

RULEBOOK v1.0



THE THEATRE

TRANSFORMATIVE CARD GAME

a game by Telsie



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Game Design, Art, and Documentation by Telsie.

For additional details, card lists, FAQs, or any other information, visit <https://www.thetheatretcg.com>.

All characters in The Theatre are owned by Telsie, with the sole exception of Pooky, owned by Pooky.



INTRODUCTION



The Theatre Entertainment
2200 Fountain Plaza
Royale, NFF 0103-A
HR Services

Congratulations! Your application has been accepted for the Director of Staff at The Theatre, and we'd like you to assume your duties immediately.

Your new position will put you in charge of building a staff list for an event at The Theatre, an entertainment venue that performs all manner of acts and performances, attempting to best serve the needs of our varied clientele.

Your staff lineup will be judged against other director's choices to see who best caters to the desires of our audience. You'll have comparable budgets and will be serving the same clients, so it should be an even playing field.

I wish you luck in your new position. Find attached the outlined rules of your staff selection and the contest between directors. Don't let me down.

Welcome to The Theatre~

Telsie Roali, Owner

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Telsie" with a small heart symbol above the letter 'i'.



COMPONENTS



Inside the Box:

Inside The Theatre - The Grand Opening Set Box, you'll find:

- This rulebook!
- A full play set of every card in the set. This means 2 copies of each of the 120 cards, totalling 240 cards. Also included are 24 Full Art card variants!



- Tokens related to play, specifically:

A Leader token

5 Boost/Sap tokens each for Paw, Hoof, and Claw

5 Combo tokens



x5



x5



x5

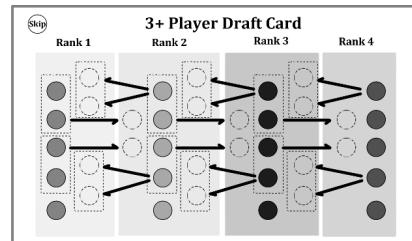


x5

- 5 Suit Cards



- 4 laminated Draft Cards



OVERVIEW



Objective:

The objective of The Theatre is to put on the greatest performance, playing cards with higher value than your opponents to Dismiss their cards. If you dismiss enough cards from all of your opponents, they are eliminated from the game and you win!

Setup:

To play The Theatre you'll need:

- A deck for each player (premade or following the deckbuilding rules in this guide)
- A set of 5 Suit Cards (or any distinct tokens/trackers)
- A way to track bonuses (**The Theatre Tokens** recommended, but pen and paper will work)

Each player will need a designated space for their **Deck**, a pile of **Breakroom** cards (for cards that win), and a pile of **Dismissed** cards (for cards that lose).

There should be a shared "play area" space between players that cards will be played into for each round.

Before playing, each player will shuffle their deck and determine a **Leader**. When using custom decks, whoever has the least amount of total cards in their Deck will be the first Leader. If everyone has the same amount of cards, then you can deal out the Suit Cards to the players in a round. Whoever gets the Charm Suit Card is the Leader. Otherwise the Leader can be chosen at random.

If playing Draft Format, follow the setup on page 14 to begin the draft.

Flow:

The Theatre is played in continuous "Acts" where each player will draw 5 (five) cards to their hand and then play those cards in sequence into the play area. Each "round" of cards will determine a winner, with the winning card going to its player's Breakroom while losing cards go to their player's Dismissed pile.

When drawing cards for a new Act if players have less than 5 (five) cards to draw from their Deck, they will shuffle their Breakroom pile into their Deck and continue to draw up to 5 (five) cards. If they still don't have enough cards to draw up to 5, they are eliminated from the performance!



PLAYING THE GAME



Acts

Draw

Each player draws 5 (five) cards to start each Act.

Deal Suits

The 5 Suit Cards should be shuffled and then dealt in a line face up. These will be used to add bonus value to cards during the Act. (see pg. 8, **Suits**, for more details)

Round (x5)

Play Cards + Activate Abilities

Each player, starting with the Leader and going clockwise, will play one card from their hand into the play area one at a time. If a played card has an ability, that ability will activate immediately. (see pg. 9, **Abilities**, for more details)

Modify Card Values

Once all players have played a card, modifications for all cards are calculated. This will include the Desired Suit and abilities - all changes to a card's value are calculated simultaneously at the end of a round.

Determine Winner

After all modifications to card values are calculated, the winner is the highest value of all cards played and it is moved to the player's Breakroom, while all losing cards are Dismissed. The winning player is designated the new Leader and will play the first card in the next round.

Ties

If there is a tie for the highest value, all cards are considered losing and all cards are Dismissed. The first player who played a card that tied for the highest value is designated the new Leader and will play the first card in the next round.



BETWEEN ACTS - WINNING



Clear Play Area:

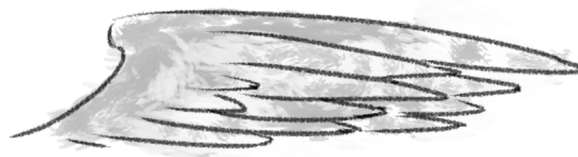
Once the final round in an Act has been played, the play area can be cleared of any remaining tokens or cards. No abilities or tokens are carried over between Acts.

Draw New Cards:

Once the final round in an Act has been played, players can draw five new cards from their Deck.

Reshuffle Breakroom:

If a player has less than five cards left in their deck, they will shuffle their Breakroom pile into their deck after drawing all remaining cards from their Deck.



Elimination/Winning:

If a player still has less than five total cards left after shuffling their Breakroom into it, they are eliminated. Play continues until all but 1 player is not eliminated, declaring them the winner.

If the eliminated player was the Leader and play will continue, pass the Leader token to the next player who isn't eliminated.

If all remaining players are eliminated simultaneously, the player with the most cards left remaining in their Deck wins.

If players have the same amount of remaining cards in their deck, whichever player started the game with less cards in their Deck wins.

If there is still a tie, the player who played the last card in the last round wins.



PARTS OF THE CARDS



Card Name

The name of the card (character).

Suit

The Suit of the card.
(see pg. 8)

Vixie

Print

The Print of the card.
(see pg. 9).

Value

The base value of the card (before any modifications).

5

Ability

The (optional) ability related to the card.
(see pg. 9)

Role

The character's role at The Theatre.

Staff



Waiter/Host

Job

The character's job at The Theatre.

Flavor Text

A quote or piece of information related to the character.

"Welcome to The Theatre. Have many fun times here, yes?"

(Boost - +1 for all matching Prints this Act)

Rank

The rank of the card.
(see pg. 13 for deckbuilding)

Identifier

The ID of the card, including 3 letter set, numerical sequence, and rarity.

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Illus. Telsie

Illustrator

The illustrator credits for the card.



SUITS



Desired Suit:

At the start of each Act, the five Suit Cards are shuffled and dealt in a line. The first card dealt will be the Desired Suit for the first round, while the second will be the Desired Suit for the second round, and so on. Cards played that have a Suit (printed in the top left) that matches the Desired Suit will get a +3 (three) bonus to their value at the end of the round. For example, a value 2 (two) card would normally lose to a value 4 (four) card, but if the value 2 (two) card had a Suit that matched the Desired Suit, it would become a value 5 (five) at the end of the round and win!

There are five suits in The Theatre:



Charm, represented by a pink heart



Luck, represented by a green clover



Agility, represented by a yellow lightning bolt



Will, represented by a blue scroll



Strength, represented by a red fist

These are sometimes referred to as the CLAWS system.

After dealing the cards, move the first Suit Card to the center of the play area where players will play around it. After the round's winner is decided, move it to the side in a "Discarded Suit Pile", then move the second dealt Suit Card to the center. Repeat this process for each round, moving the next Suit Card into the center of the play area and discarding the Suit Card at the end of the round.

If for any reason there are no Suit Cards left to move into the center (due to some abilities), instead no Suit Card is used and no cards gain any bonuses. Other abilities still apply, such as Boosts or Saps.



PRINTS AND ABILITIES



Prints:

Every card has a Print, displayed in the top right. This represents the type of character on the card, usually related to some species or sub-species. These are primarily used by the abilities in the game to give cards bonuses and penalties to their value. There are nine Prints in the first 6 Sets of The Theatre:



Paw



Talon



Fin



Hoof



Slither



Float



Claw



Webbed



Skitter

Abilities:

Some cards will have abilities that are used to modify values of cards played. These abilities can sometimes effect the card played with the ability, but often effect other cards as well, even cards played by your opponents. Each ability has unique rules explained in depth on the following pages.

There are four abilities in the first Set of The Theatre, and two abilities in each additional set.



Boost: Gives a +1 bonus to cards with a matching Print.



Combo: Gives a +1 or +2 bonus to your next card played



Sap: Gives a -1 penalty to cards with a matching Print.



Finisher: Gives a bonus based on how many cards you've played.



BOOST AND SAP



Boost



Sap

Cards with these symbols use the Boost or Sap abilities. These abilities will always be tied with an associated Print marker.

Whenever a Boost or Sap cards is played, a matching Boost/Sap token for the Print can be placed in the play area. For the rest of the Act (including the current Round) when calculating values, cards with a Print matching a Boost or Sap token will get +1 or -1 modifications, respectively.

Boost and Sap tokens apply to all cards played, including the round they are played (and even the card played with Boost/Sap if the Print matches).

Boost and Sap apply to all cards played by all players, so both you and your opponents can benefit or be punished by these abilities.

Alternatively, a card with the Sap ability can optionally remove ANY Boost token that is on the field when it is played. This effect replaces the adding of a Sap token if selected.

A Boost token can only be removed by a card with the Sap ability if the Boost token is **in the play area** when the Sap card is played. Boost tokens added later in the round or Act cannot be removed retroactively.



COMBO AND FINISHER



Cards with these symbols use the Combo or Finisher abilities.

Combo:

Cards with the Combo ability will add a +1 (one) bonus to the next card that player plays this round. A Combo token can be used to track this if desired, adding it in front of the player's Deck and removing it after it resolves.



Combo



Specific Prints will list +2 (two) instead of the normal +1 (one). These cards will add two to the next card played instead, and the Combo token can be flipped over to track it.

Combo only applies to the **next card** that player plays, not the original card with the Combo ability.

If a Combo card is played last in an Act, the Combo token will be removed between Acts (it will not carry over to the next Act/Round).

Finisher:

Cards with the Finisher ability will add a bonus to the card immediately based on how many cards have been played this Act. If a Finisher card is played first in the Act, it will get a +0 (zero) bonus. If it is played last in the Act (the fifth card played), it will get a +4 (four) bonus.



Finisher

Finisher only applies to the card played with the Finisher ability. No other cards are modified.



FORMATS - 3+ PLAYERS



Duels - 2 Players:

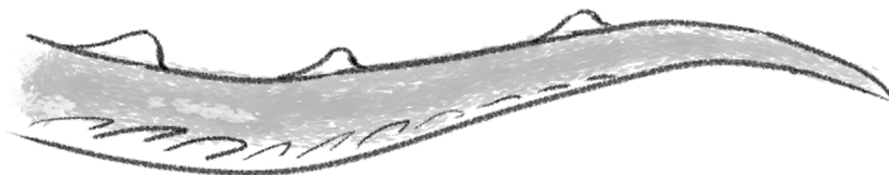
In Duels play is standard as written in the rules.

Free-for-All - 3+ Players:

Play remains mostly standard for Free-for-Alls, with the following changes.

In the case of a tie for a round, if multiple players tie for the top value but at least one player plays a lower value card, the tied cards are considered winners and placed in players' Breakrooms, while the lower value cards are considered lost and Dismissed. In this case, whoever played the first card that tied for the highest value will be marked as the Leader.

If all players tie for the highest value, all cards are Dismissed.



Team Play - Teams of 2 Players:

In team play, members of the same team will sit opposite from their "partner", alternating plays between teams during a round. Winners are still determined by the highest value card but players on the same team win together, moving their played card to the Breakroom.

In the case of a tie for highest value, if players who tied are all on the same team then all tied cards are considered winners. If the tie is amongst players not on the same team, all cards are Dismissed.

If a player on a team has less than five cards in their Deck and Breakroom at the start of an Act, that team is considered eliminated and all players on that team are eliminated from the game.



DECKBUILDING

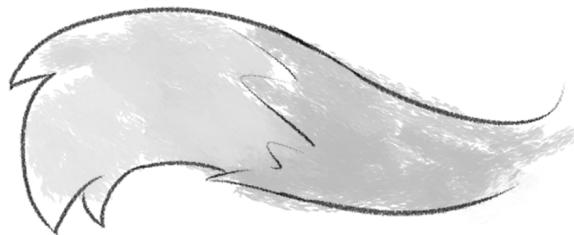


Deckbuilding:

A major part of The Theatre game is building a deck. The premade decks provide a simple way to jump directly into the game, but players can build their decks from any cards available as long as guidelines are met.

Standard deck guidelines are as follows:

- Every deck must contain at least five cards.
- Every deck must contain no more than two copies of any specific card.
- A "specific card" is any card with the same Name and Suit. For example, "Vixie" with the Charm suit is not the same as "Vixie" with the Luck suit.
- Every deck must contain a set amount of cards of each Rank. This changes based on format:
 - Duels must have 4 cards of each Rank 1-4
 - Free-for-All and Team formats (3+ players) must have 5 cards of each Rank 1-4
 - Tournaments and casual play have varying totals.



Cost:

When building a deck, Rank is a primary factor. Every card has a Rank printed in the bottom right corner. During deck-building, you can swap any 2 cards of the same Rank for a single card of a Rank higher (eg. - 2 Rank 2's for 1 Rank 3). You can also swap any single card of one Rank for 2 cards of the Rank directly below it (eg. - 1 Rank 2 for 2 Rank 1's).

After the deck is built, keep track of how many total cards are in the deck. This may be used for deciding the first Leader or for determining the winner of a game.



DRAFT FORMAT



Draft Format:

Draft Format is a way to include deckbuilding as part of the game. It allows more diversity in deck and lets players build decks in an organic way - all with only using the cards in a single set!

To start, give each player a draft card. For 2 players, this will include 16 solid circles, and for 3+ players it will include 20 solid circles. Then:

1. Separate all cards by Rank and shuffle all cards of a single Rank together. Set each Rank deck aside.
2. Place $X + 2$ cards face up from the Rank 1 deck in a line, where X is the number of players.
3. Starting with Leader, players take turns picking a card from the face up cards and adding it to their deck. When they do so, they mark a solid circle from their draft card corresponding to the card's Rank.
- 3a. Players can instead mark a solid circle to choose two cards from one Rank lower. This can be done twice per Rank.
- 3b. Players can instead mark two solid circles of the same rank to choose a card from one Rank higher. This can be done twice per Rank, and only be done if the player has 2 unmarked solid circles from that Rank.
- 3c. Players can instead Skip their turn. This can only be done once. If a player chooses to Skip their turn, they take the Leader token and will pick first next round.
- 3d. If a player has no remaining solid circles to mark, they automatically pass their turn and the Leader token to the next player.
4. Replace any chosen cards with new cards from respective Rank decks.
5. Once all players have chosen a card for a round, the Leader token passes to the next player in turn order (unless a player Skipped).
6. Repeat steps 2-4, with every new round drawing $X+2$ cards from the next Rank deck (Rank 2 on round 2, Rank 3 on round 3, etc). There will always be only $X+2$ cards from any Rank face up on the play area at any time.

Rounds continue until all players have marked all solid circles on their draft card. Then the decks are moved to the play area and the game can begin as normal. The last player with the Leader token can decide to keep or pass it to any player.



QUICK REFERENCE



Setup

- Setup area
- Shuffle Deck
- Determine Leader
 - Most cards
 - Random

Winning

If less than 5 cards in Deck between Acts, then

- Shuffle Breakroom into Deck.
- If still less than 5 cards in Deck, you're eliminated!

Act

Draw five cards

Lay out the Suit Cards in a line (1 for each round)

Round

Start

- Play a card from hand
- Start with the Leader
- Go clockwise

Modify Values

- Add +1 for Boost, -1 for Sap if Print matches
- Add +0 to +4 for Finisher cards (=cards played)
- Add +1 if player has a Combo Token (Add +2 for specific Combo cards)
- Add +3 if card Suit matches Desired Suit

Activate Abilities

- Add Boost/Sap Tokens to play area
- Mark Combo Tokens for players
- Choose to Gamble (or not)

Determine Winner

- Highest card wins (goes to Breakroom)
- Losing and tied cards go to Dismissed

