

Tooth & Talon

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Legend tells of a game dating even before King Arthur's time—one played in hushed whispers by thieves and rascallions crouching in back alleys under the flickering light of a single torch. Over time, as peasants and field laborers began to take interest, the game shed its disreputable image and was eventually favored by members of the royal court. Now you too can play it with good-natured friends and family in the comfort of your own home. You won't even have to worry about getting knifed and thrown in the river—hopefully.

About

Tooth & Talon is a Rock-Paper-Scissors inspired game and can be played by 2-5 players in 20-40 minutes.

Print and play instructions

- Print and cut out all cards (print two-sided, long edge if you want card backs).
- You will need to supply a leader marker. This can be anything that is easy to see and pass between players (such as a candlestick).
- You will need to supply the coinage or some system of keeping track of the score. These can be real coins, counters from another game, or you can simply keep track by writing down scores on a piece of paper.
- As always, card stock works better than normal printing paper.

Setup

1. Players take all six cards with the matching color/symbol into their hand (two Rats, one Snake, one Hawk, one Fox, and one Net).
2. Place the two extra Rats and two extra Nets (the white colored cards) into the discard pile within reaching distance of all players.
3. Place a pile of coins or counters within reaching distance.
4. Use some means to choose who will begin as the leader (such as the most hawkish among you) and give them the leader marker.

Gameplay

Every round consists of three turns. Each player will get to be the leader for one round in a 4 or 5 player game or two rounds for a 2 or 3 player game.

After the final round, the player with the highest score is the winner.

Taking a Turn

1. At the start of a turn, all players will simultaneously select one of the available cards from their hand (they'll have six to choose from for the first turn) and play it face-down on the left side of their play area.
2. Once everyone has chosen and placed a card face-down, all players will flip their chosen cards over. These are the active cards for the turn.
3. Starting with the leader and moving to the left, each player will choose **one** of the available actions (or none) to take with their active card (see Card Actions below).
4. After all players have played or passed, the first turn is over and all players must move their active card (if they have one) from the left side of their play area into their collection on the right side.

Following Turns and Finishing the Round

1. Observe the same rules for the second and third turns as for the first, except that players will have one less card to choose from their hand each following turn.
2. When the third and final turn is complete, players score all cards in their collection and take an equivalent value of coins (collected coins always remain visible to all players).
3. After scoring, players reset all cards, returning them to their original location at the start of the game: to their own hand, to another player's hand, or to the discard pile
4. The leader marker is passed to the left and a new round begins with a new leader for the following three turns.

Cards and Collections

- When a player takes a card (either from another player or the discard pile), they place it in the right side of their play area as part of their collection.
- All other players must be able to see what a player has in their collection at any time.

Additional Turn Rules

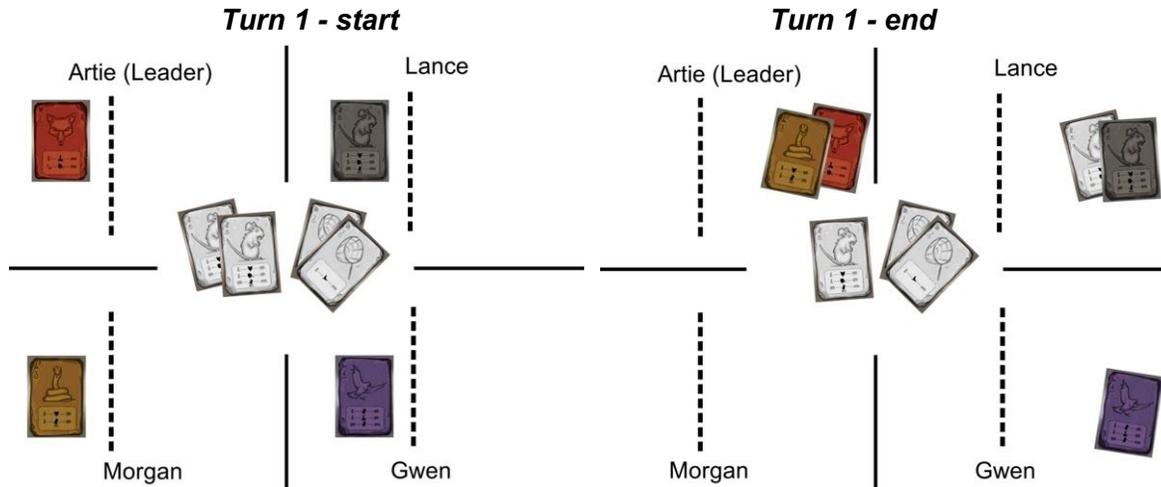
- If, during their turn, a player does not have an active card because it has been removed, that player will not be able to take an action for that turn and instead must pass.
- When taking or discarding a card from an opponent, a player may choose either the opponent's active card or a card from the opponent's collection.
- A player may only take or discard face-up cards on the table, they can never perform actions on cards in an opponent's hand.
- Table talk and bluffing is highly encouraged!

Game End

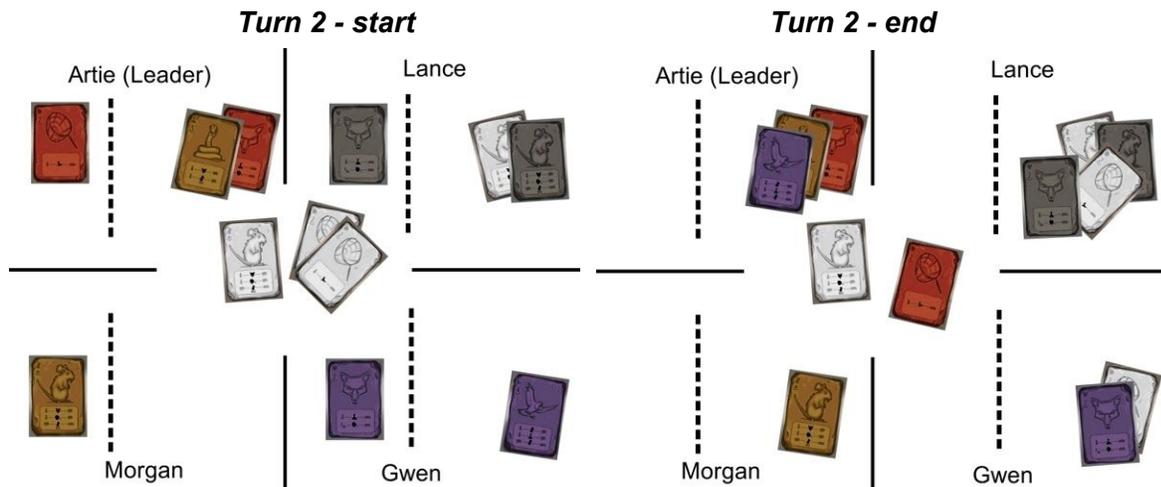
- After the last round is completed and all players have been the leader for one round (4 or 5 players) or two rounds (2 or 3 players), players add up the total value of all coins they've gained during the game to get their final score.
- The player with the highest final score is the winner.
- Ties go to the player who gained the most coins in the last round.

Example Round - 4 players

(cards are displayed from the player's perspectives)

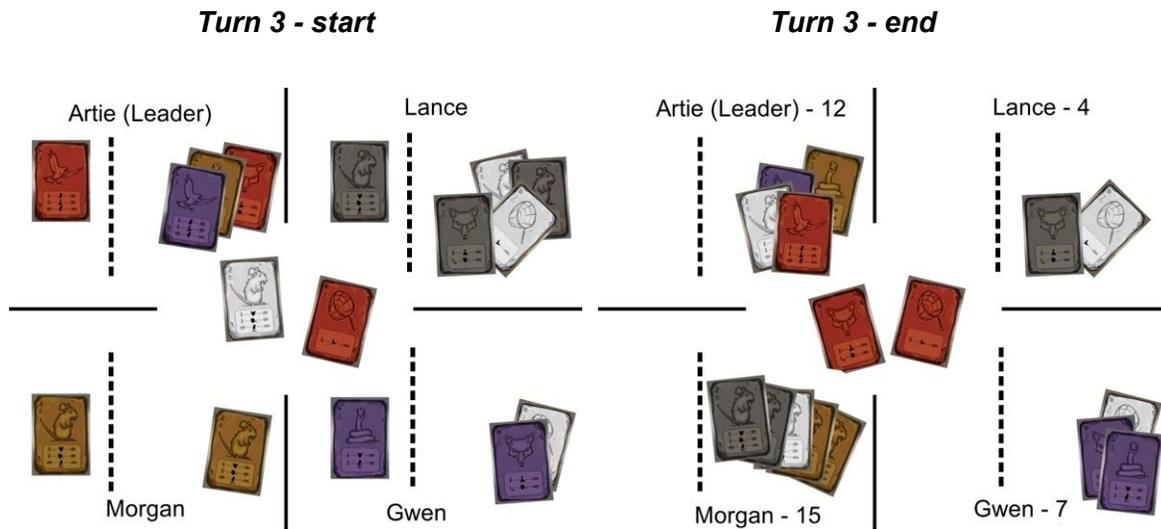


All players choose and then flip their active cards. Artie is the leader for this round and will begin all turns. Artie takes Morgan's Snake with his Fox and adds it to his collection. Lance takes the two Rats from the discard pile with his Rat and adds it to his collection. Gwen makes Lance discard one of his Rats using her Hawk. Morgan can't perform any actions because her active card was taken by Artie. All players move their active cards to their collection.



All players choose then flip cards. Artie takes Gwen's Hawk with his Net. Lance takes a Net from the discard pile with his Fox. Gwen takes the other Net from the discard pile with her Fox. Morgan makes Artie discard a Net using her Rat. All players move their active cards to their collection.

Example Round - 4 players (cont.)



All players choose then flip cards. Artie takes the Rat from the discard pile using his Hawk. Lance makes Artie discard a Fox using his Rat. Gwen makes Lance discard all his Rats using her Snake. Morgan takes all the Rats now in the discard pile (thanks to Gwen) using her Rat. All players move their active cards to their collection. The round is now over. Players tally their scores and collect coins. Artie has 12 (2 Hawks, 1 Snake, 1 Rat), Lance has 4 (1 Fox, 1 Net), Gwen has 7 (1 Snake, 1 Fox, 1 Net), and Morgan has 15 (the most coins) from her 5 Rats. Players return all cards to their original locations. The leader marker passes to Lance for the next round.

Variations

More players

- If you wish to play with more than 5 players, just print extra cards and mark each set of six differently.
- Use the same rules as with a 5 player game, however, keep in mind that games with 6 or more can take a while longer.

Teams

- Try to make teams as equal as possible (whether in number of members or skill level).
- Alternate the seating as much as possible to prevent members of the same team playing (or leading) back to back.
- All members of the same team pool their collected coins into one pot at the end of each round. The team with the most coins at the end of the game wins.

No Peek

- If playing with young children who have trouble choosing cards on their own, have everyone shuffle and choose their active card at random each turn.
- An adult may also wish to help younger players choose their actions or at least explain some of the best options available.

The Gamble

- For a gambling-style option, all players begin the game with the same amount of coins and will put the same pre-set amount (an ante) into the pot at the start of each round.
- If a player doesn't have enough to pay the ante, they must leave the game.
- You may wish to increase the ante as the game progresses to keep things interesting.
- Before the start of a round, each player will shuffle their hand face down (so they can't see it) and have the player to their left (also without looking) take one of their cards, adding it to their own hand, and then remove another card for the entire round. Removed cards remain face down for the round, no one may look at them. Each player will start the round with one less card in their hand and one card from the player on their right.
- After the round is over, return all cards to their players, including the removed cards.
- Similar to poker, at the start of each turn, after all players have chosen and placed a card face down, beginning with the leader, players either check, raise their bid (adding it to the pot), or fold. All other players must either match a raised bid or fold (and leave for the round). Players may choose to go "all in" and place all of their coins into the pot, this may result in the pot being split if others are able to continue raising. After all remaining players have checked, continue the turn as normal.
- The leader changes every turn instead of every round, passing to the left and skipping players who have already folded. Keep track of which player began leading a round as that will still pass to their left at the start of the next round.
- At the end of the round (three turns, as usual), the player with the highest score takes all coins in the pot. If tied, split as evenly as possible, leaving the remainder in the pot.
- Continue the game until only one player remains or still has coins—the winner.

Card Values and Actions



Rat (* first is worth 1 coin, second worth 2, third worth 3, etc.)

- Make any opponent discard a Fox
- Make any opponent discard a Net
- Take all Rats from the discard pile and add them to your collection



Snake (3 coins each)

- Make any opponent discard all of their Rats
- Make any opponent discard a Fox



Hawk (4 coins each)

- Make any opponent discard a Rat
- Make any opponent discard a Snake
- Take one Rat from the discard pile and add it to your collection



Fox (2 coins each)

- Take one Snake from any opponent and add it to your collection
- Take one Net from any opponent or from the discard pile and add it to your collection



Net (2 coins each)

- take one Hawk from another player and add it to your collection

Icons



- Player's Collection



- The Discard Pile



- Any Opponent



- Any Opponent or The Discard Pile