

GHOSTS OF CHRISTMAS

3-4 Players



40 Mins



Ages 10+



COMPONENTS

- A** 48 Cards (1 - 12 in four suits)
- B** 16 Ghost Board Pieces
- C** 4 Dials
- D** 4 Score cubes
- E** 1 Start player marker
- F** 1 Victory Point (VP) tracker
- G** 16 Door tokens
- H** 4 Orange Door Tokens
- I** 12 Wreath Tokens

3 PLAYERS

For a three player game, remove cards 1, 2, and 3 from each of the four suits.

GAME OVERVIEW

Ghosts of Christmas is a trick taking game where you play cards into three separate tricks: past, present, and future. You play cards into all three time periods in a single round, and winning tricks in one time period could help you win more in the future!



For example, if you think you will win 3 tricks, bid 3 doors. This bid will be successful if you win exactly 3 tricks. If you think you might win another, you could take 3 doors and 1 orange door instead: this bid will be successful if you win either 3 or 4 tricks.

SETUP

- 1 Set the VP tracker in the center of the table with a scoring cube for each player.
- 2 Place the Past, Present and Future dials facedown next to the VP tracker.
- 3 Assemble the Ghost Board for each player.
- 4 Place the door and wreath tokens in a supply next to the VP tracker.
- 5 Give the youngest player the Start Player Marker or randomly select a player.

GAMEPLAY

The game is played over a number of hands equal to the number of players. Each hand is made up of four rounds, and there are three tricks each round. Whoever has the most points after all hands are complete is the winner!

PLAYING A HAND

- 6 Begin each hand by shuffling the deck and dealing 12 cards to each player.

BIDDING

Beginning with the start player and proceeding clockwise around the table, predict how many tricks you will win this hand. Take a number of door tokens equal to your bid. You may optionally take one orange door as well, representing a trick you might win but aren't required to.

PLAYING A ROUND

Beginning with the start player and proceeding clockwise around the table, you now play a single card in front of you into one of the three tricks, Past, Present, or Future. If you are the first player to play a card into a trick, set the dial for that trick to show the suit you played; this suit is the lead suit for that trick.

If another player has already played a card onto a trick that you wish to play on, you must play a card of the lead suit if possible. If you do not have any cards of that suit, you can play any card to that trick.

This continues until you've played three cards: one into each trick. Then it is time to score each trick.

SCORING TRICKS

Start with the Past trick. The card played by the start player determines the scoring suit. Hearts always trump other suits, so whoever played the highest Hearts wins that trick. Otherwise, whoever played the highest card in the scoring suit wins, they take the starting player marker, and take a wreath token placing it on one of their doors if possible.



Tip: you can play cards in any order you want; you do not have to play in the same place as the earlier player. Not only could this help you win those other tricks, but you could empty your hand in one trick so you are not forced to follow suit in another.



SCORING HANDS EXAMPLE



Beyond Variant

CREDITS

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Now score the Present trick the same way, notice that the new starting player (whose card determines the scoring suit) is whoever won the Past trick.

Finally, score the Future trick, with the winner of the Present trick as the starting player. The winner of the Future Trick takes the start player marker and keeps it until you score the next round. Once all three tricks have been scored, discard the three cards you played and begin the next round, using the cards you have remaining in your hand.

SCORING HANDS

After four rounds, it is time to score the hand and compare your bid with how many tricks you won. If you have an Orange door and you have a wreath on every door, or on every door other than an orange door, score 1 point per wreath. Otherwise, score 2 points per wreath if you have one on every door. In all other cases score no points.

BEYOND VARIANT

This variant adds a fourth trick: Beyond. You can play cards to any of the four tricks. However, you only play three rounds and you can play this variant in 3 or 4 players. Tricks are still scored as usual.