbing game, restricting the beating card to one of the opposite suit, but that rapidly got too complex for my tastes, so I rethought it as below. I'd like to see if anyone else has time to playtest, and their thoughts and ideas.

Saldo

## SETUP

Shuffle the Standard Deck, dealing 6 cards facedown to each player, and 6 cards faceup to the center of the table.

## GAME PLAY

Your goal is to neutralize the table cards, bringing balance to as many as possible. (Once I get the rules down, I'm thinking of a story relating to a neutral border between to kingdoms)

On your turn, you will play a card to one of the center piles, then end your turn by drawing a card. When you play a card, it must contain an antipathic suit (Moons on Wyrms, Suns on Leaves, Waves on Knots) versus the card where you play it. You will then check the total difference between the suits:

- If it balances out (the totals of the two suits subtracted from each other totals 0), then you've captured that pile. Place it facedown next to you, and immediately replace it with a new card from the draw pile.
- If it does not, that pile remains in play, and your opponent may attempt to capture it by balancing it on their turn.

### Examples of Play:

- Play the 9 of Moons/Suns against the 9 of Waves/Wyrms. The Moons balance the Wyrms, and that pile is captured.
- Play the 4 of Moons/Suns on the 7 of Moons/Leaves. That pile is now set as Suns versus Leaves, and will require 3 more Leaves to balance.
- Play the 2 of Suns/Wyrms on the 4 of Moons/Suns. That pile is now set to only count Moons versus Wyrms. Currently, it requires 2 more Wyrms to balance. If the opponent plays the Ace of Moons, that brings the total to 5 Moons against 2 Wyrms. By playing the 3 of Leaves/Wyrms, that pile would be captured.

- Play the 6 of Moons/Waves on the 5 of Wyrms/Knots. The difference is 1 point, but the opposing suit has not been set, since you have both Moons/Wyrms and Waves/Knots. The Ace of Wyrms or the Ace of Knots would capture the pile.

Once the deck has run out, players continue trying to balance and capture piles until neither has any more valid plays. Any remaining cards, whether in player's hands or on the table are discarded before counting scores. I haven't yet decided the best way to score. In my first test game, just playing from open hands, I wound up with the following results:

- *Count tricks (piles) captured* – Player 1: **5** to Player 2: **4**
- *Count total cards captured* – Player 1: **11** to Player 2: **12**
- *Antipathic Aces* – Check Aces captured. If you have a pair of antipathic suits, none of those two suits count. Then count cards captured – Player 1: **6** to Player 2: **2**

**Thoughts:** Like I said, I need to get more plays in to see how this one works over time. I'm debating whether I need to adjust the difficulty by changing the number of cards dealt to the middle, or by allowing multiple cards to be played out of one's hand, then draw back up to 6. Another thought is whether to allow multiple moves – if you capture a pile, make another play before drawing cards.

I'm also torn on scoring the game. Thematically, I like the third method. It would also encourage players to be careful which piles they capture, to avoid collecting two Aces of opposite suits. If that proves to have a tendency to allow one player to run away with the game, going with the number of piles captured would probably be the most fair.

Any comments, ideas, or playtest results would be appreciated.

# SECOND STORY

*a game of reckless burglin for 2 to 5 players, by P.D. Magnus*

Any housebreaker can fill a sack with monogrammed silverware, but a spoon only shows a robber's skill when it's next to something else – maybe a gold broach, a china cup, or a set of false teeth. The real professional pilfers with variety.

**Extended Deckett:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** 2 ten-sided dice, 60 chips (10 in each of the 6 Deckett suits)

## INTRODUCTION

You and the other players are house thieves in Jacynth, trying to prove your skill as mighty yeggs. Each turn of the game is one night of burgling. As you fill up your bag with loot, you always have the option of going to one more house. If you are detected, though, you must drop your bag and flee - which means losing anything you had collected that night.

**Components:** In addition to the *Deckett*, the game requires *60 chips or tokens* (10 corresponding to each of the Deckett suits) and 2 ten-sided *dice*.

## SETUP

There are optional rules the *Excuse*, the Pawns, and the Courts, but the original rules use only the basic deck. Shuffle the deck and put it in the center of the table. Gather the chips together as a bank.

Decide in some nefarious way who will take the first turn. Subsequent play proceeds clockwise around the table.

## GAME PLAY

At the beginning of your turn, the top card of the deck is flipped over. The card represents the house you are trying to burgle. The rank of the card represents the level of security; higher ranked cards are more secure. The suits on the card represent the kinds of things in the house worth stealing.

With a number card, you have the option of doing a thorough job or being quick about it. To do a thorough job, roll one die. If the result meets or exceeds the rank of the card, then you rob the house undetected; take two chips from the bank (one matching each suit on the card) and put them next to the card to indicate that you have them in your bag of loot. If the result is less than the rank of the card, then you have drawn the attention of the guard; any chips in your bag of loot are returned to the bank and your turn is over.

To be quick about it, roll both dice. If one or both dice meet or exceed the rank of the card, then you may take one chip from the bank and put it in your bag of loot. The chip must match one of the two suits on the card, but you may pick which. If both of the dice are less than the rank of the card, then the guard has

noticed you; any chips in your bag of loot are returned to the bank and your turn is over.

Note that most ten-sided dice have a '0' on the tens face; a '0' is a high roll that always succeeds.

**Crowns** are treated as rank ten: very well-protected houses. Since there is only one suit symbol on the card, you should always roll two dice when a Crown is turned up.

Because Crowns are not just ordinary houses, you may sometimes take a second chance when neither die rolls the ten you need. If you have a chip in your lair that matches the suit on the Crown (loot from a previous turn), you may move it to your bag of loot in order to reroll the dice. If you miss it again, you lose everything in your bag, including the chip which you added from your lair. (You may try another second chance if you have another chip in your lair to risk.) If you make it, you may end your turn or continue as usual.

**Aces** represent a bit of luck. If an Ace is turned up and you do not have a chip corresponding to the suit of the Ace in your bag of loot, it's good luck; take a matching chip from the bank and put it in your bag of loot. If you already have a chip of that suit in your bag of loot, something has fallen out of your bag; return one matching chip to the bank. In either case, another card should be flipped over. You can't end your turn on an Ace.

When you have successfully burgled a house, you may decide either to end the night or to try another house.

If you end the night, take any chips in your bag of loot and put them in front of you. These are goods you have taken back to your lair. Although it is possible to lose chips that are in your bag of loot, there is almost no way to lose chips once they are in your lair. (You can only lose chips from your lair if you risk them on a second chance against a Crown.)

If you keep going, another card is flipped over. Resolve it as above. Note that you may not back down from a house once the card has been flipped over. By that time, you are already inside.

When your turn is over, any revealed cards are put in the discard pile. The player to your left takes the next turn.

Reshuffle the discard pile to form a new draw pile if ever the deck is exhausted.

**The last night:** If a turn ends and one type of chip has been entirely depleted from the bank, the game enters a final phase. Each player gets one final turn in which to try and end with the highest score. Play order continues in the usual way, so that the player who took the last chip from the pile will also get the final turn.

Note that the final phase only begins when a type of chip is emptied from the bank at the *end* of some player's turn. Suppose a player has the last chip of a kind in their bag of loot, presses their luck by drawing another card, blunders the job, and has to return their loot to the bank – that would not trigger the final phase.

If a type of chip is depleted from the bank, then there just isn't anymore of that stuff left in the city to steal. If you rob a house that has the suit symbol of a depleted type, you can not draw a chip for that suit and get no compensation. You still have to roll the dice even if the card has no suits that correspond to available chips.

## SCORING

At the end of the game, look at whatever chips you have in your lair. Disregard the suit you have the most of, and see which other suit you have the most of after that; that is, look at your *second most numerous* suit. Your score is the number of chips you have in that suit.

If two players have the same score in their second most numerous suit, look at *third* most numerous suit. If that is also even, look at *fourth* most numerous. . . and so on. If there is parity even on the *sixth* most numerous suit, then the game is deemed to be a tie.

*Example:* Morgan has 6, 4, 3, 2, and 1 chips in five different suits. Siveny has 4, 4, 3, and 3 chips in four different suits. Their most numerous suits are disregarded. Each has 4 chips in their second most numerous suit, and 3 in their third most numerous - a tie so far. Siveny has 3 in her fourth most numerous suit; Morgan only has 2 in his. So Siveny wins.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

If you want to use some or all of the extended deck cards, just shuffle them into the deck. They make the game a bit less brutal.

The Excuse indicates a scurrilous attempt to talk your way out of a jam. If it is flipped up on your turn, put it next to your bag of loot. Another card should be flipped over. If you end the night by choice, move the Excuse to your lair. On a later turn, when you fail to roll what you need, you may discard the Excuse and immediately reroll the die or dice.

Pawns and Courts represent tenement houses. You must decide whether to work quickly through one flat, to ransack several, or to trundle through the whole building. You only roll one die in any case, but the risk and reward are different. If you choose one flat, you need to roll at least a 3 and (if you succeed) you may take *one* chip that corresponds to a suit on the card. If you choose several flats, you need to roll at least a 6 and (if you succeed) may take *two* chips that correspond to two different suits on the card. If you choose all the flats, you need to roll at least a 9 and (if you succeed) may take *three* chips that correspond to the three suits on the card.



# ShED

*2 to 5 players start the game with a pool of tokens matching the Decktet's suits and then they try to get rid of them through careful trick taking, by Greg James.*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns or Courts)

**Extra material** : Tokens, per player 1 in each of the Decktet's 6 suits (assemble your own or get the "basic" set)

## SETUP

Players start the game with a pool of 6 tokens: one in each of the Decktet's suits (see the Variant section for a fun alternate setup).

No Token Keeper is required, but as the game progresses a token discard pile will form and grow. Keep this pile of discarded tokens nearby – some of them will enter back into the game!

The Dealer for the first hand will be the person whose pet sheds the most. He will then deal each player a 7 card hand. The rest of the deck is placed face down within easy reach of all players to form the draw pile. Depending on the number of players in the game, set aside a remainder unseen each hand as follows:

In a 3 player game, set aside a remainder of 3 cards; in a 4 player game set aside 4 cards and in the 5 player game, set aside the last card as the remainder.

If you are using the Pawns and/or Courts, see the Extended Deck section below for the size of remainder for your game.

Cards follow their usual rank order (low to high): A, 2–9, ♠, ♠♠, ♠♠♠.

Aces rank zero in all tricks except when they lead. An Ace will win its own trick when its matching ♠ is played or when no other player is able to follow suit (details below).

## GAME PLAY

### Choose the Type of Trick being played

Players each play one card per trick. The player on the dealer's left will lead the first trick. He dictates the type of trick being played by selecting a card from his hand and playing it front of him on the table. The card will belong to one of these groups:

1. Personalities – the "face" cards of the Decktet
2. Locations – indicated on the cards by a bisected circle
3. Events – indicated on the cards by a solid black circle
4. Ace Suits

Continuing clockwise around the table, players must follow the chosen lead and play a card from their hand of its type.

*Example:* The lead card for the trick is *The Soldier* (5♣♠). All subsequent players must play a Personality card to this trick. If they are unable to do so, they must still play a card from their hand and thus will have no chance of winning the trick.

Note: This is new territory for determining “suit” in a Decktet game and forces players to think about the cards differently. Although it is not necessary, you may wish to refer to the table (on page 134) in the Decktet Book: “Summary of Cards by Interpretive Type” before playing your first game. This table has been generously reproduced by the author and can also be found on page 9 here. At a glance it will become obvious that the three types of cards are well distributed through the ranks, which offers Shed a fine balance. On the other hand, the distribution of types through the ♠s, ♣s, and ♡s makes things very interesting for this game!

## Winning the Trick

The highest ranked card played which matches the type indicated by the lead wins the trick. The winner will lead the next trick.

*Example:* *The Soldier* (5♣♠) has been played to start the trick. The next player follows type and plays *The Lunatic* (6♣♠). *The Sailor* (4♣♠) is played next and the last player doesn't have any Personality cards in his hand. He plays *The Castle* (7♣♠). *The Lunatic* player wins and he will lead the next trick.

**Tiebreaker Rule** In the event of a tie, the last card played which matches the rank of the highest card on the trick wins (provided of course that it matches the type of lead). To continue the example, if either *The Sailor* or *The Castle* player played *The Penitent* (6♣♠) instead, they would have won the trick.

**Shed a token** The trick winner may shed one token from his take to the supply which matches one of the suits on the lead card – his choice. Tricks led with Aces and ♡s allow the winner to shed one token of its suit.

*Example:* Cards on a trick were played in this order:  
*The Soldier* (5♣♠) — *The Lunatic* (6♣♠) — *The Sailor* (4♣♠) — *The Penitent* (6♣♠)  
*The Penitent* player wins and he must shed either a ♣ or a ♠ token to the supply. He will lead the next trick.

**All tokens of a suit have been shed** If the winning player has already shed all tokens of the suit(s) indicated by the lead card from his take, he must select a token that matches one of these suits **from an opponent of his choice** and add it to his own take as a penalty! If no players have a token which matches the lead card, the trick winner must take a matching token (his choice) from the supply and add it to his take.

**Leading an Ace** Players may choose to lead an Ace. An Ace trick is one which is won on the merits of rank and suit only. All players must play a card from their hand which matches the suit of the Ace – the type of card doesn't matter. If a player doesn't have a card of the suit dictated by the Ace, he must still play a card

and will have no chance of winning the trick. The highest ranked card of the Ace's suit will win the trick. Here are the two ways an Ace will win its own trick:

- 1) If the Ace's matching ♠ is played, the Ace is the high card on the trick and wins.
- 2) If the Ace is the only card of its suit played to the trick, the Ace wins.

**Three special cards** *The Origin* (2♣♠), *The Market* (6♣♠) and *The End* (♠♣) are ambiguous card types and are considered to be either Locations or Events. Players can play these cards to tricks of either type. If any of these 3 cards leads a trick, the lead player must announce what type of trick it is when he plays the card: Location or Event.

Note: If any of these 3 cards are played to a trick led with a Location or Event card, the ambiguously suited card is considered to be following type.

*Example:* The end of the round is near and players only have a few cards left in their hands. *The Desert* (2♣♠) is led and one of the other players is holding the *Ace of Wyrms*, *The Merchant* (9♣♠) and *The End* (♠♣). Unfortunately, he is out of Sun and Wyrms tokens and doesn't want to win the trick. Too bad! He must play his Crown to follow type (Location) – he can't claim that *The End* is an Event card for this trick and avoid winning. If he wins, he must take either a Sun or a Wyrms token from an opponent and add it to his take as a penalty.

**New Trick and End of the Round** After the trick has been scored, the cards are set aside face down in the discard pile and everyone (starting with the winning player and continuing clockwise) draws a card to replenish their hands to 7 cards. When the draw pile has been exhausted, play continues until all cards have been played.

If the victory condition has not been met and all cards have been played, the new Dealer is the player on the old Dealer's left. He will shuffle all of the cards including the remainder. The first player in the new round will be the player on the new Dealer's left.

## GAME END

When a player sheds his last token, the game ends immediately and that player is declared the winner.

## BINGMAKER SCENARIO

On the odd occasion, a game will end with a player being forced to choose between two (or possibly more) players who have the same token in their take, thus having the power to choose who the winner will be.

*Example:* Near the end of a three player game, two players have one Wave token each and the third player has a Moon and a Sun. It is the last trick and the third player leads his last card: *The Mill* (8♣♠) and wins the trick (Ouch!). There are two ways to resolve this situation – choose the solution which best suits your playing preferences.

1. The game ends at this point and the two Wave holders share the victory. This is the way we play it at home. We don't think of it as a shared victory as such, but rather that the third player has gone down in defeat.
2. Some players will not be keen on this scenario and will want a definite winner at the end of the game. This is especially true if you are playing a round robin series of games with the winner being the first player to win a target number of games. In this case then, the player who would normally take a token from another player will take a token from the supply as his penalty. To continue the example, the player who won the hand with *The Mill* would choose a Wave or a Leaf token as his penalty from the supply and the game would continue until a clear winner prevailed.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

The ♠ and ♠ cards fit seamlessly into a game of Shed and are recommended once you have a few games under your belt. If a ♠ or ♠ is the lead card on a trick, the victor may shed one token from his take which matches one of the card's 3 suits – his choice. Be careful as the endgame approaches though – winning a trick led by a ♠ or ♠ could have dire consequences if you don't have any tokens in those 3 suits. Chances are, an opponent will!

Size of remainder for games using the extended deck:

3 player game with Pawns = 4

3 player game with Pawns & Courts = 2

4 player game with Pawns = 4

4 player game with Pawns & Courts = 4

5 player game with Pawns = 5

In the 5 player game with Pawns & Courts, just deal each player 8 cards and set aside the final 4 cards as the remainder.

## VARIANT

This random starting take is a fun variation and ramps up the tension from the very first trick: Count out 1 token in each suit per player, throw them into a bag, mix them up a bit and then fish out 6 random tokens per player for their starting take.

## PARTNERSHIP RULES

Shed can be played in partnership with players on each team sitting on opposite sides of the table. Each player plays one card per trick and play proceeds clockwise. The winning team will be the first to shed all of their tokens.

The rules are adjusted as follows: Tokens are held by one player on each team. Each team starts with 6 tokens (1 in each suit or use the Variant). The ♠ and ♠ cards are not used in the partnership game. Each player starts with an 8 card hand. The remaining 4 cards are set aside unseen for this round.

The point values of partner's cards played to a hand may be added together for a combined score if they are of the same type. Ranked cards score their number and ♣s score 10.

The Ace rules are adjusted as follows:

An Ace scores zero unless it leads the trick. If an Ace leads, it scores 1. If an Ace's matching ♣ is played on its lead by either team, the Ace will score 11.

The tiebreaker rule remains the same, with the trick being awarded to the team that plays the card which ties the score.

The winning team may shed a token which matches a suit with the lead card. Partners may collaborate on this decision after the trick has been played.

The next trick will be led by the player who played the highest ranked card (which matched the lead) on the winning team. If both players played a card of equal rank which matched type with the lead card, the second player will lead the next trick.

*Example:* Cards on a trick were played in this order:

*The Darkness* 9(♣♣) — *The Cave* 7(♣♣) — *The Painter* 3(♣♣) — *The Castle* 7(♣♣)

*The Darkness* is the lead card, but his partner didn't follow the type of lead card (Location) and played a Personality card (*The Painter*). Thus his rank of 3 cannot be combined with *The Darkness*, so the team's score is 9. *The Cave* followed type (Location) and his partner played *The Castle*, which also follows type. Its 7 is combined with his partner's 7 for a score of 14 and they win the trick. The *Cave/Castle* team may now shed a ♣ or ♣ token – their choice. *The Castle* player will lead the next trick.

## 2 PLAYER RULES

*Shed* – like *Gasp!* – was conceived as a multi-player trick-taking game available to partnership play. Until these 2 games came along, my favourite trick-taking games were *Euchre* and *Tressette*. I have played 2 player versions of both and while quite enjoyable, the 2 player versions were not the same as the “real thing” in my mind. Still, playing with 2 is better than not playing at all and I offer this same caveat for *Gasp!* and *Shed* in their 2 player clothing. With that said, here is a way to play *Shed* with 2:

The rules are the same as in the standard game, but are adjusted as follows: Each player starts with 6 tokens (1 in each suit or use the Variant). The ♠ and ♠ cards are not used. Each player starts with a 10 card hand. 4 cards are set aside unseen as a remainder each round. After each trick, each player draws 1 card to their hand.

Each player plays 2 cards on the same trick and play alternates A-B-A-B.

The point values of player's cards played to a hand may be added together for a combined score if they are of the same type. Ranked cards score their number and ♣s score 10.

The Ace rules are adjusted as follows:

An Ace scores zero unless it leads the trick. If an Ace leads, it scores 1. If an Ace's matching ♣ is played on its lead by your opponent, the Ace will score 11. If you play the matching ♣ after you lead the Ace, the Ace still scores 1.

The tiebreaker rule remains the same, with the trick being awarded to the player that plays the card which ties the score.

The winning player may shed one token which matches a suit with the lead card.

The next trick will be led by the winning player.

**Shed**

# SIEGE OF JACYNTH

*A challenging tile-laying area control game for 2 players, by Greg James.*

Siege! The walls of Jacynth are under attack – a horde of warriors from the eastern deserts are attempting to scale the walls with ladders and smash them down with the aid of their catapults. The defenders are ready with their cauldrons of boiling oil and ultimately one side will be defeated with the invaders being repelled or the walls being breached.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Excuse)

**Extra material:** 12 tokens

## DESCRIPTION

The fortified wall of Jacynth is created at the start of the game by shuffling the Aces, Crowns and the Excuse and then laying them down in a connected line on one side of the table. The Excuse forms one section of the wall and is thus unsuited. The other 6 sections are comprised of random pairs of Aces and Crowns.

On his turn, each player adds a card from his hand to this initial tableau which represents his forces being deployed in the battle. The key concept of the game is that through careful positional play, a single card may score against several sections of the wall simultaneously. The player who has allocated the strongest forces against the most sections of the wall when this is tallied at the end of the game is the winner.

## COMPONENTS

Basic Decktet and The Excuse

12 generic tokens (we use checkers)

## SETUP

Separate the Aces, Crowns and The Excuse from the rest of the deck. Shuffle these and then lay them out so that the short ends of the cards are touching. A connected line of 7 stacks will be formed at one end of the table. A stack will have either The Excuse or a random Ace/Crown pair.

Shuffle the remaining cards and deal each player a 5 card hand. The rest of the deck forms the draw pile which is placed face down on the side of the playing area within easy reach of both players. The first player is the attacker: he uses one of the generic tokens each turn to mark the card he plays.

## GAME PLAY

Play alternates with each player's turn consisting of legally placing a card on the tableau and then drawing the top card of the draw pile.

## CARD PLACEMENT RULES

All cards are added to the tableau by placing them parallel and adjacent to 1 or more cards in the tableau. Cards may not overlap. The full long side of a card must be supported by a foundation of one or two cards already in play in order for it to be legally placed.

## ATTACHING AND DEFENDING THE WALL

When a card is part of a continuous vertical connection of cards to a section of the wall, it represents that player's forces via matching suit(s). Through careful card placement, a single card may use its suits to exert influence on several wall sections.

In the endgame scoring example below, note how the Diplomat, Lunatic and Forest are each influencing these 3 stacks: the Excuse, the Sun/Wyrm Ace stack and the Moon/Leaf stack. The Forest scores its 5 against the Excuse, nothing against the Sun/Wyrm stack and one Moon and one Leaf against the Huntress/Ace of Leaves stack.

## THE ACES AND CROWNS

Each Ace/Crown stack is controlled by the player at the end of the game who satisfies these conditions:

1) owns one or more cards vertically connected to it which when combined, share both of the suits.

example: one stack is comprised of The End and the Ace of Knots. In order to claim control over this pair, a player must have card(s) which have at least one instance of Leaves and Knots. If the Ace/Crown pair has only one suit, then a player must have at least two cards in play against that stack which have that suit. e.g. In order to lay claim to a stack comprised of the Ace of Waves and The Sea, a player must play at least two Wave cards against it.

2) if both players satisfy the first condition, then the player who has the highest sum of the required suit(s) on his connected cards wins the Ace/Crown stack. If this is a tie, then the numeric values of the cards are summed and the player with the higher total scores the stack. If this is still a tie, then neither player scores the stack.

## THE EXCUSE

Control over The Excuse is determined by the combined ranks of the cards which are vertically connected to it. The player with the highest total when the ranks of their cards are summed wins The Excuse. If it is a tie, then the player with the higher number of suits in their forces scores The Excuse. If this is still a tie, then neither player scores it (see endgame scoring example).

## GAME END

When each player has played all of the cards in their hand, the game ends.

# SCORING

Start at one end of the wall and tally the strength of each player's forces one section of the wall at a time. Whichever player controls the higher number of stacks in the wall wins. If this is a tie, then the player who has the greatest tally of suits which influence the 6 suited stacks is the winner. If this is still a tie, then the game is a draw.

## ENDGAME SCORING EXAMPLE:

Chuck the Checker player has defeated Ugo's unmarked cards 4-3. Close game!  
Stack by stack scoring:

Stack	Chuck's Checkers	Ugo's Unmarked cards
Aces		
The Excuse	35,	35,
Aces		
Ace		
Ace		

### Details:

This was a very close game with a couple of fierce battles. Ugo forced a pin on the Moon/Knot stack as his first move by playing the *Discovery* fully on the *Bard/Sea* stack. The *Author* was part of his starting hand and is the only *Moon/Knot* card in the deck. He thought he could play it late in the game and steal the stack. Chuck managed to save a couple of Knot cards for the endgame and stole this stack for the win.

By playing the *Merchant* as a fork across the *Excuse* and the *Leaf/Knot* stack, Chuck used its 9 against the *Excuse* and both of its suits against the *Windfall/End* stack. A powerful opening move.

The *Excuse* had to be settled by the tie-breaker rule, as the sum of both player's cards against this stack is 35. When all of Chuck's cards influencing the *Excuse* are examined, all 6 of the Decktet suits are present. Ugo's cards against this stack only have 4 suits – with a void in Waves and Wyrms, so Chuck takes it.

*The Mill*: a poor play by Chuck. A better play for Chuck at that point in the game would have been to play it where the *Forest* ended up, as its *Leaf* still would have influenced the *Moon/Leaf* stack, but its 8 would have been better utilized against the *Excuse*. Got away with it this time, Chuck!

*Tie-Breaker*: For the sake of argument, if the *Excuse* battle had ended in a tie, then Ugo would have won on the tie breaker because he has a total of 21 suits against the 6 suited stacks, while Chuck has only 19.

## VARIANTS

*Open Draw Pile*: The draw pile is placed face up on the table so that the next card coming is always visible. My wife prefers playing this way (but see strategy tips below).

*Pie Rule* (untested): in lieu of playing a card as the opening move of the game, the first player may elect to swap positions of one Ace or Crown in the wall with another. The *Excuse* cannot be moved. Player 2 then plays the first card to the tableau.

## STRATEGY TIPS

The ability to count cards and knowledge of the Decktet are strong assets in this game. For those who don't have the deck memorized, this quick hint will help: each player will play 12 cards in the game and across these 24 cards, each suit will occur exactly 8 times. So, a quick scan of the tableau and your hand can give a lot of information.

Choosing whether to fork or pin cards on the wall in the opening moves can have far reaching consequences, so try to choose wisely.

## COMMENTS

This is a game with a strong visual-spatial element which some players will find very challenging. Both my wife and son were able to grok the gist of the game after a few moves. This said, complex connections can form and it is my hope that the logic of the game can be readily grasped and that (as it did for us) the mechanics will become intuitive before the end of the first game. My son & I also observed that this game has a chess-like feel to it, with forks and pins being the meat of the strategy in the game.

There must be a tile laying game out there that is similar to this, but I have no idea what it is! I don't have much experience with domino/tile games at all. The only game which consciously influenced this is a little pnp game (which I haven't played) called *Castle Builders*. One night while I was driving somewhere, I was thinking about Castle Builders and what it would play like if it were a Decktet game and this is what came out of that process.

As with all of my Decktet games, the key goal in the design is to create a game which can only be played with the Decktet system and is therefore interestingly double-suited. I also wanted every card to have the ability to score more than once (an idea I explored in game:sun-bid) . This comes with a price in a tableau style game – counting up at the end can be a chore. I hope that reckoning the scores in this game will not take longer than tallying up a game of Jacynth (for example) and that players find it at least as enjoyable.

This game is an ideal candidate for CJ Winter's Decktet domino style tiles (or a mini Decktet like mine) if you wish to reduce the footprint the game makes on the table.

# SNAKEBIT

*manipulate the cards in this trick-taking game to take as many tricks as you can, while avoiding the cursed suit, for 3–4 players, by Isaac Bickerstaff.*

**Extended Decktet:** No

## SETUP

Remove the Pawns and Courts from the deck.

Remove the 6 Aces from the deck and shuffle them together to form a draw pile. Do the same with the 6 Crowns.

Shuffle the remaining cards together and deal them out evenly to all players.

## GAME PLAY

Flip over the top cards of the Ace and Crowns deck. The Ace card will determine the trump suit, and the Crown card will determine the cursed suit.

When a player leads a trick, he determines at that time which of the two suits on the card will be the suit led. Players who follow must play a card with that suit, regardless of whether or not it appears on the top or the bottom of the suits on the card. If a player does not have this suit in his hand, he may play any card he wishes. The highest card in the suit led wins the trick, unless trump has been played to the trick; in this case, the highest trump in the trick takes the trick. The situation may arise where a player follows suit and plays trump at the same time; in this situation, count the trick as having been trumped, even if this happens on the first card played to the trick, and the player does not declare that suit as the lead.

Players may not lead either the trump suit or the cursed suit until those suits have been broken by another player playing the suit as part of following a trick, or as a result of being void in the led suit.

Players should book their tricks as they win them.

At the end of the hand, players score 1 point for each trick they took, and -1 point for each card in the cursed suit that they took. Net out the scores and keep track of each player's score.

The game ends when one player reaches -13 points. The player with the highest score wins.



# SOLO HEX

*a solitaire game for the decktet by tsilver33*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

## SETUP

Shuffle the Decktet thoroughly. Deal five cards face down into a pile, and another five cards to the right of that. Deal three cards face down below and slightly to the left of the first pile. Deal one card sideways face down, and then three more cards face down in the same pile (For a total of seven cards, the fourth one sideways.) Deal two other piles the same way, one to the right of the first one, so that is below and in between the top piles, and one one below and to the right of the top rightmost pile. Deal two more piles the same way as you dealt the first two (With five cards each.) under the three middle piles. Finally, turn the top card on each pile face up. The entire setup should come out in a hexagon shape.

Solo Hex

## GAME PLAY

The goal of the game is to combine all of the cards into one single pile, face up. Each turn, you may take one card, and move it onto an adjacent card that shares at least one of it's suits (Also move any face up cards under it with the move.). This will leave one card face down, turn it face up immediately. If you reveal a sideways card, that card must immediately 'jump' to an adjacent card that shares at least one of it's suits. If none of the surrounding cards share a suit, then you 'flip out' and the game is over. If any of your seven piles runs out of cards, you cannot move cards back into it. That pile is empty for the rest of the game. Be careful that you don't leave any piles stranded. If at any time, it becomes impossible to move any cards onto a adjacent card that shares at least one suit, the game is lost.

**The Excuse:** The excuse is a special card. Once revealed, the excuse cannot move onto any card at all. The excuse must be jumped onto from any other card. If the excuse is a sideways card, then it immediately jumps to the lowest numbered card next to it (If there are no numbered cards, just move it onto any card adjacent.)

**Victory:** If you combine all cards into a single pile, with all of them flipped face up, you win!



# SORCEROUS FUTURES

*An arcane commodity speculation game of bidding and bluffing, by Adam Blinkinsop and P. D. Magnus.*

You are sorcerous investors, speculating on the fates of various people and places. You might risk your sorcerous gravitas on the Forest and the Huntress, only to lose it all when a bad moon rises in the end. Or you might get a bargain on a Sailor and a Journey, striking it rich when your ship comes in on a favourable wave.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Excuse)

**Extra material:** poker chips or equivalent

Note that the rules are written for a four-player game. Untested options for three or five players are given at the end.

## SETUP

In addition to the Decktet, the game requires some way to track resources. You can use poker chips or paper game-money. The rules below treat the basic denomination as \$1, but this just means one of the lowest value chip.

Each player starts with \$100, and the winner is the player who has the most at the end. The rest of the chips (or whatever) form the *bank*.

Shuffle the basic deck and deal four cards face down to each player. Take two of these and looks at them, without showing them to the other players. You may pay \$3 to the bank in order to exchange one of your cards in hand with one of the face down cards. You may do this multiple times, as desired. Then the two cards on the table are removed from the game, and you keep the two cards in hand. They are kept secret until the end of the game<sup>1</sup>.

The cards you keep are *valuations*, and they will influence the value of item cards at the end of the game. You may not look at other players' valuations until the end of the game, but you may look at your own valuations at any time.

The two cards you did not keep should be set aside. Other players may not look at them, but they will not play any further role in the game.

Put the *Excuse* faceup in front of a randomly selected player.

## AUCTIONS

Deal five cards face up in the middle of the table. This represents the market of items which are available for purchase.

The player with the *Excuse* selects one of the five cards from the market and starts an auction. This player has the option of either of initially passing or making an opening bid. Then the player on their left must either pass or bid. The first player to bid may call any amount, but subsequent bids must be at least \$1 higher than the previous bid.

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<sup>1</sup>This bit is untested. In the prior version, players looked at all four cards and simply chose two to keep.

This continues, clockwise once around the table, until every player has either passed or bid. The player holding the *Excuse* has the final chance to pass or bid (even if they made an opening bid in the auction).

The player who bid the most pays their bid to the bank and puts the item card face up on the table in front of them. If every player passes, then the item card is discarded.

After the auction, the player with the *Excuse* passes it to the player on their left. Then that player selects a card from the market and starts an auction, following the same rules.

After four cards have been auctioned, there will only be one card left in the market. The player holding the *Excuse* must start an auction on the remaining card.

When there are no cards remaining in the market, five cards are dealt to form a new market of cards. The next player to start an auction may choose from any of these. This repeats until there have been four markets, at which point the deck will be exhausted.

Note that the first player to auction a card from a market will also be the player to auction the last card. Then the next player will auction the first and last card of the next market. Each player will get first pick from a market once per game.

## SELLING FORTUNES

Once all the cards have been auctioned, players sell all of the cards from in front of them.

**Face value:** Players collect money from the bank equal total ranks of *number cards* that they hold. No money is collected for Aces and Crowns at this time.

Example: Jeff purchased a 3, 3, 5, and 8 during the game. He collects \$19 from the bank.

**Suits:** Players then collect money from the bank for the suits of the cards they hold.

Aces pay the value of their suit.

Number cards pay the value of both of their suits.

Crowns pay *three times* the value of their suit.

It is easiest to handle all players payout for one suit before moving on to the next suit.

### Determining the value of each suit

All players reveal their valuation cards face up in the middle of the table.

If there are no cards of a given suit in the valuations, then that suit is worth \$0 (nothing).

If there is exactly one card of a given suit in the valuations, then that suit is worth the rank of that card. For this purpose, treat Aces as 1 and Crowns as 10.

If there is more than one card of a given suit in the valuations, then that suit is worth the *median* of the ranks of the cards.

Here is an easy way to determine the median: Consider only the valuation cards that have the suit in question. If there are three or more, set aside the highest and

lowest ranked of them. Keep doing that until you have just one or two left. If there is just one left, then the value of the suit is the rank of that remaining card. If there are two left, then the value is the average of the two ranks (add the ranks together, divide by two, and round up).

### The final tally

For a short match, stop after one game.

For a longer match, players keep their bankroll and play a series of three games.

In either case, the player with the most money at the end wins.

## AUCTION STRATEGY

At the beginning of the game, you know about one quarter of the valuations. You can learn about the other valuations in several ways. If other players bid heavily on some suits, then perhaps they put high cards of that suit in the valuations. As more cards appear in the market, you can infer more about the valuations by process of elimination; since all purchases are face up, you can look around the table to see which cards of a given suit are still unaccounted for.

The minimum value of a card is its rank (if it is a number) or zero (if it is an Ace or Crown). The maximum value of a card is 29 (a 9 with two suits that are each worth 10).

The maximum value of a Crown is 27; since the Crown can't be a valuation if it is a market item, the suit of a Crown item is worth at most 9.

## THREE OR FIVE PLAYERS

The rules above are written for four players. They have been playtested a bit. Here is how it would work with a different number of players.

For three players, add two random cards to valuations and set aside two random cards. Each market is four cards (rather than five).

For five players, add either the Pawns or Courts to the deck. Each market is four cards (rather than five).

## THE EXTENDED DECK

It is possible to play with the Pawns or Courts, but these rules are totally untested.

A Pawn or Court may not be kept as a valuation card. If a player is dealt a Pawn or Court in their initial four cards, they may reveal it and draw a replacement. Cards revealed in this way are shuffled back into the deck. (Note that a player may choose not to reveal a Pawn or Court, so as to discard it at the beginning.)

As a market item, a Pawn or Court pays out for all three of its suits at the end of the game.



# STAMP ALBUMS

*a game of building a better stamp collection than your competitor, by  
Roxanne Clark*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

**Extra material:** None

## SET UP

### Deck Set up

Using the full extended deck:

- a Pull out the Excuse and the “stamps” (the character cards) from the deck.
- b Shuffle the rest of the deck and then, still as a separate pile, the “stamps”.
- c Put the “stamps” at the bottom of the deck and then draw 8 cards from the top of the deck. Put this small deck to one side with the excuse on top of it.
- d Deal the remaining cards into 3 piles. Shuffle each separately.
- e Place each of the 4 piles on top of each other, with the deck topped by the excuse to the bottom.

### Table Set up

- f Deal 5 cards, face-up to form a row across the middle of the table.
- g Deal, face-down, 5 cards to each player. These cards form the player’s ‘hand’.
- h Each player views their own hand of cards and places any “stamp” card that they have into a row on their side of the table. (This row is referred to as their “shop” and so this step is referred to as “setting up shop”)

## GAME PLAY

1. The first player takes as many cards from the main deck as is necessary to make their hand size up to 5 cards.
2. Setup shop
3. The player may purchase as many cards as they can/want to but must purchase at least one item. Items may be purchased from any row on the table (see Purchasing). Spent cards go into a discard pile if bought from your own shop or the general market row in the centre but are paid to your opponent (even if it takes their hand size over 5 cards) if the cards are bought from their shop.

If the player cannot make even one purchase, using their current hand, they should show their hand to the other player to confirm that this is the case, discard their cards to the discard pile and draw another 5 cards from the main deck, beginning their turn again with step 2.

4. Play passes to the next player.

**The Excuse** The appearance of the excuse signals that no more “stamps” are available from the draw pile. Discard it and draw a replacement card from the draw pile immediately.

## Purchasing

Any card or combination of cards may be used to purchase a card on the table provided that they each match at least one of the suits on the desired card and that their total value at least equals the value of the card to be purchased.

*Example:* These cards 5  + 5  can purchase 9 

Crowns, Pawns and Courts all have a value of 10.

Aces cost 1 to buy but when used to buy other cards or stamps have no value in themselves but are added to a purchase in order to expand the choice of suits with which a card or stamp can be purchased.

*Example:* The sun ace used here adds in sun to the list of viable suits that can be used in the purchase of the huntress enabling the Castle to be used.  
3  + 7  + A  can purchase 

Once purchased a card is added to the player’s “Album” if it is a “stamp” or the player’s hand if it is not. Any card purchased from the central ‘general market’ row is immediately replaced by a card from the draw pile.

## ENDING THE GAME

The game finishes when either all of the “stamps” have been purchased or neither player has the resources to buy those that are left.

The winner is the player with the highest total value of stamps. In the event of a draw other assets in their hand can be taken into account.

# SUITCASES

*a Decktet game for two players and using a cribbage board, by David L. Van Slyke*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

**Extra Material:** Cribbage board and pegs

## SETUP

Randomly determine who is the dealer the first round; on subsequent rounds alternate who is the dealer. The dealer shuffles an extended Decktet and deals out six cards to each player. Then each player selects two cards to contribute to a set of four cards belonging to the dealer named the “crib”. Finally, the non-dealer cuts the remainder of the deck; the dealer completes the cut and turns over the top card.

## GAME PLAY

**Suit Casing** The non-dealer starts making the first “suit attempt”. A suit attempt is when players alternate setting cards face-up in front of them but cannot use a suit twice and thus may need to say “pass”. If your opponent passes but you can play additional cards into that suit attempt you must do so. As cards are played scoring events happen (see below). A special bonus of 1 point is given to the last player able to play in each suit attempt; the other player initiates the next suit attempt.

Note: Unlike traditional Cribbage, once the suit attempt’s sum passes 11 there is no reason to keep track of the sum.

Note: Like traditional Cribbage, consider consecutive cards played when looking for runs, pairs, and of-a-kinds. If you have a pair in your hand these will probably not be consecutive (unless your opponent passes so you can and do play the second directly after the first) and thus probably not scored until the next phase of “Cleaning Hands”.

Note: Like traditional Cribbage, there is a clean slate at the start of each suit attempt regarding pairs and runs.

**Cleaning Hands:** Both players pick up their hand of four cards and use it for a second rendition of scoring events (see below). The top card on the deck also counts for each hand, so these are really hands of five cards. The non-dealer evaluates his or her hand first. Then the dealer evaluates his or her hand, and then the crib.

**Scoring Events:** When scoring the Excuse has a rank of zero and no suit (useful with scoring events of sums of 11) and Pawns have no rank but three suits (irrelevant to runs and sums of 11 but valid for pairs and of-a-kinds). The following events score points:

- (a) sum of 11 (1 point)
- (b) pairs (2 points) so counting the combinations we also get: 3-of-a-kind is 6 points, 4-of-a-kind is 12 points, and 5-of-a-kind is 20 points

- (c) runs of three or more cards (# of cards)
- (d) a complete suit-meld containing all six suits (6 points)

Note: As with traditional Cribbage, all combinations of scoring events are considered. Thus a hand of cards containing a 4, a 5, and all three 6's is worth a total of at least 24 points as follows:

- (a) 3 points for sums of 11 (the 5 with each 6)
- (b) 6 points for 3-of-a-kind (the three 6's)
- (c) 9 points for three three-card runs (4, 5, and each 6)
- (d) 6 points for a complete meld (the three 6's) and depending upon the 4 and 5 more complete melds may be possible

**Victory:** Play rounds of dealing, suit casing, and cleaning hands until a player reaches or passes 121 points to immediately win. Use a Cribbage board to keep score.

Note: Because the game is significantly influenced by luck, traditional Cribbage also uses meta-scoring. A player is skunked if at 61 to 90 points when the opponent wins, and double skunked if at 60 points or less. Continuing this tradition is optional but can be fun. If used by family members try agreeing before playing who, if first skunked, will have to do a certain household chore or owe the opponent a foot rub.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

(Normally used)

## VARIANTS

It is suggested to allow “muggins” in which a player scores any points overlooked by his or her opponent. If you use muggins then also including the following random events as 2-point scoring events for the dealer keeps players alert: “Sky High” (top card on the deck is the Excuse), “So Low” (top card on the deck is a Pawn), and “Royal Clique” (top card on the deck both last round and this round is a Crown).

# SUN BID

a 2–4 player auction game for the Decktet with an innovative scoring system designed for the double-suited cards, by Greg James.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** a way to keep score; a second full Decktet required for 3 or 4 player game

## SETUP

**2 Player Game** Separate all of the Sun suited cards from the rest of the full Decktet and then remove *The Bard* and the Sun suited Pawns and Courts. Each player randomly receives a stack of bidding cards based on the table below.

The Ace of Suns is placed face up on the table at the start of the game. The remaining 30 cards are shuffled and placed face down next to the Ace of Suns and comprise the auction deck. The player holding *The Pact* is the start player and the game begins.

**3–4 Player Game** Set up the bidding deck as described for the 2-player game, but include *The Bard*, *The Window*, *The Lightkeeper* and *The Harvest*. Each player randomly receives a stack of bidding cards based on the table below.

To form the auction deck, use the remaining 30 cards from the first Decktet as described above. Then, remove all of the Sun suited cards from the second Decktet. These 30 cards are shuffled in with the first auction deck so that 60 cards are up for auction. The player holding *The Bard* goes first and the game begins.

The bidding cards are separated and compiled in this way:

2 Player	3 Player	4 Player
9–6–5–2	Bard–8–5–2	Bard–6–2
8–7–4–3	Window–9–6–3	Window–7–3
	Lightkeeper–Harvest–7–4	Lightkeeper–8–4
		Harvest–9–5

Each player randomly receives one of these sets of bidding cards. Bidding cards are placed face up on the table in front of their owners at the beginning of each round so that all of the cards are visible.

## GAME PLAY

The game is played over a series of 3 rounds with scoring taking place at the end of each round.

## PLAYER ACTIONS

Each turn, a player may either 1) flip a new card and add it to the auction pool, 2) call an auction or 3) play a Pawn or Court.

## 1. Flip a new card

If the card flipped up creates a situation where the pool is filled, then there is a forced auction and the lead player will bid last. He places The Excuse (or some other token if you prefer) in front of him to indicate that he will bid last. If the card flipped does not trigger an auction, then the lead passes to the left.

**Forced Auction** In a 2-player game, a forced auction takes place when the 4th card enters the pool. In the 3-player and 4-player game, a forced auction takes place when the 5th card enters the pool.

No player is required to bid in a forced auction. If all players pass, the cards in this auction are discarded.

## 2. Call an auction

If the lead player chooses to call an auction rather than flip a card, he places The Excuse (or some other token if you prefer) in front of him to indicate that he will bid last. Note that there need not be any cards in the auction pool for a player to call an auction. The Sun card may be valuable enough in itself to that player for him to consider calling an auction for it. Bidding goes around the clock starting with the player on his left. Players may only bid once. If all players pass, then the player who initiated the auction is obliged to bid.

**Auction and Bidding Rules** Sun suited cards follow their usual rank order for the purpose of bidding – Ace, 2–9, ♠, ♣, ♠. The exception is that two Pawns are used as bidding cards and the game requires one to rank higher than the other. The mnemonic to help remember the ranking for the Pawns is that the Sun is in the top position on *The Lightkeeper*, so it is “higher” than the Sun on *The Harvest*.

If a player chooses to bid, he selects one of his face up Sun cards and pushes it forward to indicate his bid. All subsequent bids must be higher than the previous bid and the card with the highest value wins the auction.

The winner of the auction takes all of the cards from the auction pool into his take and then exchanges his face up bidding card with the Sun card above the auction pool. The Sun card won in the auction is then placed face down next to his other Sun cards and will not be available until the next round. Sun cards played in losing bids are returned to their owners face up and are available for the next auction. Cards in player’s takes are also public information.

Play then passes to the player on the lead player’s left.

*Note: When a player has expended all of his face up bidding cards, he is obliged to sit out the remainder of the round.*

**Ace Rules** A player who wins an Ace in an auction may suffer a penalty. All cards including the Ace are placed in the winning player’s take at the end of the auction. The player must then choose one card of the Ace’s suit and discard it along with the Ace. If the Ace is the only card of its suit in a player’s take, then only it is discarded.

## 3. Play a Pawn or Court

A Pawn or Court in a player’s take may be played in order to score a card from the pool, provided that the two cards share a suit. E.g., *The Rite* ♠♠♠♠ may be played

to score a card in the pool that has a Moon, Leaf or Wyrn. That card is added to the player's take and the Pawn/Court is discarded for the remainder of the round.

## END OF ROUND

A round ends when either 1) the last Sun card has been played or 2) the draw deck is depleted.

1. In some rounds, the draw deck will not be depleted and only one player will have a Sun card face up in front of him. This player may continue flipping cards until he wishes to take the auction pool with his Sun (obeying the forced auction rule, of course). He may also wish to pass on a full auction pool and begin a new auction pool (provided that there are still cards remaining in the draw deck). Ultimately, this player will end the round when the draw deck is depleted and then scoring will take place as described above.
2. Alternately, a round will end in this way: A player will flip over the last card in the draw pile and add it to the pool. If this last card flipped fills the pool, an auction will take place as described above. If it isn't, the next player (who still has a bidding card) may choose to call the final auction or pass. If he passes, the cards in the pool are discarded and the round ends.

Sun Bid

## START A NEW ROUND

After scoring a round, all bidding cards are turned face up, all of the auction cards are gathered, shuffled and a new round begins with the player holding The Bard (The Pact in a 2-player game) as the new start player.

## ENDGAME AND TIEBREAKER

The game ends after the third round is scored and the player with the highest score is the winner. In the event of a tie, the player holding the highest total of Suns at game end is the winner.

## SCORING RULES

Scoring is determined in this sequence of 4 steps:

### 1. Highest value in Suns – 5 points

At the end of the round, all bidding cards are flipped face up and their values are summed, using these values for the numberless cards:

01 – *Ace of Suns*

10 – *The Harvest* 🌱🌿🌾🌻

11 – *The Lightkeeper* 🌱🌿🌾🌻🌙

12 – *The Window* 🌱🌿🌾🌻🌙

13 – *The Bard* 🎵🌱

The player with the highest total of Suns scores 5 points.

## 2. Pawns & Courts – 3 points each

Each Pawn or Court in a player's take scores 3 points.

## 3. $x$ of a Kind – $x$ times 2 points

Next, players arrange the cards in their takes into piles which share the same rank. Each card which shares rank scores 2 points. e.g. A pair is worth 4 points, 4 of a kind is worth 8 points. Note that only Crowns and numbered cards can be scored in this manner – no Pawns or Courts.

## 4. Binding cards in sequences – 1 point per card

Finally, players arrange their cards by suit and score one point for each card that shares a suit and is in sequence. It is advisable to score one suit at a time to ensure that all possible points are gleaned. A Crown may be used in scoring as a wild card of its suit as one value only to form a sequence.

### 2 player Example:

*Author* 2 ♠️

*Journey* 3 ♠️

*Huntress* ♠️

*Forest* 5 ♠️

**4 points**

### 3 or 4 player Example:

Duplicated cards that are in sequence score once each:

*Author* 2 ♠️

*Author* 2 ♠️

*Journey* 3 ♠️

*Huntress* ♠️

*Forest* 5 ♠️

**5 points**

## VARIANTS

For the 2 player game, the auction deck can also be sorted this way: 9–6–4–3 and 8–7–5–2.

For a less “Ra-like” and more “Decktet-like” bidding structure, P.D. Magnus has suggested this variant: Treat the Pawns as being of equal value, with the second Pawn played during an auction being the winner. This would provide some unique situational tactics that some players may enjoy. With this variant, the ♠️, ♠️ and ♠️ cards would all have a numeric value of 10 for the purpose of determining the end of round highest Sun score.

## COMMENTS

The key to scoring a lot of points is to ensure that cards in your take score more than once. Knowledge of the card distribution is helpful in this regard. As all of the Sun cards have been stripped from the auction deck, they do not score as pairs and sequences. This makes Leaves the tallest suit with no voids, followed by Waves which is only missing the 5. Wyrms (2 and 6) and Knots (3 and 7) are missing two cards and three Moon cards (4, 8 and 9) are absent. Crowns are helpful as they can bind up a stranded card to pick up an extra 2 points.

It is choice to have two pairs in your take that are also in sequence. The most powerful combo is both pairs of 8s and 9s, as these 4 cards will score a total of 12 points if you can pull it off!

*Note: I added the Pawns/Courts as God tiles after the first run of playtests and haven't played with this rule yet. It should work fine, though.*



# SUZERAIN

*A trick taking game about a sibling rivalry for ultimate control over a kingdom for 2 players by Kenny VenOsdel.*

Growing up with a twin is no laughing matter. It's hard to concentrate on the historical essays you are reading when the sound of maniacal laughing is always floating through the windows. You never understood why your sibling liked burning ants with a looking glass anyway. Those creatures are much more interesting alive and under your study.

Now, to make matters worse, you are both being set up with your own dominion! Mother should know that you may be ready for that but your brother's kingdom is only going to suffer! Didn't you hear him say "I think I'll need a bigger lens" as he gazed greedily at his subjects during your joint coronation? You can't let this happen. You can't let *him* rule. . .

## **Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

*Suzerain* is a 2 player trick taking game about a sibling rivalry for ultimate control over a kingdom. Both players start with nearly identical hands and will play tricks to attempt to claim the best cards. Cards that are played and cards that are gained are placed into a player's private discard pile. When a player's hand gets exhausted they pick up their discard pile and it becomes their new hand.

## SETUP

Remove the aces from the deck and randomly deal each player 3 of them. One player starts with the 2, 3, and 4 that contain a Moon. The other player takes the 2, 3, and 4 that contain a Wyrn. These are their starting hands, they begin with all six available to use. Return the other cards to the deck and shuffle it. Place it near the middle of the table and reveal the top two cards of the deck. The non-dealer leads the first trick.

## GAME PLAY

Each turn players will play to tricks. A trick consists of each player playing a single card to the center of the table. The player who has the lead will play the first card and the other player must follow one of the suits shown on that card if possible. It is not necessary to follow both. If they cannot follow suit they may play any card but they will not win the trick no matter that card's rank. The player who played the higher card (if the suits were followed) wins the trick.

Regardless of who won the trick, whichever player played the highest ranked card leads the next trick. It is therefore possible to not follow suit but play a higher rank card, losing this trick but leading the next. If both cards are the same rank the player who lead the current trick leads again.

## WINNING A TRICK

The player who won the trick must claim one of the face up cards or a random card from the top of the deck, and place it in their discard pile. Discard piles are kept face down and are not open information but you may look at your own at any time. When a face down card is claimed, the player claiming it may look at it first but does not need to reveal it to the other player.

## LOSING A TRICK

The player who lost the trick must claim one of the face up cards and place it in their discard pile. They may not choose to take a random card. After this they may discard 1 or 2 cards from their hand. They do not need to show the other player what they are discarding but should communicate how many cards they are discarding, even if it is zero.

## WINNING THE PAWNS AND COURTS

If a player claims a Pawn or a Court it gets set to the side, it does not enter their deck. Anytime after taking a Pawn or Court (including immediately) they may remove a single card from their hand that shares at least one suit with the Pawn or Court. This card may be kept secret if a player wishes. Any cards removed this way are returned to a players deck at the end of the game for scoring.

## CLEAN UP AND BEDRAWING

After both players have taken their card they make sure to place all cards gained and any played that trick into their discard piles. The player who lost the trick must discard 1 or 2 cards or announce that they do not wish to discard anything. They need not reveal the discarded cards to the other player. Next, turn over cards from the deck until there are 2 face up cards again. If a player has no cards left in hand at this point they pick up their entire discard pile; it is their new hand and play continues as before.

## END OF THE GAME AND SCORING

The game ends when the final two cards in the deck are claimed. Players then reveal their decks, sort them by rank, and score points. All ranked cards from 5 to Crown that you have a majority in are worth 1 point. If you have all the cards of that rank you score 3 points. For example: There are 3 cards of rank 5. If you own two of them you will score 1 point, if you own all 3 you score 3.

Pawns and Aces are scored together. Each of your aces is worth one point for every Pawn you have that shares a suit with it. Therefore, aces can be worth 0–2 points.

Courts are scored with 2's, 3's, and 4's. For every suit you have on a 2–4 card that matches a Court you score 1 point. If a card matches 2 suits on a Court it is worth 2 points. Therefore, each card of rank 2–4 can be worth a maximum of 4 points.

The player with the highest score wins. If tied, whoever has more 5's wins.

# VARIANTS

None yet but I'm toying with the idea of a few major changes to the trick playing to make different versions of the game you could play. I won't be doing any work on them until this base version is finished though. Here's the ideas as spoilers and to keep them recorded in case I forget what they were.

**1. Escalation Mode** allows multiple cards to be played to a trick as long as they share a single suit between them. In this version only the winner gains a card but whenever you pick up your discard pile the other person draws a random card and puts it in their discard pile. This creates tension between winning a trick and playing your hand out too soon. It would possibly need suit restrictions removed or at least altered.

**2. Deckbuilding** Players have a hand size of 3–6 (undecided on amount until playtests can happen) and will redraw only when they play or discard their last card. When you gain a card it gets placed into your draw pile. Before you draw you always shuffle that pile. If the draw pile runs out and you still need to draw to reach your hand size you shuffle your discard pile and put it in your draw. This obviously only works since you usually discard 1–2 cards when you lose a trick. The thing that I think makes it potentially interesting is that gained cards will be drawn right away but then get diluted into the starting hand eventually.



# TERRAPIN

*a family of betting games for 2 or more players, by P.D. Magnus; score points, avoid Turtle Butt*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra Material:** coins/chips

## INTRODUCTION

Terrapin is a family of betting games. All Terrapin games use the same basic rules for ranking possible hands. Western and Temptation Terrapin play well with up to 7 players; Provincial and Liar's play better with 4.

To play, you'll need to provide chips or a substitute - glass beads, pretzels, pennies, nickels, electrum pieces, or some other countable token. Don't bet serious money, and don't come crying to me if you lose your last glass bead playing Terrapin.

## SCORING

A hand of cards is 'Turtle Butt' when it includes at least one instance of each of the six Decktet suits. Since the numbered cards have two suits each, it is possible to get Turtle Butt with as few as three cards. Turtle Butt is worth no points and nullifies any value that would otherwise have been in the cards. If you have a Turtle Butt and reveal your cards, you cannot possibly win the pot.

If you do not have Turtle Butt, then you score the total of any points for pairs, sets, or straights in your hand.

Each pair is worth five points. Additional Aces or Crowns are worth five points each. Note that three of a number rank (such as three 7s) will be Turtle Butt and so make the whole hand worthless.

You also score for the longest straight in your hand: a series of cards in rank order, with Aces being below 2 and Crowns above 9. A straight is worth two points for each card after the first; that is, the length of the straight *minus* one, *times* two.

*Example:* A four card straight Ace-2-3-4 is worth 6 ( $= (4 - 1) \times 2$ ).

Note that you may only score for the longest straight in your hand. Additional straights, even if they are of the same length, do not provide additional points.

## WESTERN TERRAPIN

Each player antes one chip into the pot. The dealer gives two cards face down to each player. There is then a betting round, starting with the player on the dealer's left.

Betting rounds work in the usual way: The first player bets or folds. After someone has bet, subsequent players either match the bet, raise, or fold. Bet and raise limits should be agreed upon by the group. (We play with a raise limit of 5 or 10 chips. You could play a no-limit tournament, if that's your thing.) The player who bet or raised most recently is called the 'last aggressive player.'

After the betting round, three cards are dealt face up in the middle of the table. If these three cards on their own make Turtle Butt, they are set aside and another three cards are dealt. Another betting round ensues, beginning with the last aggressive player.

Starting with the last aggressive player, each player has the choice to either take a card or stand. If a player takes a card, it is dealt face down. Continuing around the table, players who took a card may take a second, and so on. This continues until either every player has decided to stand or the deck is exhausted.

There is a final betting round, beginning with the last aggressive player. If at any time during the hand all but one player has folded, then the remaining player wins and takes the pot.

If more than one player remains after the last betting round, there is a showdown. Remaining players reveal their hands, beginning with the last aggressive player. Your hand is formed by all of your cards along with the three shared cards. If your hand has all six Decktet suits in it, it cannot win. If it has five or fewer different suits, calculate the score as above. The highest scoring hand wins. (If someone has already shown cards that can beat your hand, you may opt to not show your cards when it comes around to you during the showdown.)

Note that a hand with Turtle Butt cannot win a showdown. If every player in the showdown has Turtle Butt, then the pot remains in play, players reante, and a new hand begins.

If multiple players in the showdown have the same highest score, they divide the pot as evenly as possible. Any remainder stays in the pot for the next hand.

TURTLE BUTT	
Turtle Butts at least one instance of each suit	
	
<b>Aces &amp; Crowns</b>	
PAIR	1 point
THREE-OF-A-KIND	5 pts
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	10 pts
FIVE-OF-A-KIND	20 pts
<b>Numbered cards</b>	
PAIR	card rank
<b>Runs</b>	
STRAIGHT TWO OR MORE	length of
CARDS LONG	longest run

## PROVINCIAL TERRAPIN

Everybody antes one chip. Each player is dealt three cards face down. Two cards are dealt face up to the middle of the table. After looking at his hand and the shared cards, the dealer decides on a stake. The stake must be at least one chip and should be limited by common agreement. (A stake limit of three makes for a relatively conservative game. Five allows for runaway pots.) The dealer announces the stake.

Each player then secretly puts either zero, one, or two chips in their hand. These chips are used to indicate the play they intend to make. They hold out their clenched fist to indicate that they are ready, and players then simultaneously reveal their chips. Zero chips in your hand, an empty fist, means that you *fold*. One chip, you *pay to play*. Two chips, you *call*.

**Folding (zero chips)** Set down your hand. You are out for the round. If everyone folds, then the hand ends without a winner; the pot remains in play, players reante, and a new hand begins.

**Paying to play (one chip)** Every player who paid to play must put a number of chips in the pot equal to the stake. Beginning on the dealer's left and proceeding clockwise around the table, players who paid to play must either discard or draw

one card. (You must do one or the other if you've signalled one chip, but you may not do both.)

If you *discard*, choose one card from your hand and put it face up on the table. Start a discard pile if there is not one already; otherwise, put the card on the top of the discard pile.

If you *draw*, you may either take the top card of the discard pile (if there is one) or the top card from the deck.

**Calling (two chips)** Every player who calls must pay *twice* the stake to the pot.

If any player calls, then there is a showdown. Note that players who signal one chip (pay to play) must draw or discard *before* the showdown. The showdown begins with the player who called. If multiple players called, it starts with the one closest to the dealer's left.

In the showdown, your hand is your private cards plus the two shared cards. The highest scoring Turtle-Butt-free hand takes the pot.

If nobody called, repeat the process. And again as long as people are just paying to play. The hand continues until either someone calls, only one player remains, or everyone folds.

Here are some assorted points about strategy in Provincial:

- You may not simply pass or abort your action. If you pay to play, you must either discard or draw. If you call, then you may not draw or discard before the showdown.
- After the dealer declares the stake, it is fixed for that hand. The only way to fatten the pot is to lure other players into playing longer. As you do, you'll have to be adding or shedding cards from your hand.
- If the stake is low, then there are pressures to make the hand go on. Players with weak hands can afford to draw several times as they build up their hands. Players with strong hands may want to let things go a while so as to build up the pot.
- If the stake is high, then there are pressures to either fold or call quickly.
- Sometimes you should discard something that is actually good for your hand. For example, suppose your hand is 3,4,5,9,9 with five of the six suits. This is 9 points as it stands (5 for the pair, 4 for the straight). You pay to play, so as to fatten the pot, but another player calls. Before the showdown, you must either draw or discard. If you draw, you might get the sixth suit; that would give you Turtle Butt and kill your hand. So you should discard the 3 or the 5. You'll still have a respectable 7 points at the showdown (two less, since the straight is shorter).

## TEMPTATION TERRAPIN

Each player antes three chips into the pot. The dealer gives two cards face down to each player and deals three cards face up in the middle of the table. If these three cards on their own make Turtle Butt, they are set aside and another three cards are dealt. Players may look at their face down cards.

Starting on the dealer's left and going clockwise around the table, each player has the opportunity to take another face down card. To do so, they must pay one additional chip into the pot.

After the dealer has decided whether or not to take a card: Starting on the dealer's left and going clockwise around the table, each player has the choice of taking *another* face down card. This time it requires paying *two* chips to the pot.

This repeats, with the next card costing three chips and so on - each additional card costing one more chip than the previous one. It ends either when no players want additional cards or the deck runs out of cards.

A showdown ensues. Your hand is all your private cards plus the three shared cards. The highest scoring Turtle-Butt-free hand takes the pot.

If everyone has Turtle Butt, then no one wins the pot. All chips remain in the pot for the next hand. Players ante again, the player on the dealer's left becomes the dealer, and a new hand is dealt.

## LIAR'S TERRAPIN

Each player antes a number of chips equal to half the number of players, rounded up.

There is only one hand of cards, and only one player can see it at a time. You need to bluff the next player into either taking the hand or challenging you when the hand really has points in it. If you're challenged when the hand goes Turtle Butt, you're out.

The first player draws a hand of three cards, looks at them, and then may draw additional cards. Further cards are drawn one at a time, and the player may look at each one before deciding to draw another. When done drawing, the first player announces a score of one or more. The next player must either challenge the announcement or accept it.

If the next player challenges, then the first player shows the entire hand. If the cards score as many points as the player announced and are not Turtle Butt, then the second player (the challenger) is out of the game. If the cards are Turtle Butt or score fewer points than were claimed, the first player (the one challenged) is out of the game. After a challenge, the deck is shuffled and the next player a new hand. The next player will be the challenger (if the challenge went well for them) or the next player after that (if it did not).

If the second player accepts, then the first player gives the hand to the second player. After looking at the hand, they may discard any number of cards. After discarding, they may draw cards. When done drawing, they must announce a score greater than the score claimed for the hand by the previous player.

The next player then either challenges or accepts this announcement. Every time a player goes out, each remaining player takes one chip from the pot. Play continues until only one player remains. The final player takes all the chips remaining at the end.

# THIRD WHEEL

*a trick-taking game, by Kenny VenOsdel.*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** None

Third Wheel is a game for 2 people who want a 3rd to leave. Successful collusion against a third party member can convey the message that they are no longer wanted and often results in them leaving, and rather quickly at that. It has been used for exactly this purpose so effectively that in Jacynth simply suggesting a game of Third Wheel has become a rather impolite way to ask someone to go home. As a result the game is often suggested, but very rarely played.

## OVERVIEW

Third Wheel is a trick taking game for exactly 3 players where 2 players (referred to as Setters) are always set against a rotating dealer (referred to as Dealer). The 2 Setters will get to call trump and hi/low, and then the dealer must bid a number of tricks they will take, with the goal being to make their bid exactly. The other players will get the most points for setting the dealer, but the player who took fewer tricks will usually do the best.

## SETUP

Choose a dealer, have them shuffle the basic Decktet and deal 11 cards to each player. The remaining 3 form The Wheel and are set to the side. Going clockwise from the dealer the first Setter (S1) calls a trump suit and the second (S2) calls the hand either low or high. If a trump card is present in a trick it will beat all non-trump cards. If more than one trump is present the best one will win it. In a high hand, the higher rank cards are always better. In a low hand the lower rank cards are always better.

*Example:* Say trump is Wyrms and the Ace of Wyrms, 4 of Leaves/Waves, and 9 of Wyrms/Waves are present. In a high hand the 9 of Wyrms/Waves is the best trump and would win the trick. In a low hand the Ace of Wyrms is the best card and would win the trick.

Finally the Dealer must bid a number of tricks that they intend to take. Before making their bid the dealer may first take The Wheel, add it to their hand, and then discard any 3 cards facedown. If they do this they must bid at least 6 or exactly 0 for the hand.

## GAME PLAY

**Playing a hand** Players will play to tricks consisting of each player adding exactly one card to the center of the table in clockwise order with the player who played the highest rank card (or lowest rank in a low hand) winning the trick and then

leading the next. One of the lead suits must be followed if able. Trump cards are considered the highest rank cards even if they were played based upon their other suit.

*Example:* If Knots are trump and you play the Ace of Wyrms, I may follow with the 4 of Wyrms and Knots. Even though I followed the Wyrms the Knot on my card counts as trump.

If trump is led it must be followed with trump if able. If a player cannot follow suit and does not play a trump card their card loses the trick regardless of its rank.

The dealer leads the first trick but each subsequent trick is led by the player who won the previous one. This continues until all cards have been played. Players then score points for the tricks and if the game is not over another hand is played. For each new hand the dealer rotates clockwise.

**Scoring a hand** There are 3 possibilities when scoring: the dealer makes their bid exactly, misses their bid, or goes over their bid.

1. If the dealer made their bid exactly they score points equal to their bid plus one point for every trick taken by the Setter who took the most tricks. The Setter who took the fewest tricks scores one point for each trick they took. Exceptions: If the dealer makes a 0 bid, they score exactly 11 points, one for every trick in the hand. If the dealer makes an 11 bid they score 22.

*Example:* D bid and took 5 tricks. S1 took 4 tricks and S2 took 2. D1 scores 9 (5+4), S1 scores 0, and S2 scores 2.

2. If the dealer doesn't make the bid they score nothing. The Setters each score points equal to the dealer's bid. Additionally, the Setter with fewer tricks scores one point for each trick they took.

*Example:* D bid 5 but took 3. S1 took 2 and S2 took 6. D scores 0, S1 scores 7 (5+2), S2 scores 5.

3. If the dealer overshoots the bid they score points equal to their bid only. The Setter who took the fewest tricks scores 1 point for every trick the other Setter took, and 1 point for every trick that the dealer took over their bid. Note: In some provinces the dealer instead loses 1 point for each overtrick. So a bid of 4 that took 6 would score 2 points only.

Design Note: In keeping with the above design note this may need to be changed such that the Setter with fewer tricks scores their own tricks plus the overtricks.

*Example:* D bid 4 but took 7. S1 took 1, S2 took 3. D scores 4, S1 scores 6 (1+3), S2 scores 0.

Note: If the Setters ever tie they both score half, rounded down, of the points for those tricks.

**End of Game** Continue playing hands until everyone has been the dealer an agreed upon number of times (2? 3?) or at least one player reaches a certain point threshold (33?). The player with the most points is the winner.

# THRICEWISE

*a fast paced game of careful timing for 2-5 players by P.D. Magnus*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** a scorepad

**Summary of the game:** Every turn, you add one card to the grid. You score a point each time your card makes three in a row. Threesomes must be in rank order, all be of the same rank, or share a suit symbol.

## SETUP

Deal three cards to each player.

With 2 or 4 players, deal four cards face up to form a 2x2 grid. With 3 or 5 players, deal six cards face up to form a 2x3 grid.

## GAME PLAY

At the beginning of each turn, every player selects one card from their hand and places it face down in front of them. Once everyone has made a selection, cards are revealed.

Provided all the cards are of different ranks, players may place their cards in increasing order of rank. A player with an Ace would go first, then a player with a two, and so on; a player with a Crown places last.

If two or more players play cards of the same rank, their cards are *deferred*. Leave deferred cards are left face up on the table; they may be played in a later turn. Any players whose cards are not deferred play normally, lowest rank first.

When you play a card, you may place it adjacent to any card in the grid (orthogonally or diagonally). You may not play a card on top of another card.

**Scoring:** If you play a card that makes three in a row (either orthogonally or diagonally) then you score points. The three cards may be a *flush* (three cards that share a suit symbol), a *set* (three cards of *the same rank*), or a *straight* (three cards in rank order). You may score for multiple times if your card makes threesomes in different directions or of different kinds.

Each threesome is worth the rank of the lowest number card of the three. Aces and Crowns are not number cards, so a threesome is worth as few as 2 or as many as 9 points. Since three Crowns or three Aces have no number card, these sets are worth no points.

**The edges of the grid:** If the grid of cards is already six cards wide, then cards may not be played to make it any wider. Similarly, if the grid is six cards tall, then cards may not be played to make it taller. Until the grid reaches six cards in a direction, cards may be played to extend it on either side. As a result, the starting cards may ultimately be anywhere in the grid: in the center, on a side, or in a corner.

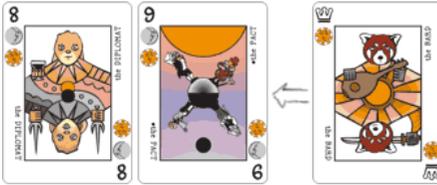
**Deferred cards:** If you have deferred cards on the table when you are able to play, play them before playing your new card. If you have multiple deferred cards, they must be played in the order that they were deferred: earliest cards first.

**Drawing cards:** After everyone has played their card (or set it aside because it was deferred) each player draws a card if there are any left in the deck. If there are not enough cards left for everyone to get one, then nobody draws.

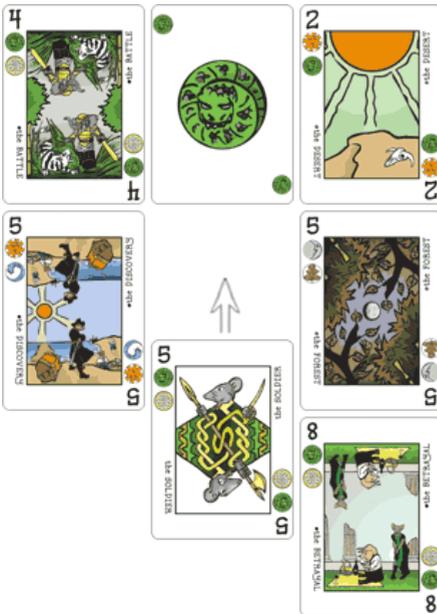
**Game end:** Ordinarily, the game continues until the cards fill a 6x6 grid and ends immediately when the 36th card is played. If players have deferred cards in the final turns or if the card do not deal out evenly, then the game ends after the turn in which players play the last cards from their hands.

## EXAMPLES

*Example:* You play with the and already in place. It is worth 8 for the plus 8 for the 8-9- straight; a total of 16 points.



*Example:* You play the Soldier () with the other cards as shown below. You score 4 for the , 4 for the , and 5 for the set of fives; a total of 13 points. Note that both flushes use the same cards (the 4-5-8) but they make a flush in both suits.



# TIGHTWAD

*an avoid-winning-the-last-trick trick-taking game based on the traditional "Cucumber", by Anders Bentsen*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** None

Ah, finally back at The Mad Badger, after a long and profitable day of questing and looting. Now it's time to unwind with a few dozen tankards of ale, while bragging of the day's heroic bravery. But only a fool spends all his loot paying for drinks. No, a crafty adventurer, such as yourself, always makes sure someone else gets stuck with the tab at the end of the night.

Tightwad is a trick-taking game for the basic Decktet, in which you do not want to win the last trick. Each trick represents a round of drinks, and whoever orders the last round also picks up the tab.

Tightwad

## SETUP

Randomly chose a dealer, who then deals each player a seven card hand. Set the rest of the cards aside.

If there are more than 5 players in the game, an additional basic Decktet is needed. Just shuffle the two basic Decktets together.

## GAME PLAY

- The player to the left of the dealer starts the first trick by playing a card to the center of the table. This card controls the trick for now.
- Going clockwise around the table, the other players each play a card, until everyone has played one card to the trick.
- Cards played must be either equal or higher in rank than the card currently controlling the trick, or be the lowest ranked card the player has in hand. Aces rank 1, crowns 10.
- A played card takes control of the trick if it is higher in rank **and** shares at least one suit with the card currently controlling the trick. Put this new controlling card on top of the old controlling card in the center of the table.
- An ace always takes control of a trick if the card currently controlling the trick has its suit. Note that any card with the ace's suit will take control of the trick afterwards.
- The card that controls the trick when everyone has played one card wins the trick. Whoever played this card leads the next trick.

*Example:* It's a four player game. Steve leads a trick by playing *The Soldier* (5♣♣), this card controls the trick for now. Dylan then plays *The Calamity* (♣♣) thereby taking control of the trick. Valerie must now either play another ♣, a matching ace (ace of ♣), or her lowest card. She plays *The Origin* (2♣♣). Lastly Brandon plays the ace of ♣, winning the trick.

# SCORING

- The player who wins the last trick loses the round, and keeps the winning card on the table in front of him as a penalty. A card is worth its rank in penalty points. Penalty cards are not removed until the end of the game.
- The player on the old dealer's left is the new dealer, and another round is played. It may happen that there are not enough cards left in the deck to deal each player seven cards. If this is the case, just deal as many cards as possible to each player, making sure everyone gets the same number of cards.
- The first player to reach 10 or more penalty points loses the game.

# TINKER, SAILOR, SOLDIER, SPY

*a game of recruiting team members and gaining experience before adventuring through the world, by mrichey.*

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory

**Extra material:** 36 suit chips, 6 of each suit

You are the lowly tinker (the Excuse). A strange wizard has charged you, the Sailor, the Soldier, and a Spy (the Diplomat) with defeating an evil that has taken over the world. He gave you 36 magic amulets (suit chips) for your journey. Your company of four will recruit new members and master events before leaving on your adventure ridding each location of evil.

## SETUP

In the beginning your hand consists solely of the Excuse, the Sailor, the Soldier, and the Diplomat. All other personalities (11 cards) go into the personality pile. The event cards (including the Market, 11 cards) go into an event pile next to the personality pile. The Aces are placed in their own pile. The remaining cards are all location cards (including the Origin and the End) and go into a location pile.

## GAME PLAY

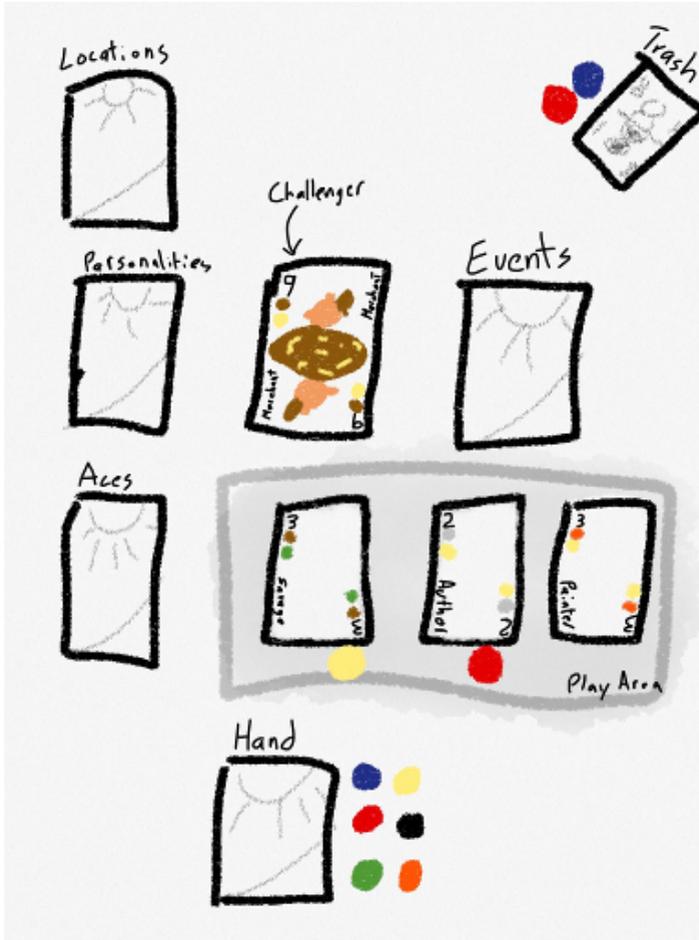
### Round 1: Recruiting and experiences

Draw the top personality card and the top event card. Look at them and then decide which one your group needs more and trash the other, it's now out of the game forever. The chosen card is now the challenge card. You defeat the evil spells cast on the personalities or gain knowledge by mastering an event by having the sum of your played cards and suit chips be equal or higher than the chosen card. Place the chosen card face up in the challenger position. You can choose to quit fighting and trash the challenge card at any time after your first card is played thus not gaining a team member or knowledge. You get one "free" mandatory play. Each play after that costs one suit chip, but the suit chip counts toward your sum for that suit. If you play a suit chip you must play a card. When you've beaten the challenge card you add it to you discard pile. When you've gone through your hand, add an Ace to your discard pile, reshuffle, and work your way through your deck. Every time you reshuffle, you must add an Ace to you hand (this represents your group's additional weariness from adventuring). When you've worked through the personality and event piles move on to round two.

### Round 2: The journey.

Work your way through the locations of the world the same way you beat the challengers. You must defeat evil in every location to win, you cannot lose a challenge against a place. Locations are not added to your your hand after you defeat the evil magic there, you just move on to the next location. Continue to add an Ace every time you go through your hand, until they run out. The game ends when you can no longer play (out of suit chips, but need to draw more cards

to remove evil magic from location) or when you've made it successfully through each location (thus removing evil from the whole world).



**Note:** In the image above, the player drew the Merchant and an event card. The player looked at both cards and decided to play against the merchant. The player took the top card off his hand pile and put it (the Savage 3) into play (this was a mandatory play). The Savage's 3 count towards the goal (the Merchants 9). The player decided to continue trying to relieve the Merchant from his evil curse, so he played 1 suit chip which allows him to draw another card and brings his sum up to 4. The player draws the next card from his hand and he puts it into play. This time it is the Author 2. This brings the player's points up to 6 total (the Savage's 3 + the 1 suit chip + the Author's 2) which is still not enough to remove the curse. The player decides to play one suit chip (bringing his total to 7) and draws from his hand. He draws the Painter 3 bringing his total to 10. He has removed the evil curse from the Merchant. He trashes the two suit chips he played that turn (they never return to the game), he takes the Merchant, the Savage, the Author, and the Painter and places them in a face up pile next to his

hand. When his hand runs out, he shuffles an ace into the stack, and it becomes his hand.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

Pawns are valued at 10, Courts 11, and Crowns are 12. The Excuse represents you.

## VARIANTS

Add up the values of locations you couldn't save. Perfect score is zero.

## TIPS

You may play suit chips that don't further your current goal

Plan for the Sea and the End

Lose some round 1 battles if the card options aren't great



# TITLES

*Poetry, knowing, and association, by Othila.*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional

**Extra material:** Writing Implements

## SETUP

Remove the Aces and assign one to each player. Shuffle the remaining cards. Deal five cards to each player; any remaining cards are left in the deck, face down.

## GAME PLAY

The youngest player is the first speaker. She looks at her cards, selects one secretly, and writes (and subsequently speaks) a short poem, the true title of which is the name of the card. Generally, players should limit their poems to one or two lines of blank verse, but let's not get pedantic. Players are not forbidden from using the name of their card in the body of their poem, but it's a risky decision to do so.

After the speaking of the poem, each player selects one of their own cards as a title for the poem and puts them face down in a pile. The speaker shuffles them and lays them in a row, face up. If desired, the speaker may then read her poem again. Afterwards, each player, aside from the speaker, places their Ace face up under the card they believe is the poem's true title. The speaker then reveals the poem's true title: if all or none of the players guessed correctly, everyone but the speaker scores two. If only some players guessed correctly, those players and the speaker score three. Additionally, each player (including the speaker) scores one for each ace on their card (unless they are the speaker and ALL the aces are on their card).

After scores have been tallied, shuffle all the cards together—players retain their Aces. The deal moves counter-clockwise to the new speaker, and a new round begins. Play continues until a player scores X number of points.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

There's no reason to play without this, though you can: with six players, the basic deck will still provide five cards per round to every player.



# TURTLE SOUP

*a Decktet game of fraught cuisine for 4 to 6 players by P.D. Magnus*

It's soup night at Absurdity House. A big stock pot is simmering on the stove. As guests arrive and add ingredients, the soup becomes richer and more delicious. If you take a bowl now, you won't get to taste what comes next. But if you wait too long, some jackass will drop a turtle butt in the broth and turn it into swill.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns or Courts)

**Extra material:** tokens in 2 types

## SETUP

In addition to the Decktet, you'll need chips or tokens in two denominations. In the rules, these are called 'large' and 'small' chips, but you can use two sizes, two colours, or two entirely different kinds of tokens. Set these in the middle of the table as a bank.

## GAME PLAY

The game is played over a series of hands, called *nights*.

At the beginning of each night, shuffle the deck and put it face down on the table. One player can take charge of flipping cards. Since all cards are shared, it doesn't matter who does the flipping.

**Start the pot boiling:** Flip a card face up and then flip another. Continue until there are cards showing four or more of the six Decktet suits.

When cards are flipped over, add chips to the pot: For an Ace or Crown, add one large chip. For a number card, add a number of small chips equal to the rank of the card. These chips come from the bank.

**Take a bowl?** Active players simultaneously indicate whether they intend to take a bowl now or wait for more ingredients.

We do this by giving a black stone and a white stone to each player. You put a stone in your closed fist and hold it out. A white stone means you are waiting, a black stone means you are taking your bowl now.

If a player takes a bowl, they get their share of the pot. Divide the number of small chips in the pot by the number of active players and round down. Similarly, divide the number of large chips in the pot by the number of active players and round down. The player taking a bowl gets that many small and large chips.

*Example:* There are 13 small chips and 2 large chips in the pot, with three active players. Any players who decide to take their bowl now will get 4 of the small chips and none of the large chips.

After players take their bowl of soup, they are no longer active players for that soup night. If there are any active players remaining, flip another card and add to the pot as before.

**Too many cooks:** If the additional card makes it so that the face up cards include at least one instance of each of the six Decktet suits, then the soup has gone Turtle Butt. The soup night is over. Return any chips in the pot to the bank. Players who didn't take a bowl get nothing for that night.

If the soup has not gone Turtle Butt, remaining active players indicate whether they want to take a bowl or wait. If any active players remain, flip another card. And so on until either everyone has taken a bowl or the soup has gone Turtle Butt.

**Playing chicken with soup:** The game should be played for at least five soup nights. Obviously, you can make the game longer by playing more nights. In the end, each small chip collected is worth 1 point and each large chip is worth 5. The player with the most points wins.

Since a player's share of small and large chips from the pot are calculated separately and both are rounded down, it is important not to make change from the pot. Once you have chips from a bowl you've taken, however, it is fine to make change with the bank as necessary.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

One idea for Pawns and Courts is to have them put in an extra large chip. If you manage to collect an extra large chip, it's worth 10.

## VARIANTS

None yet.

# TYPE TRUMP

*a this trick-taking game for 3 or 4 players where trumps are defined by Interpretive Type, by Greg James.*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Extra material:** Suit tokens optional, but recommended

## OVERVIEW

After trump has been identified, players evaluate their hands and choose a suit that they will score for the current round. A point is awarded for each card in a player's take at the end of the round which matches suit with his choice.

## SETUP

If you are using the suit tokens, give one of each suit to every player.

The Dealer deals out the entire deck evenly to all players and announces the trump type for the round (see "Trump Defined" section below). For your first few plays it is recommended to play with just Personalities as trump each round until players get used to the game. Thereafter, trump will cycle through the 3 types. Round 1 will be a Personality trump round, Round 2 will have Locations as trump and the third Round will have Events as trump. If the game hasn't ended yet, the next Round will begin the cycle again with Personalities as trump.

Next, players each declare a scoring suit (see next section) and then play begins with the player to the Dealer's left and continues clockwise.

In each successive round, the new Dealer is the player who was first to play in the current round.

## DECLARING A SUIT

Before the round begins, players will evaluate their hands and then declare one suit that will be their scoring suit for the round. If you are not using the tokens, then this is done around the clock starting with the Dealer. If you are using the suit tokens, the declaring may be done simultaneously. Each player secretly selects the token which matches their choice and keeps it in his hand. When all players are ready, the suit chips are revealed and then placed so that all players are aware of their opponent's choices. (A suit may be chosen by more than one player). At the end of the round, players will score one point for each card in their take which has the suit they chose at the beginning of the round.

This means that each player has the potential to score 10 points in any given round and may glean up to 4 of these points in a single trick (in a 4p game).

Players are also permitted to not select a suit, which means they are playing the Spoiler for the round. More than one player may choose this, but if all players choose the Spoiler, the hand is scrubbed. If you are using the suit tokens, the player will not place a chip in hand and will reveal an empty hand during the declaration phase at the beginning of the round.

The Spoiler must win **exactly one trick** and his score for the round will be the highest number of cards in this trick which matches suit with one other player's scoring suit. If the Spoiler wins more than one trick or fails to win any tricks, he scores zero for the round.

## TRUMP DEFINED

### Type Trump

Each round, trump will be one of the following:

- Personalities –the “face” cards of the Decktet
- Locations – indicated on the cards by a bisected circle
- Events – indicated on the cards by a solid black circle

Although the card distribution is different for each type, there will be exactly 11 trump cards regardless of which type is trump. It is recommended that players separate trump cards from the rest of their hand when they are arranging their cards before each round.

**Three special cards** *The Origin* 2♣♣, *The Market* 6♣♣ and *The End* ♣♣ are dual typed cards and may be either Locations or Events. If either of these Types are trump, then these 3 special cards are trump cards for that round.

## GAME PLAY

Cards follow their usual rank order (low to high): A, 2-9, ♣.

Trumps have their limitations as their trump power is only active if they follow suit (when the lead card isn't a trump) or follow the trump type (when trump is the lead card). Otherwise, they are powerless cards. Examples follow below.

For your first few plays, it is helpful if the lead player calls out whether the lead card is a trump or not, until everyone gets used to this mechanism.

## LEAD CARD IS NOT A TRUMP

If the lead card is not a trump, all players must play a card which shares a suit with it (if they are able). If a player is unable to follow suit, then any card from their hand may be played. If there are no trumps which match suit played to the trick, the highest card played which shares a suit with the lead wins. If two cards are tied for the highest rank, the last one played takes the trick.

If a player wishes to trump the trick, **his trump must match a suit with the lead card**. Note that if the only card a player has in his hand which matches suit with the lead is a trump, he is obliged to play it. Thus *The Desert* 2♣♣ may take a trick led by *The Bard* ♣♣ if Locations are trump for that round. Note that a Location card which lacks a Sun (e.g *The Cave* 7♣♣) could not trump *The Bard* lead in this example.

If more than one valid trump is played to the trick, the highest ranked trump wins. If the highest trumps are the same rank, the last one played wins. Again, any trump must share a suit with the lead card to have its trump power activated.

*Example:* Locations are trump and cards are played in this order:  
*The Savage* 3♣♣ – *The Castle* 7♣♣ – *The Merchant* 9♣♣ – *The Cave* 7♣♣.  
 Who wins? *The Savage* is a Personality card and is therefore not a trump this round, so players must follow suit if they are able. The second player plays *The Castle*, which is a trump card but doesn't share a suit with the lead, so *The Savage* is still reigning the trick at this point. 3p plays *The Merchant* (which shares Leaves with the Savage) and takes the lead. 4p wins the trick with *The Cave* b/c it is the only trump played which shares a suit with the lead (Wyrms). If 4p declared either Leaves, Wyrms or Knots as his scoring suit at the beginning of the round, winning this trick gleans him two points. If his scoring suit is Suns or Waves, this trick is worth one point to him and if his suit is Moons it scores zero.

## TRUMP AS LEAD CARD

Similarly, all players must follow trump if it is led, but in this case it is Type which must be matched – not suit. e.g. If Personalities are trump for this round and *The Penitent* 6♣♣ is led, all other players must follow with a Personality card (regardless of suit) and the highest ranked Personality card will take the trick (again, regardless of suit). If a player is out of trumps, he may play any card from his hand and will lose the trick.

## SCORING

When all cards have been played, the round ends and players tally their scores. A player's score for the round is simply the number of cards in his take which match suit with his chosen suit. Any player who chose the Spoiler and successfully took just a single trick will score 1 point for each card which matches one player's scoring suit. Otherwise the Spoiler scores zero.

The player who led this round is the new Dealer for the next round and will announce the new trump type as described in the Setup section.

## GAME END

Play for a set number of rounds, say one round for each player in the game. Or play to a target score of 21 for a shorter game or 31 for a longer game. If the score is tied when the target has been reached, play another round to settle it.

## EXTENDED DECK

Pawns and Courts have not been tested in this game yet, but I feel they may prove to be overpowered.

## 4-PLAYER PARTNERSHIP RULES

Untested, but here's a wacky idea that I think will work well with this game:

Partners sit across from each other, the deck is dealt out, trump type is announced and players examine and arrange their cards. *Then partners swap hands.*

The teams decide together what their scoring suit will be and make their bid. There is no spoiler option in the partnership game. The game is played normally with each player playing the hand that was dealt to their partner. At the end of each round, tricks taken by partners are combined and scored.

## COMMENTS

It will definitely take players a round or two of Type Trump to get their heads wrapped around the suit and trump rules, scoring and their implications for game play. None of the following study is necessary to enjoy the game, but may help players figure out some strategies earlier if they end up enjoying it. (I find the study fun too).

Following in the footsteps of Shed, this game presents new territory for determining “suit” in a Decktet game and forces players to think about the cards and tricks differently from other trick taking games. Players who are very familiar with the Decktet are at a definite advantage in this game, so I recommend that new players have access to the table (on page 134) in the Decktet Book: “Summary of Cards by Interpretive Type” while playing. This table has been generously reproduced by the author and can also be found on page 9 here.

In addition to this, players who have a grasp of the Antipathetic suits will also fare better at the game. This information can be seen at a glance on the Nonesuch Reference card which is available on p. 7 of the file referenced above and is also available with the latest Artscow Decktet. For fun, I have compiled the following table. It shows that each type of trump will have suits distributed like this:

Personalities	Locations	Events
4 ♀	2 ♀	3 ♀
4 ♂	3 ♂	2 ♂
2 ♀	5 ♀	3 ♀
3 ♂	5 ♂	4 ♂
3 ♀	3 ♀	3 ♀
4 ♂	2 ♂	4 ♂

# VARG BID

*an auction game for 3–4 players by Felbrigg Herriot*

Most people suppose that the game is named for the tenacious, seven-fanged Varg which inhabits the swamps of Lower Scepany. However, there is a man from Holdenvale with the unlikely name of Sebastian Varg-Bid III who claims that his illustrious grandfather invented the game.

**Extended Decktet:** Recommended (Excuse)

## OVERVIEW

Varg Bid is an auction game in which your hand of cards provides both the commodities being auctioned and the currency for bidding on them. The aim is to win high ranked cards at auction; the cards you spend to win them are discarded.

Varg Bid

## SETUP

Shuffle the deck and deal each player ten cards. (With four players and the basic deck, each player will get only nine cards. With five players, each player will get only seven; this will leave one card.)

Give the Excuse to the player on the dealer's left; it serves as an auction token.

Crowns are treated as rank 10 for both bidding and auction value. Aces are treating as rank 1 for the purpose of bidding, but have an auction value of 11.

## GAME PLAY

The player with the auction token (the Excuse) selects one card from his hand and puts it face up in the middle of the table. (With five players, the left over card is auctioned first; the dealer is the first to bid on it. After the initial auction in the five-player, the player with the auction token selects a card to auction and play proceeds normally.)

Starting on his left and going clockwise, players choose to bid or pass. You may only bid one card at a time. After every player has had a chance to play a first bid card, players may play second bid cards or (if they passed the first time around) enter the bidding. Bidding ends when everyone around the table has passed.

When you make your first bid in an auction, you may select any card from your hand. Place it face up in front of you and announce your bid. You are allowed to bid less than someone else's bid, if you like, but a lower bid will not win.

You may increase your bid by adding a card, but you may only add a card that shares at least one suit symbol with the first card that you bid in the auction. You may not increase your bid if you currently have the highest bid in the auction.

You may bid even if you passed earlier in the auction.

When bidding is complete, add together the ranks of multiple bid cards. (Aces count 1, number cards count their rank, and Crowns count 10.) The player with the highest total bid takes the auctioned card and puts it face down in their scoring pile.

If no one plays a bid card in an auction, then the auctioned card is discarded. If multiple players have the same total bid, then the player who reached that total first wins the auction.

After an auction, all bid cards from all players are discarded. The auction token (the Excuse) moves clockwise one player. The player with the token starts a new auction.

Once you have played all of your cards, you sit out the remainder of the hand. Play continues until there is only one player remaining. That player may start one auction, after which the hand ends. This means that a player with two or more cards left over after everyone else has played all of theirs can put one up for auction and use the other to place a winning bid for it.

At the end of the hand, Aces in your score pile are worth 11 points each and all other cards are worth their rank. The total score for each player is recorded, and the player on the dealer's left becomes the new dealer. A game consists of a number of hands equal to the number of players, so that each player deals once.

The current value of your score pile and the number of cards left in your hand are public information.

# THE WALL

*trying to get the best parts of the city on your side of the wall, a game for 2 players by Julien Griffon.*

In the city of Kayin, the decision was taken to build a wall to split the city in two due to diverging ideologies. Now is the time to decide where the wall will run.

Each player plays the leader for one side, vying against each other to get the most value to their side. You are using your influence to convince the undecided to join you, have important places on your side and important events in the city's life happen there.

However, you need to find the right ways to exercise your influence. Will you find the inspiration at the right time? You will have to roll the dice to know and choose the ideas (Decktet suits) you keep wisely to take the advantage over your opponent.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns)

**Extra material:** 7 6-sided dice (Decktet dice are preferable), Decktet suit counters, 3 tokens

## SETUP

Place three Pawns (the Light Keeper or The Watchman, the Harvest and the Borderland) in the middle of the table, so that they form a line between the players. They represent:

- Undecided People (the Light Keeper or The Watchman)
- Important Places (the Borderland)
- Important Events (the Harvest)

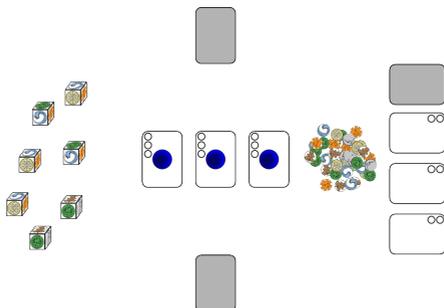
One player takes all the aces, the other takes all the crowns (Power cards). They shuffle those and place their power card deck face down in front of them.

The Excuse and the last Pawn will not be used.

All remaining cards are shuffled into a deck placed face down on the side. The three top cards from this deck are flipped face up. Those are available for purchase.

The counters are placed in a pile at the reach of both players.

The 7 dice are placed at the reach of both players.



# GAME PLAY

Turn overview:

- Keep dice
- Roll dice
- Buy a card/Take counters
- Flip a power card
- Play an action (anytime during the turn)

## Turn in details

On their turn, players roll up to 6 dice. They may select any number of dice their opponent didn't use on the previous turn and set them apart so that they can be used later. They roll all other dice (including those used by their opponent). Once the dice are rolled, the player can:

- use as many dice and counters they possess as the value of one of the cards available for purchase to buy it. There must always be at least one of each color on the card among the dice/counters used. Only one card can be bought per turn and it is immediately replaced by another card from the deck. The card that was just bought goes to the matching pile (People, Places or Events), on the side of the player who bought it; or
- take as many counters of one (and only one) suit as there are dice showing this suit.

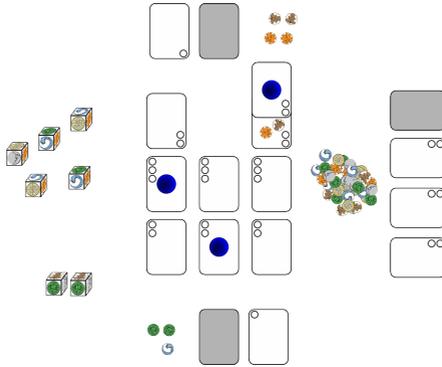
At the end of their turn players flip the top card of their power card deck. This allows them to perform the corresponding action at any time (if applicable) during their next turn. Every time the deck is depleted, reshuffle and keep drawing every turn.

## Actions

- Wyrms: Pay twice the price of a card plus one counter (in any suits) on the opponent's side to make it switch sides (for example, 7 counters to steal a 3-value card).
- Moons: Pay twice the price of a card minus one counter (in any suits) on the opponent's side to discard it (for example, 5 counters to steal a 3-value card).
- Leaves: Pay one counter in any suit to change the result of one (and only one) die.
- Waves: Pay one counter in any suit to discard one (and only one) of the cards available for purchase.
- Suns: Roll one more die.
- Knots: Place one or more of your counters on one or more of the cards on your side. This raises the cost for the opponent to discard or steal this card by two per counter. For the final scoring, the basic values of the cards are still used.

## Controlling a pile

Whenever a player has more cards on their side in one pile, they can buy the cards matching this pile for one less counter (to a minimum of one in each suit on the card). Control of a pile can be signaled by a token.



The Wall

## GAME END

The game ends when both players have had a turn after the last card was drawn from the deck.

Players then compare the number of tokens on their side. Whoever has the most wins the game. In case of a draw (0–0 or 1–1), players compare the values of the cards in the tied categories. The relevant marker token goes towards the player who has the highest value in this category. If this is not conclusive, tally up all the cards' values, whoever has more points wins. As a last resort, you can compare the number of counters in front of each player.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

The Wall uses three Pawns.



# WINDOW

*a Decktet solitaire game by Cristyn Magnus*

**Extended Decktet:** No

**Object of the game:** To merge all of the cards into a single pile.

## SETUP:

Deal out nine cards face down, in a three by three grid. Deal nine more cards face down on top of those. Do it again, so that you have nine stacks of three cards each. Finally, deal one card face up onto each of the stacks.

## GAME PLAY:

- When a face up card on one stack is a rank higher or lower than the face up card on an adjacent stack, you may take all the face up cards from one of the stacks and move them to the adjacent stack. For example, a 4 card could move onto either a 3 or a 5.
- When you move face up cards from a stack, immediately flip over the top face down card remaining in that stack.
- If there are no remaining cards in a stack (if it is just an empty space) then you may move the face up cards from any adjacent stack into that space.
- Adjacent stacks are right, left, up, or down, but not diagonal.
- When you move a stack, you must move all the face up cards in that stack. You may not split the face up cards, and you may not move face down cards.
- Aces may move onto either 2s or Crowns. Crowns may move onto either 9s or Aces.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

Window is not meant to be played with the Excuse or Pawns, and I'm not sure what you would do with them. That doesn't mean you couldn't make something up.



# DECKTET PASS NOT

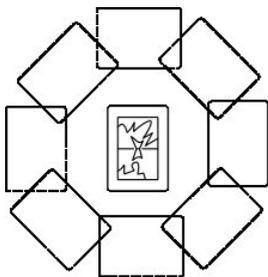
*a faithful conversion of the original solitaire game "Ring Pass Not" by Sandhill Games, by Ruber Eaglenest, made for the Decktet by Ruber Eaglenest.*

You are a great mage, represented by the excuse, taming the wyvern; put it in front of yourself in a way that the little fool is standing up. As the mage you need to create a ring of protection before the wyvern breaths fire upon you. Well a wyvern, or a balrog, or whatever please you because the nature of the Decktet you could represent whatever battle, or characters, or universe that please you, well, always when the story to represent must be the creation of a protection against a superior physical or magical power.

**Extended Decktet:** Mandatory (Pawns and Excuse)

## THE RING OF PROTECTION

The ring of protection is composed of eight magic elements linked together in a perfect circle (perfect by the nature of the links). Each element is presented by a card of the Decktet, and the player must place them orthogonally and diagonally around the Excuse in eight slots that form the circle. Each card must link with another two by their common same suits. Once one suit of a card is used, it is not available for make another link.



Aces and Crowns count as they have two available links of the same suit.

Pawns can only link, as normal, with two other cards but, they have available 3 suits, so the mage can choose what element to link.

For the disposition of the cards, it is recommended that each card superpose the corner of the linked card, covering the suits in that corner; so, the ring of linked suits appear at the external part of the cards and the ring. This is not a requirement, but could make more easy the lecture of the already formed links.

Note that you could place a card in any empty slot, without the need of form a link, even to place a card next to another with a broken link (it has no matching suits, or the suit it is already in used).

Once a card is already placed in a slot, it can be moved to any other empty slot. You could even move a card that it is already linked. But be careful because when if the ring is completed with eight cards and any link is broken working, the ring will fail to protect the mage.

Note that you could even rotate groups of cards linked together. Because it is the same that move the whole bunch moving the cards in order, one by one.

## DRAWING POOL

At the beginning of each play from a shuffled deck, deal four cards face up. This is where the mage must draw the elements to build the ring of protection.

Each time a card is taken from the pool and placed upon the ring, you must draw a new card from the deck and replace the void left by the card used.

If you have no possible movement, or possible links, or simply you don't like your cards. You can deal again from the deck, discarding the actual drawing pool; but then you must decrease the number of cards in the pool by one. That is, you start with four cards in the pool, if you deal, you have three, then, if you deal again, you have two; if finally you deal again, you will only deal one card from the deck, and next time you are in the need of deal, you found yourself without resources to finish the ring, and then you are dead.

When the deck has no remaining cards, reshuffle all the discarded cards to build a new deck, and deal the convenient number of cards.

## THE WYVERN

The wyvern is an external entity that it is no physically represented in the game (at the least, but you can put a wyvern figure outside the ring). It brings death to the mage, and therefore ending to the game.

If when the ring is completed one link is broken, the wyvern breathes, and the mage dies; the player loses.

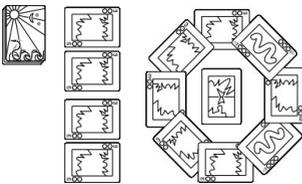
If when the player has dealt three times and has no moves or possible links, or just surrender, the wyvern breathes, the mage dies; and the player loses.

If the ring of protection has all the links, the wyvern breathes but the mage survives this round and therefore the player wins... at least this time.

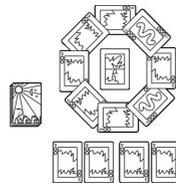
## DEATH OF THE MAGE

Turn around the excuse card: that is, the wyvern is upon you!

## EXAMPLE OF LAYOUTS OF THE GAME



With the drawing pool at the left of the ring



The drawing pool near the player, at the bottom of the ring

## BASIC GAME

You, the mage, are represented by the excuse; take it out of the deck and put it in front of yourself in a way that the little fool is standing up. Shuffle the deck, with all the basic Decktet cards plus the Aces, the Crowns and the Pawns. Deal four cards for the drawing pool.

When dealing again, discard the cards of the drawing pool.

Play the game as indicated until winning or be defeated. Now calculate the final score.

After finishing a game, you could repeat for several rounds until satisfied.

## SCORING

Once a play is finished with a completed ring or by the death of the mage is time to count all the points, awarded as this:

6 points for each valid link. That is, a complete ring will award a total of 48 points.

30 points for create a pool of a suit with 6 of the same suit in the ring.

60 points for create a pool of a suit with 7 of the same suit in the ring.

120 points for create a pool of a suit with 8 of the same suit in the ring.

## ADVANCED GAME

As a solitaire Decktet Not Pass is a very short one with plays that can be resolved in little minutes, so to make the thing more interesting this advanced variation led the player through different stages in increasing difficulty.

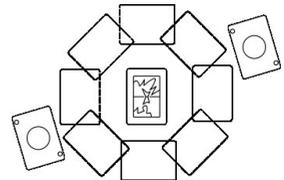
**Setup of the Advanced Game** Shuffle the deck with all the card less the Excuse, and the Aces. Use the excuse for represent the mage. Set aside the Aces.

**Power tools** If you end a stage and score a pool of suits, you gain one power tool represented by one Ace. You gain one randomly selected Ace per special bonus. Shuffle them face down and randomly choose one.

This Aces are of one time use (return them to the Aces pile) and serve as a joker, you can change the suit of any link of a card to the suit of the Ace (put the Ace over half that card).

Aces can be accumulated, but not more than 3.

**Limiters** In advanced stages limiters come to play. They are random selected Aces that must be placed outside of the ring and in a place where it defines the nature of a link of the ring. That is, they limit the kind of suit that must be linked in that place of the ring.



## STAGES OF THE ADVANCED GAME

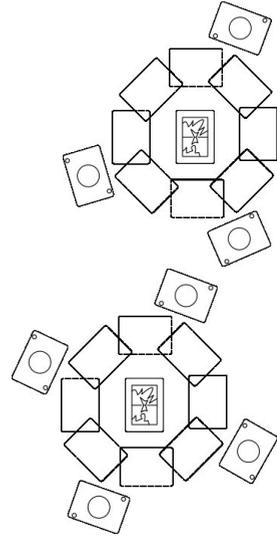
**Stage 1** Play as a basic game.

**Stage 2** Select a random Ace and put it as a limiter anywhere outside of the ring.

**Stage 3** Select two random Aces, put them separated symmetrically of each other. (See the above image)

**Stage 4** Use three Aces as limiters forming an equilateral triangle, that is, one act as the top of the triangle, and the two others are separated two links from the top limiter. These two has only one link separating each other.

**Stage 5** Use four Aces as limiters. They must be separated of each other only by one link. If there are not Aces available because the player has three of them as power tools: remove one randomly selected and use it as a limiter.



## WINNING AND SCORING THE ADVANCED GAME

If you reach and complete the fifth ring, congratulations, you have tamed the wyvern.

If winning or losing, calculate the score of each stage. At the end of the game winning or losing, just sum up to calculate the total. Annotate the stage reached and score.

# THE YOUNG QUEEN'S PALIMPSEST

*a game of ancient manuscripts, by Adam Blinkinsop*

**Extended Decktet:** Optional

**Extra material:** 20 cubes (scholars and scribes) per player

Players are scholars and scribes poring over (studying, scribbling, erasing, more scribbling) an ancient manuscript. By playing cards to the free-form play area and then placing worker cubes on them for control, they hope to have their work be recognized by the Queen at story time.

## SETUP

Shuffle the deck, deal five cards to each player, and flip one face-up to the middle of the table as the root of all knowledge. The game works well with just the basic deck; extended card details are given below.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you must play a card and draw a card. The card you play must touch at least one other card as well as the table (you can't just cover cards up). All touched cards are called "adjacent".

If any adjacent cards have at least as many scribes as the rank of the card you just played, and their rank was visible before you played this card, score them. Aces score all adjacent occupied cards. The player with the most scribes on that card scores its rank, and the player with the second-most scores half its rank, rounded down. Cards without rank (or whose rank is no longer visible) cannot be scored nor trigger scoring (other than the Ace, as noted). In the case of a tie, tied players all score half rank.

Finally, look at each adjacent card's suits and count all the suits that match your played card. Place that many scribes on any adjacent card(s). There is no limit to the number of scribes on a card.

The game ends when: a player runs out of cubes or the deck runs out of cards. Score all cards whose rank is still visible once more. The player with the most points wins.

## THE EXTENDED DECK

The Excuse has no suits and no rank; it cannot trigger scoring nor place scribes. Instead, take all the scribes from one card you occupy and place them on one other card.

The Pawns have no rank, they cannot trigger scoring. Place scribes as usual.

The Courts have no rank, they cannot trigger scoring. Instead of placing scribes, remove scribes from adjacent cards equal to the number of matching symbols there. These scribes do not need to be your own.

The Crowns have no rank, they cannot trigger scoring. Instead of placing scribes, move scribes from adjacent cards equal to the number of matching symbols

there to adjacent cards (touching the origin card). These scribes do not need to be your own.

# ZIGGURAT DEMOLITION THROWDOWN

*because the world needs more games about dueling wizard, for 2–5 players, by P.D. Magnus.*

You are an ancient and powerful wizard living in a community for aged but powerful wizards. The guy across the way bubbles his cauldron much too loud, even though you have asked him to turn it down several times. There was a time when those who disturbed your afternoon tea would feel the force of your eldritch wrath. Perhaps this afternoon will be such a time.

**Extended Decktet:** Optional (Pawns, Courts and Excuse)

**Extra material:** one Rainbow stash of Looney Pyramids (15 pyramids) per player

## OVERVIEW

This game uses a copy of the Decktet and one Rainbow Pyramid stash per player. (A Rainbow stash is a small, medium, and large pyramid in each of five colours: Red, Yellow, Green, Blue, and Black. For example, a Treehouse set per player or an Ice Dice set for every two players.) Cards represent spells you have in mind; in the game, this means attacks you can make. Pyramids are your circle of magical instruments; they are what you need to have in place to play cards. Your opponent will whittle away at your pyramids, and you at theirs. The first player to run out of pyramids loses.

## SET UP

A stack of one or more upright pyramids is called a *tower*.

Each player starts with four towers: one red, one blue, one yellow, and one black. Each tower consists of a one-pip pyramid on top of a two-pip pyramid on top of a three-pip pyramid; all the pyramids in a starting tower are the same colour. (In a more touchy-feely, hug-your-neighbor game, these would be called *trees*.)

Place the green pyramids flat in the middle of the table. This area is called the *scrapyard*.

As the game progresses, pyramids in towers can be replaced with smaller pyramids of a different colour. When that happens, it is always the top pyramid in the stack which determines the colour of the tower. For example, a tower which is a one-pip blue pyramid sitting on a three-pip red pyramid is a 'blue tower'.

Shuffle the Decktet and deal five cards to each player. The rest of the deck forms the draw pile.

To determine the starting player, use the rule for determining start player in the game that one of you has played most recently. Turns then alternate.

## GAME PLAY

On your turn, you may do one of three things: attack, draw cards, or remodel.

**Attacking:** You attack by selecting an opponent's tower and playing a card. Which cards you can play for attacks depends on what colour towers you have; at the beginning of the game, you have a complement of towers allowing you to play any attack.

The *rank* of the attack card you play determines the strength of the attack. The *suits* of the card determine the possible targets.

For details, see *Attacking* below.

**Drawing cards:** Draw until you have five cards in your hand. The only time you may draw cards is when you spend your turn to do so.

*You are getting old, and you don't have as much stamina as you used to.* When the draw pile is exhausted, each player must select one of their own remaining towers and deal one pip of damage to it; see *Doing damage*, below. Then the discard pile is turned over and shuffled to form a new draw pile.

**Remodelling:** Discard any three cards from your hand. You may exchange the pyramid on top of one of your towers for a pyramid of the same size from the scrapyard. This takes your entire turn.

## Attacking

The strength of an attack is determined by the rank of the card. In addition, each type of attack requires that you have a tower of a specific colour:

Playing an Ace, 2, 3, 4, or 5 makes a 1-pip attack; you must have a red tower in order to play one of those cards as an attack.

Playing an 6, 7, 8, or 9 makes a 2-pip attack; you must have a blue tower in order to play one of those cards as an attack.

Playing a Crown (♔) makes a 3-pip attack; you must have a yellow tower in order to play one of those cards as an attack.

Green towers can be used as wildcards to make any kind of attack, but the tower takes 1 pip of damage for being used it in this way.

attack card rank	damage	tower required
Ace, 2-5	1-pip	red
6-9	2-pips	blue
♔	3-pips	yellow

The suits of the card determine which of your opponents towers you may attack. A ♠ can be used to attack a black tower; a ♠ or ♠ can be used to attack a red tower; a ♠ can be used to attack a blue tower; a ♠ can be used to attack a green tower; a ♠ can be used to attack a yellow tower. This follows the closest color match between suits and pyramids, and it's summarized in the table below.

*Example:* 3♠♠ can be played to make a one-pip attack against a black tower or a blue tower. You must have a red tower in order to play the card

attack card suit	tower target
 Moons	black
 Suns	red
 Waves	blue
 Leaves	red
 Wyrms	green
 Knots	yellow

This can take a few plays to get straight, remember: The rank of the attack card determines the strength of the attack and is constrained by the colour of the *attacker's* towers. The suit of the card determines what can be targetted and is constrained by the colour of the *defender's* towers.

If your opponent has more than one tower which is an eligible target, pick one and announce that it's one your attacking. If your opponent has no towers that are eligible targets, then you can't make the attack.

## Defending

When a player makes an attack, their opponent may play cards to defend. In order to play a defense, the target character must have a black or green tower.

There are two ways to defend:

- The defender plays an Ace with a suit that matches the color of the target tower.
- The defender plays one or more cards with total ranks exactly equal to the rank of the attack card. Aces are 1; s are 10. Example: Evan attacks with a 7. Maris could defend by playing a 7, a 3 and a 4, or any combination of cards with ranks adding up to exactly 7.

Either kind of defense nullifies the attack. Both the attack card and defense cards are discarded.

## Doing damage

When a tower is damaged, remove one pip of pyramid for each pip of damage done. The damage is always taken starting at the top of the tower, and the pyramids removed are placed flat in the scrapyard.

If it is not possible to remove pyramids of exactly the right size, then 'make change' from the scrapyard. The player inflicting the damage selects a smaller pyramid from the scrapyard to be placed on top of the tower. This may change the colour of the tower.

*Example:* Evan's blue tower is undamaged; it consists of a 1-pip pyramid on a 2-pip pyramid on a 3-pip pyramid. Maris makes a successful 2-pip attack against the tower. Even moves the 1-pip and 2-pip pyramids to the scrap pile, Maris picks a 1-pip green pyramid from the scrap pile, and the green pyramid is placed on the top of the tower. It is now a green tower.

If a tower takes more damage than it includes pips worth of pyramids, the pyramids are placed in the scrapyard but the extra damage has no effect.

## Green towers

A green tower allows to play an attack card or defense cards that would otherwise require a colour of tower which you do not have. When it is used in this way, the green tower is dealt 1-pip of damage.

Since you are the one dealing damage to your own tower when you use a green tower in this way: If the green pyramid at the top of the tower is a 2-pip or 3-pip pyramid, then you may replace it with any pyramid from the scrapyards of the next size down.

## The battle ends

When a player has no towers remaining, they are out of the game. The battle ends when only one player has towers remaining.

The survivor scores one point for each pip of pyramid left in their towers.

All players earn points for having destroyed opposing towers. When a particular player loses a tower for the first time, the attacking player gets 1 point; the second time, 2 points; third, 3; fourth, which eli from the game, 4. If the player destroys their own tower, then no points are awarded for that tower.

The player with the most points at the end of the game is the winner.

## STRATEGY AND STUFF

Lots of the strategy in this game centers on controlling the colours of your own and your opponent's towers. For your own towers: Once one of your towers has been destroyed and you only have three left, you can't have towers that do everything. For your opponent's towers: If you restrict the number of colours they have, you restrict their options; if you restrict it too much, it becomes hard to find attack cards that can target their towers.

Suns (☀) and Leaves (🍃) may be used to attack red towers. This means that there are more cards in the deck that can attack red towers than there are for any other colour.

You can destroy your own tower if it consists of a 1-pip green pyramid (and you use it for something) or if the draw pile is exhausted (and you take attrition to a 1-pip tower). In the two-player game, this is almost never a good idea. In the multi-player game, it's a way of denying your opponents points.

## VARIANTS

**The extended deck:** If you want to add the Excuse, Pawns, Courts, just shuffle them into the deck.

The Excuse may be played as a defense against any attack, although you must still have a black tower; it plays like an Ace of any suit. If played at the same time an attack is made, before your target decides whether or not to defend, it makes the attack unblockable; that is, no defense can be made against such an attack.

A Pawn may be played for a one-pip attack. A Court may be played for a two-pip attack.

It is possible to defend against a Pawn or Court by playing an Ace (of the appropriate suit), cards with ranks adding up to 10, or a Crown. Pawns and Courts

may not be played as defenses. (This is to balance the fact that they are very versatile as attacks.)

Here's a table with the extended deck inserted.

attack card rank	damage	tower required
Ace, 2-5, ♠	1-pip	red
6-9, ♠	2-pips	blue
♣	3-pips	yellow

