

THE GANG

The Cooperative Poker Game

DELUXE
EDITION

For 3-10 players, ages 10 and up

PLAY
WITHOUT
READING
THE RULES!



For an animated tutorial explaining the rules of this game, scan the QR code above to download the free Kosmos Helper App. See the app store for details.

You are **THE GANG** — a group of professional thieves ready to commit a series of heists!

The success of these heists hangs on The Gang's perfect coordination. To win the game, you'll have to work together to steal three gold bars without tripping the alarm three times.

And how exactly will you do it? You'll play **poker ... cooperatively!**

This special deluxe edition contains:

- ♦ THE GANG - The Base Game for 3 to 6 players
- ♦ MORE PLAYERS - Expansion for 7 to 10 players
- ♦ THE JOKERS & MORE - Mini Expansion 1
- ♦ TOOLS OF THE TRADE - Mini Expansion 2
- ♦ THE DEALER - Mini Expansion 3

KOSMOS

THE GANG

The Cooperative Poker Game

Poker

The Gang is based on poker — more specifically on the poker variant *Texas Hold 'em*. If you already know the rules for *Texas Hold 'em*, it will be easier for you to learn and play *The Gang*. However, in our many playtests, we have found that even absolute poker beginners can easily pick up *The Gang* and have a lot of fun! It can help, of course, if you watch an instructional video for *Texas Hold 'em* before you play.

Not all of the rules for *Texas Hold 'em* are necessary for *The Gang* and a few new rules have been added in their place.

Cooperative

You win or lose together. You can only win the game if you correctly evaluate your fellow players' cards.

NOTE: Contrary to normal poker, you absolutely do not want to bluff!

Communicative

An important rule of *The Gang* is that you are not allowed to freely discuss the cards in your hand. You are not allowed to show, say, or hint which cards you have in your hand to the other players. Additionally, if you know something about another player's hand only because you know your own hand, you also cannot disclose that information.

There is, however, an opportunity for communication in the form of chips. Pay attention to who takes which chip in each round and how the chips change among you.

Note: The difficulty level of this game is determined not only by the cards, but by the number of players. **The more players there are, the more difficult the game becomes.**

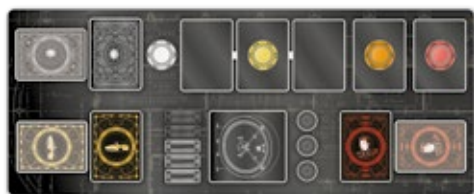
If you are playing a three-player game with experienced poker players, the game may seem too easy depending on the distribution of the cards.

We recommend playing a complete "basic game" before deciding if you want to **adjust the difficulty level** by changing the number of players or trying Advanced, Professional, or Master Thief Mode. You can also adjust the difficulty level using the exit chips.

GAME MATERIALS

THE BASE GAME (for 3–6 players)

Rules start on page 4



1 Playmat



52 Playing cards
(normal poker cards)



6 Gameplay and hand ranking
overview cards



3 Gold bars

(the 2 additional gold bars will only
be used for the *The Tools of the Trade*
expansion)



3 Alarms

24 Chips



6 White chips
(1 to 6 stars)
for **Round 1**



6 Yellow chips
(1 to 6 stars)
for **Round 2**



6 Orange chips
(1 to 6 stars)
for **Round 3**



6 Red chips
(1 to 6 stars)
for **Round 4**

EXPANSION: More Players (for 7–10 players)

Rules start on page 12



4 Additional gameplay and hand ranking overview cards

19 Additional chips



4 White chips
(2x 0, 1x 7, 1x 8 stars)
for **Round 1**



4 Yellow chips
(2x 0, 1x 7, 1x 8 stars)
for **Round 2**



4 Orange chips
(2x 0, 1x 7, 1x 8 stars) for
Round 3



4 Red chips
(2x 0, 1x 7, 1x 8 stars; 3 exit chips)
for **Round 4**

ADVANCED MODE, PROFESSIONAL MODE, AND MASTER THIEF MODE

Rules start on page 14



10 Challenge cards



10 Specialist cards

MINI EXPANSION 1: THE JOKERS & MORE

Rules start on page 17



2 Joker cards

MINI EXPANSION 2: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Rules start on page 18



10 Tool cards



5 Vault cards



2 Additional gold bars

MINI EXPANSION 3: THE DEALER

Rules start on page 19



1 Dealer chip

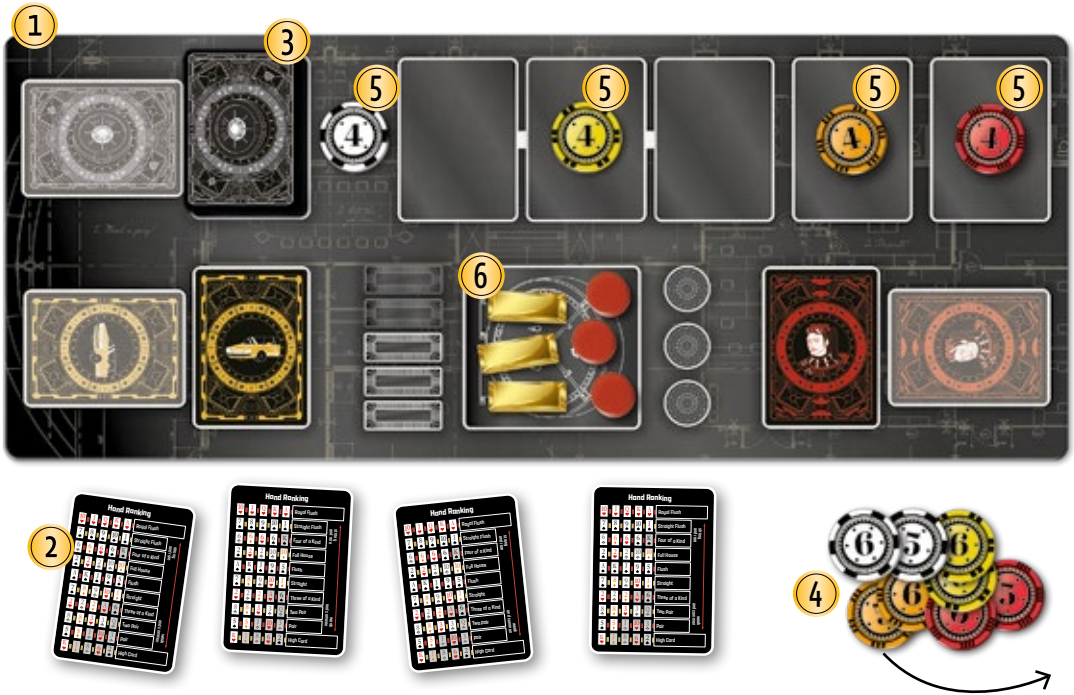
THE BASE GAME (for 3-6 players)

GAME SETUP

You will only need the materials listed on page 2 under **The Base Game**. Return the remaining materials to the box.

- 1 Place the **playmat** in the middle of the table.
- 2 Each player should receive one **gameplay and hand ranking overview card**.
- 3 Shuffle the **52 playing cards** and place them face down in the designated space on the playmat.
- 4 Remove the **chips** that show a higher number of stars than the number of players in your game. Return these chips to the box.
- 5 Place the **white chips** on the white space of the playmat, the **yellow chips** on the yellow space, the **orange chips** on the orange space, and the **red chips** on the red space of the playmat.
- 6 Place the **three gold bars** and the **three alarms** on the vault area of the playmat.

Example: If you play with four players, you will need the 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-star chips of each color. Return the 5- and 6-star chips to the game box.



GAME OVERVIEW

A full game of *The Gang* consists of three to five “heists.” Each heist consists of four rounds. At the end of each heist, you will see if you were successful or not. You win the game if three heists are successful. You lose if you fail three times.

GAMEPLAY

Heist process

Each heist consists of four rounds and the showdown, which proceed in the following manner:

ROUND 1 ("PRE-FLOP")

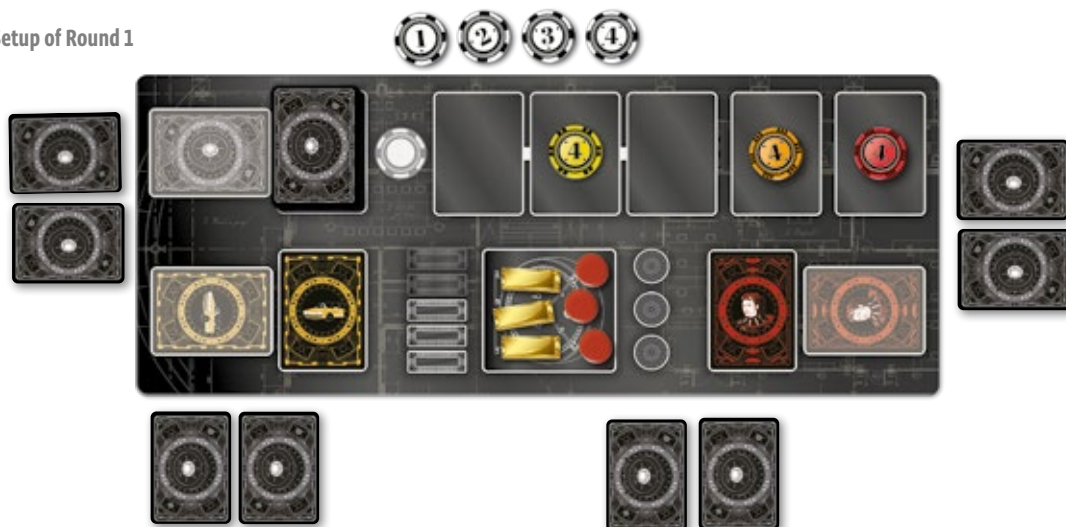
a) Deal two cards to each player

Shuffle the 52 playing cards and deal **two cards face down** to each player. These are the "pocket cards." You can look at your own **pocket cards** at any time. Place the remaining cards back on their designated space on the playmat.

b) Lay out and take the white chips

Lay out the **white chips** in the center of the table next to the playmat.

Setup of Round 1



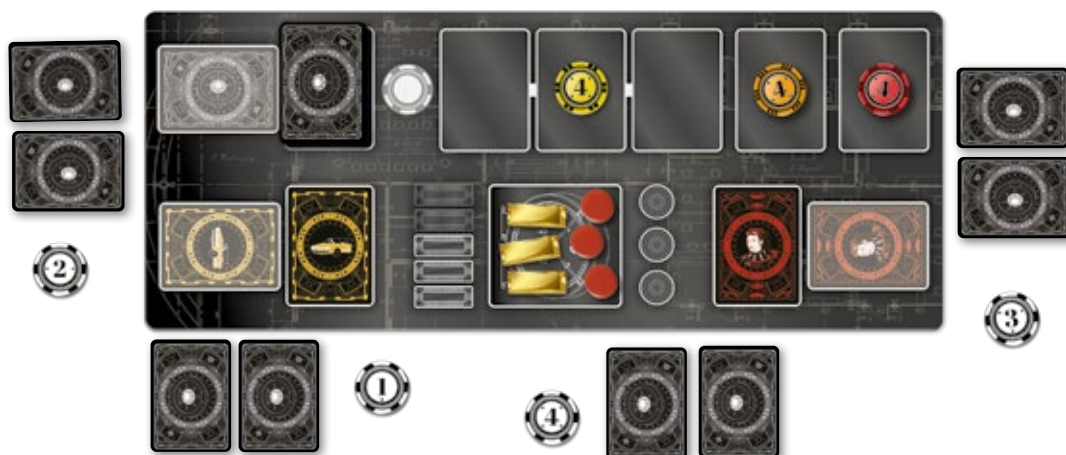
The chips show an increasing number of stars, which **indicate the strength** of the chips. They are the method by which you communicate your estimation of the strength of your own **hand (pocket cards + community cards)** relative to the other players. If you take the chip with the most stars, you are signaling that you believe you currently have the strongest hand at the table. If you take the 1-star chip, you believe that you have the weakest hand.

There is no turn order. You all play **at the same time** according to the following rules:

- You can take **any chip from the current round at any time** and place it in front of you. This can be a chip **from the center of the table**, or it can be a chip that is **already in front of another player**.
- You may **never have more than one chip** of the same color in front of you.
- You are allowed to put a chip from the current round that is in front of you **back in the center of the table**. You may never place a chip in front of another player.

As soon as everyone has a chip in front of them, Round 1 ends.

End of Round 1



Round 2 ("The Flop")

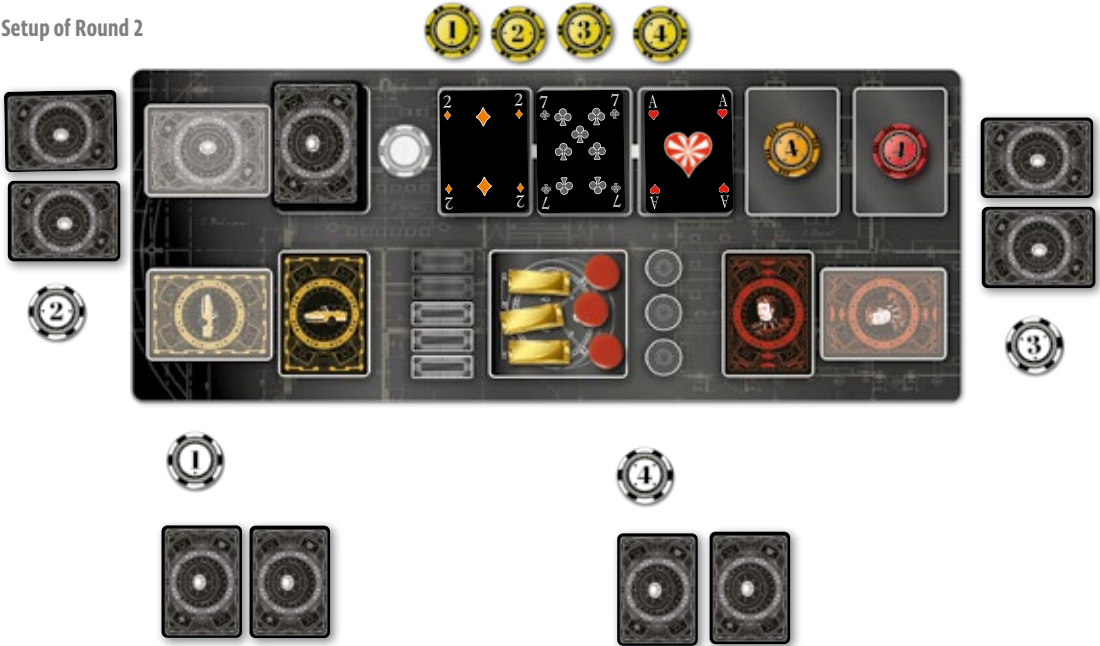
a) Reveal three community cards

One of you draws **three cards** from the deck and places them **face up on the** three designated spaces on the playmat. Face-up cards on these spaces on the playmat are called **community cards**.

b) Lay out and take the yellow chips

Lay out the **yellow chips** next to the playmat.

Setup of Round 2



Each of you takes one of the yellow chips, as in the first round. The chips from previous rounds are not part of the current round. You should, however, place them neatly in front of you in a row, so that the other players can see how your evaluations have changed over the course of the rounds.

End of Round 2



ROUND 3 ("THE TURN")

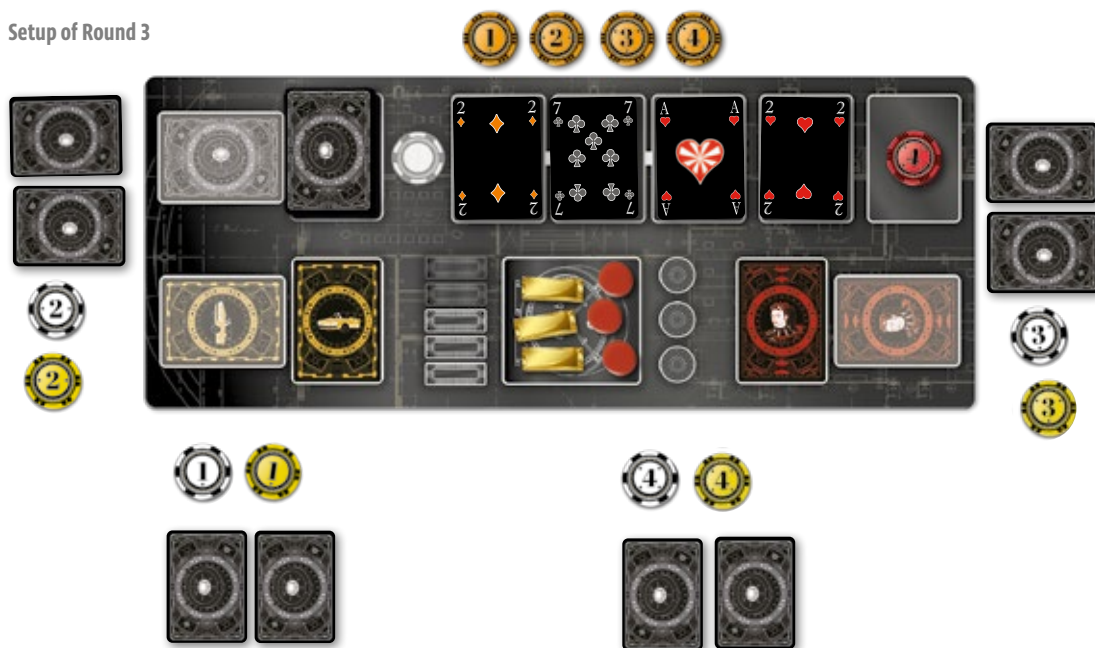
a) Reveal one community card

One of you draws **one card** from the deck and lays it face up next to the three other community cards.

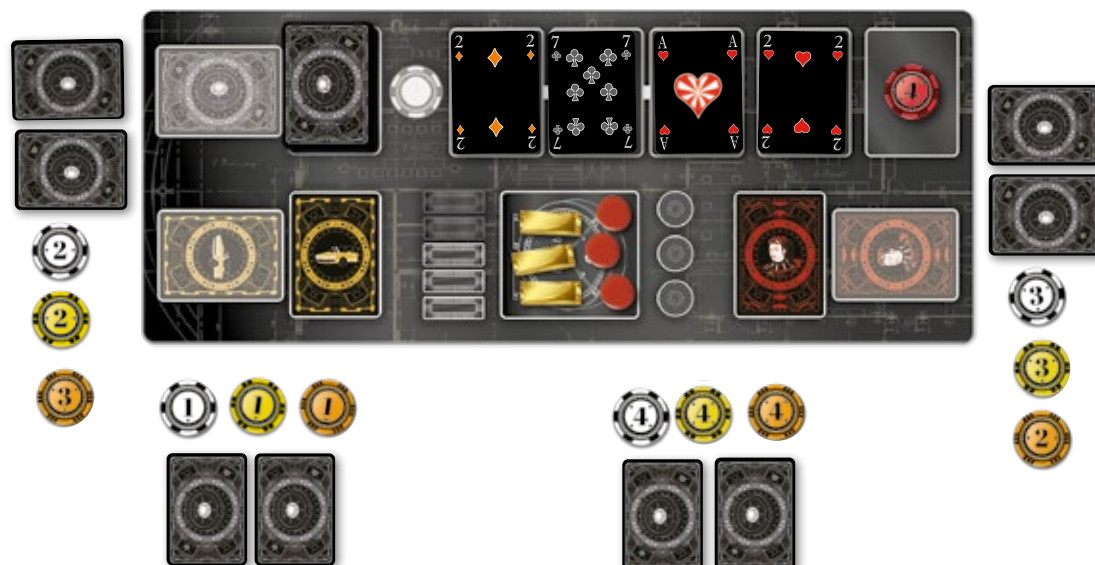
b) Lay out and take the orange chips

Lay out the **orange chips** next to the playmat. Each of you takes a chip as usual.

Setup of Round 3



End of Round 3



ROUND 4 ("THE RIVER")

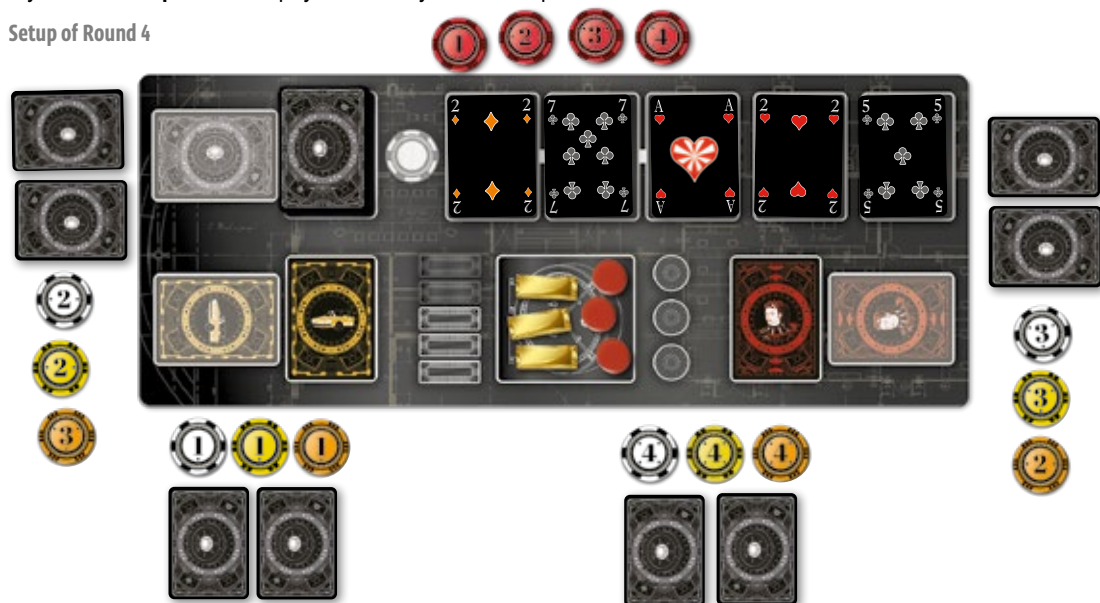
a) Reveal one community card

One of you draws **one card** from the deck and lays it face up next to the three other community cards.

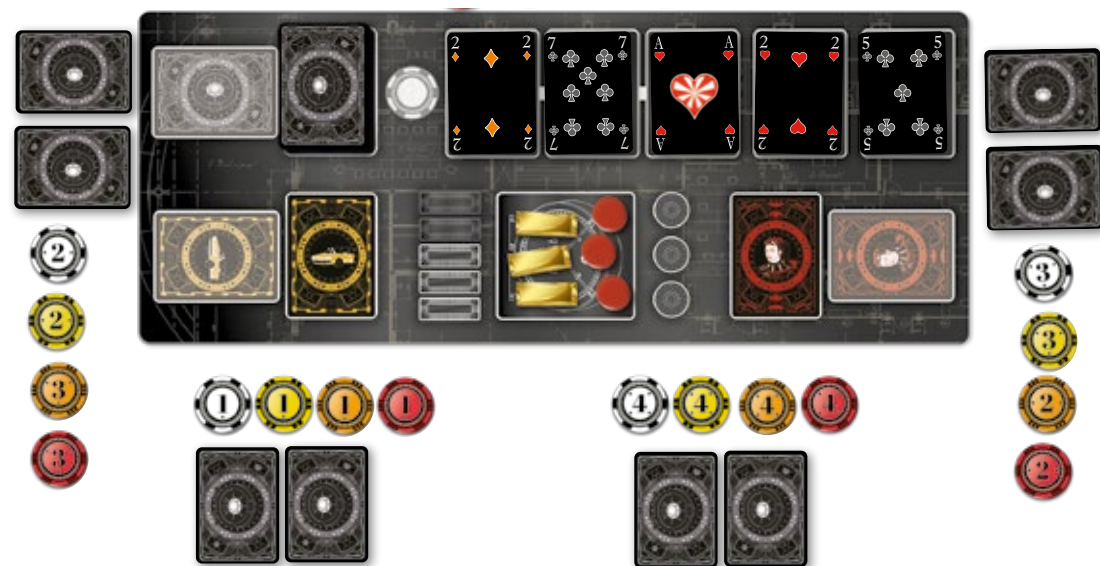
b) Lay out and take the red chips

Lay out the **red chips** next to the playmat. Each of you takes a chip as usual.

Setup of Round 4



End of Round 4



After **Round 4**, proceed to the showdown.

THE SHOWDOWN

Now we come to the moment of truth. The only chips that matter now are the red ones you took in **Round 4**!

Beginning with the player with the red 1-star chip, reveal your hands in ascending order (1-star chip, 2-star chip, and so on) and declare your **best possible poker hand made up of exactly five cards**.

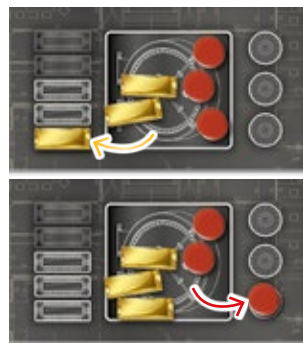
ALL CORRECT?

If you all reveal **equally strong or stronger hands** one after another without a mistake, the heist is successful. Move **one of the gold bars out of the vault area and into one of the gold bar spaces** to the left.

AT LEAST ONE MISTAKE?

If one of you reveals a **weaker hand** than one that was previously revealed, you made a mistake in the order of the chips. This heist fails because you organized yourselves incorrectly. Move **one of the alarms out of the vault area and into one of the alarm spaces** to the right.

The Showdown ends the current heist. Begin the **next heist** with Round 1.



GAME END

The game can end in two ways, depending on which condition happens first:

- Either you **win** if you succeed in moving **three gold bars** to the **gold bar spaces**.
- Or you **lose** if you have to move **three alarms** to the **alarm spaces**.

RANKING OF HANDS

It is extremely important to know the following hand rankings well in order to evaluate your own hand in comparison to others. If you know the rules for *Texas Hold 'em* you can skip this section of the rulebook.

Important: You must build the **best possible hand** made up of **exactly five cards** from your seven available cards (2 pocket cards + 5 community cards)!

There are ten different rankings. Each hand can be placed in one of these rankings.



Overview card

GROUND RULES: THE VALUES OF INDIVIDUAL CARDS

The highest card is the A (ace) followed by K (king), Q (queen), J (jack), and then the number values in descending order: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2. Cards of different suits (**spades, diamonds, hearts, clubs**) have the same value (e.g. the ace of spades is equal to the ace of hearts).



weak card

strong card

THE CARD COMBINATIONS IN DETAIL (FROM WEAK TO STRONG)

There are 10 different card combinations. These vary in strength and frequency. A “high card” is very common, a “three of a kind” is relatively rare, and a “royal flush” almost never happens. Here is an explanation of the 10 card combinations, sorted from **weakest and most common** to **strongest and rarest**:



High Card

If someone doesn't even have a pair, their highest card counts. If multiple players have the same high card, first compare the highest **kicker card** (see the box below for an explanation of the term **kicker card**). If these cards also have the same value, compare the second-highest **kicker card**. If these are also the same, compare the third and then the fourth-highest **kicker card**.

Kicker Card

The term “kicker card” refers to a card that does not contribute to the actual hand. Every hand that doesn't consist of five cards is “padded” with kicker cards. As a reminder: A maximum of five cards are incorporated into the evaluation of the hand ranking, including kicker cards.



Pair

A pair is made up of two cards of the same value. If more than one player has a pair, the pair with the higher card value is stronger. If more than one player has the same pair, compare the highest *kicker card*. If these also have the same value, compare the second-highest *kicker card*. If these are also the same, compare the third-highest *kicker card*.



Two Pair

Two pair is a hand that has two cards of the same value and two cards of another value. If more than one player has two pair, the respective higher-valued pairs are compared. If these are of the same value, the respective lower-valued pairs are compared. If these are also the same, the fifth card decides (→ *Kicker Card*).



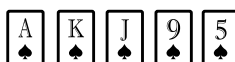
Three of a Kind

A three of a kind is made up of three cards with the same value. If multiple players have three of a kind, the set with the highest card value is strongest. If multiple players have the same three of a kind, first the highest and then the second highest *kicker cards* are compared.



Straight

A straight is made up of five cards with consecutive values. If multiple players have a straight, the straight with the highest card wins. The ace can count as either the highest or the lowest card: A-2-3-4-5 or 10-J-Q-K-A. The ace cannot be used in the middle of a straight: K-A-2-3-4 is not allowed.



Flush

A flush is made of five cards in the same suit (clubs, spades, hearts, or diamonds). If multiple players have a flush, they are evaluated based on the highest card. If these are the same, the second highest decides, then the third highest, etc.

NOTE: In poker, the four suits are actually divided into two colors: black and red. We've given the suits four different colors for better differentiation:

spades = black, diamonds = orange, hearts = red, clubs = grey



Full House

A full house is made up of a pair and a three of a kind. If multiple players have a full house, the higher three of a kind wins. If the three of a kind is the same, the highest pair wins.



Four of a Kind

A four of a kind is made up of four cards of the same value. For example, four kings. If multiple players have four of a kind, the highest four of a kind wins. If multiple players have the same four of a kind (i.e., if the four of the kind appears in the community cards), the highest *kicker card* decides (→ *Kicker Card*).



Straight Flush

A straight flush consists of a straight, i.e., five consecutive cards, all in the same suit. If multiple players have a straight flush, the player whose straight flush contains the highest card is the winner.



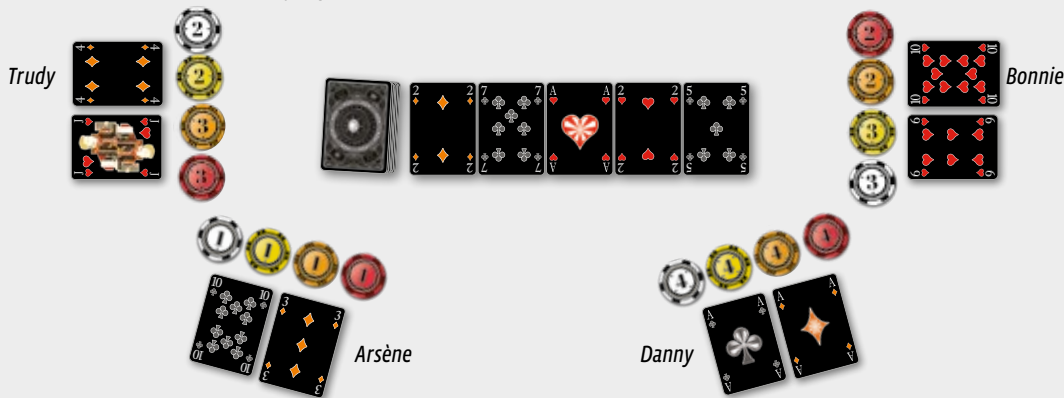
Royal Flush

The strongest hand in the poker ranking is a royal flush. A royal flush consists of a straight flush, i.e., five consecutive cards all in the same suit, that begins with 10 and ends with an ace.

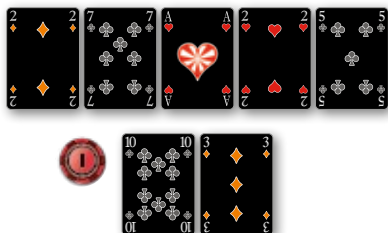
TRUE TIE

It sometimes happens that (despite the *kicker cards*) the card combinations of several players are **exactly the same**. This happens, for example, when the best possible card combination consists of the five community cards and therefore the players' pocket cards are not part of the best possible card combination. Then you have *true tie*. Among the players who are involved in a *true tie*, the order of the chosen chips is irrelevant. The ranking compared to all of the other players must still be correct.

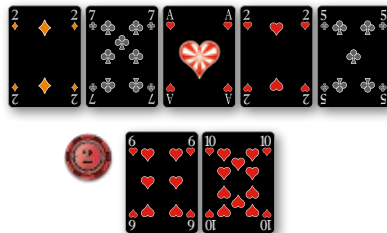
Example: Showdown in a four-player game



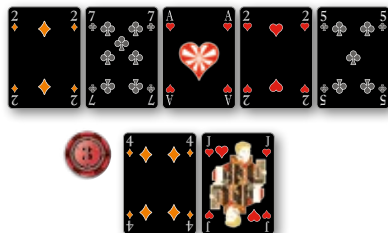
Arsène has the hand **2-2-A-10-7**
and the 1-star chip



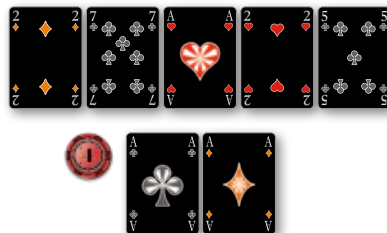
Bonnie has the hand **2-2-A-10-7**
and the 2-star chip



Trudy has the hand **2-2-A-J-7**
and the 3-star chip



Danny has the hand **A-A-A-2-2**
and the 4-star chip



Danny has a full house. The other three players each have a pair made up of two 2s. Danny therefore ranked himself correctly (4-star chip), as he has the highest-ranking hand.

Arsène, Bonnie, and Trudy next compare their highest kicker cards. For all three, this is the community ace. Because all three have an ace, the second highest kicker card is compared. For Arsène and Bonnie, this is the 10 and for Trudy this is the J. Trudy has a higher-ranked hand than Arsène and Bonnie and therefore also ranked herself correctly (3-star chip).

Arsène and Bonnie have the exact same hand, a true tie (remember: only five cards contribute to the hand). Their chosen chips are counted as correct (1-star and 2-star chip). Therefore, all of them have ranked themselves correctly and the gang can move a gold bar into one of the gold bar spaces.

REMINDER

You **may not share information about your hand** with the other players. You may only speculate on the hands of the other players with information that is available to everyone (you may not share any information that relates to your own hand).

EXPANSION: MORE PLAYERS

(for 7–10 players)

You will need the game components listed on pages 2 and 3 under “**The Base Game** (for 3–6 players)” and “**Expansion: More Players** (for 7–10 players).” Return the remaining game components to the box.

The rules of the Base Game (for 3–6 players) apply — see page 4 in these instructions — with the following changes based on the number of players.

First read the rules for a game with ten players. Then check how many chips you need for the number of players you have.

10 Players

Game materials needed from this expansion:



Eight 0-star chips
(2 white, 2 yellow, 2 orange, 2 red)



Four 7-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Four 8-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Three exit chips (red)

GAME PLAY [with 10 players]

In each of the four rounds, add the chips of the **relevant color** (two 0-star chips, one 7-star chip, and one 8-star chip). The **exit chips** are only used in **Round 4**.

The rounds are played as usual: Players take chips in each of four rounds, and then proceed to the showdown.

The **two 0-star chips** rank below the 1-star chips. That means that during the showdown, the hands with the 0-star chips must be weaker than the hand with the 1-star chip. It doesn't matter if one of the 0-star hands is stronger than the other one, the important thing is that both of the hands with the red 0-star chips are weaker than the hand with the 1-star chip.

In **Round 4**, you will take the red chips (0 to 8 stars). **In addition**, three of you must take an **exit chip**. Exit chips may be taken and traded exactly the same way as star chips during the round.

Round 4 ends when all star chips **and** all exit chips have been taken from the center of the table.

The players who have exit chips do not take part in the showdown. That means you do not need to check whether their star chips are in the correct order.

Example: Showdown in a game with 10 players

A 4♥ 2♣

B 10♥ 8♣

C 8♠ 6♥

D 7♥ 4♦

E 9♥ 5♦

F A♣ 4♠

G 10♠ 9♠

H 7♣ 7♠

I K♦ J♠

J D♠ D♥

Deck: K♥, 5♠, D♣, 10♦, 3♣

Players A and D have each taken a 0-star chip. Their hands are both weaker than Player C's hand with the 1-star chip — the order is therefore correct.

Players B, F, and H have each taken an exit chip. Player B also took the 6-star chip and the showdown reveals that they have a weaker hand than player G with 5-star chip. This doesn't matter, though, because Player B's exit chip means that they are not included in the showdown evaluation.

VARIANT: Mastermind Mode for 10 players:

Use only two exit chips.

VARIANT: Mega Mastermind Mode for 10 players:

Use only one exit chip.

9 Players

Game materials needed from this expansion:



Four 0-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Four 7-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Four 8-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Two exit
chips (red)

VARIANT: Mastermind Mode for 9 players:

Use only one exit chip.

8 Players

Game materials needed from this expansion:



Four 7-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Four 8-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



Two exit
chips (red)

VARIANT: Mastermind Mode for 8 players:

Use only one exit chip.

7 players

Game materials needed from this expansion:



Four 7-star chips
(white, yellow, orange, red)



One exit
chip (red)

VARIANT: Mastermind Mode for 7 players:

Use no exit chips.

Easier variant for 5-6 players

Since *The Gang* is relatively difficult with five or six players, the exit chips can also be used to make the game easier.

Simply **add one exit chip** to the game when playing with five or six players.

ADVANCED MODE

When you have gained some experience with *The Gang*, you can add the **specialist** and **challenge cards** into the game. These cards alter the rules a bit and add more variability to the heists.

Place the **challenge cards**  and the **specialist cards**  face down in two separate stacks in the spaces intended for them on the playmat.

When you play with these cards **for the first time**, they must respectively be ordered from 1 to 10. When you turn over the first card from the stack, it must be card 1, and so on.

The first heist of the game is unchanged; play it without specialist or challenge cards.

Depending on the outcome of each heist, a specialist **or** a challenge card is activated.

Successful heist?

If you are successful at a heist (gold bar moved to gold bar space), your next heist will be made more difficult by a challenge card. Reveal the **topmost challenge card** in the stack, place it in the center of the table, and read it out loud. This challenge is **now active for the next heist**.

At the end of the next heist, place this challenge card **back at the bottom of the stack**. It is only active for **one** heist!

You can read about the different challenge cards on page 15 of this rulebook.



Failed heist?

If you fail at a heist (alarm moved to alarm space), your next heist will be made easier by a specialist card. Reveal the **topmost specialist card** from the stack, place it in the center of the table, and read it out loud. This specialist is now **active for the next heist**.

Some specialists will help you all directly from Round 1 of your next heist.

For other specialist cards, you decide as a group which of you shall use it and when during the next heist. In order to do so, one of you may suggest using the specialist card at any time (before the showdown!). If the others agree, use it!

At the end of the next heist, place this specialist card back **at the bottom of the stack**. It is only active for **one** heist — whether you have used it or not!

You can read about the different specialist cards on page 16 of this rulebook.

Repeat these steps **at the end of each heist** until the end of the game. This means that either **one challenge card or one specialist card** will be active from the second heist onward.

TIP: In order to experience the whole variety of specialist and challenge cards, **do not** re-sort the stacks from 1–10 at the end of your game. Play through the stacks over several games until you have seen every card from 1–10. When you come back to number 1 **for the second time**, shuffle the deck. From then on, the cards will be in a random order.



PROFESSIONAL MODE

Professional Mode functions like Advanced Mode, but with these changes:

- Remove challenge card 1, “Quick Access” from the stack. This will not be used in Professional Mode.
- Reveal a random challenge card at the beginning of the game. This challenge card is active for **all heists in the game!**
This means that the revealed challenge card is active from the first heist and stays active for all subsequent heists. From the second heist on, for example, there will be **either two challenge cards or one challenge card and one specialist card active**.

MASTER THIEF MODE

Master Thief Mode functions like Advanced Mode, but with these changes:

- Remove challenge card 1, “Quick Access” from the stack.
- Remove one of the three alarms from the game. You lose the game when you have set off **two alarms**.
- There are no **specialist cards** in this mode.
- Reveal two random challenge cards at the beginning of the game. These are active for the first heist. At the beginning of each subsequent heist, discard the lowest-numbered challenge card. Then reveal a new challenge card. There are therefore always **two challenge cards active** for every heist.

CHALLENGE CARDS

Overview & Explanations



1) Quick Access

Put aside the white chips for this heist. In the first round, distribute the pocket cards and go straight to Round 2.



2) Noise Sensors

Turn over the **1-star chips** for **Rounds 1, 2, and 3** to the **dark side**. These chips **cannot change owners after the first time they are taken from the center of the table**.



3) Motion Detector

If **at least one of the community cards** in Round 2 is a **J, Q, or K**, the following occurs: The player who has the **white 1-star chip** (from Round 1) must put their pocket cards face down in the discard pile and draw **new pocket cards** from the deck.



4) Retina Scan

This challenge adds an **extra condition** for a successful heist. Before the **player with the highest-value red chip** reveals their hand in the showdown, you must do the following: The **other players** must confer and **agree together on a card value (from 2 to ace)** that they believe the **player with the highest-value red chip** has **at least one of in their pocket cards**. The player with the highest-value red chip obviously cannot take part in this discussion or give hints. If the players are incorrect, the heist is unsuccessful, even if the ranking of the red chips was correct.



5) Hasty Getaway

There is no distribution of orange chips in Round 3. Just reveal the fourth community card and go straight to Round 4.



6) Ventilation Shaft

Turn over the **highest-value chips** for **Rounds 1, 2, and 3** to the **dark side**. These chips **cannot change owners after the first time they are taken from the center of the table**.



7) Laser Tripwires

If **none of the community cards** in Round 2 is a **J, Q, or K**, the following occurs: The player who has the **highest-value white chip** (from Round 1) must put their pocket cards face down in the discard pile and draw **new pocket cards** from the deck.



8) Blackout

At the beginning of Round 2, you must all discard your chips from Round 1.

At the beginning of Round 3, you must all discard your chips from Round 2.

At the beginning of Round 4, you must all discard your chips from Round 3.

This means that you all must pay close attention to who has which chips in each round in order to better evaluate changes in the strength of your hands.



9) Fingerprint Scan

This challenge adds an **extra condition** for a successful heist. Before the **player with the highest-value red chip** reveals their hand in the showdown, you must do the following: The **other players** must confer and **agree together on what hand ranking (high card to royal flush)** they believe the **player with the highest-value red chip** has. The player with the highest-value red chip obviously cannot take part in this discussion or give hints. If the players are incorrect, the heist is unsuccessful, even if the ranking of the red chips was correct.



10) Security Cameras

Instead of two pocket cards, you are all dealt **three!** For the showdown, build the best five-card combination out of your **three pocket cards and five community cards** (instead of two pocket cards and five community cards).

SPECIALIST CARDS

Overview & Explanations



1) Informant

Decide which of you will **secretly** show **exactly one of their pocket cards** to **one other player**. Of course, this player may not tell the others which card they have seen.



2) Getaway Driver

Decide which of you will share **what hand ranking** their current hand has (pocket cards plus current community cards) with the rest of the players. They cannot share further details.

Example: "I have a pair." The player cannot share which pair they have!



3) Investor

Once the **pocket cards have been dealt in Round 1**, each player says how many **"face cards" (J, Q, K)** they have.

Example: Arsène has K, J and says: "I have two face cards." Bonny has Q, 3 and says: "I have one face card." Trudy has A, 10 and says: "I have no face cards."



4) Mastermind

Decide which of you will share with everyone **how many cards** of a **specific value** they have in their hand.

Example: You decide as a group that Danny will tell you all how many 9s he has. He has 9, 3 and says: "I have one 9."



5) Hacker

Decide which of you will **take one card from the deck** and add it to their hand. Afterward, this player must place **one of their pocket cards face down** on the discard pile. This can be the card that they have just drawn from the deck.



6) Coordinator

Once the **pocket cards have been dealt in Round 1**, each of you chooses **one of your pocket cards**. Everyone then **simultaneously** passes their chosen card to the **player on their left** as a **pocket card**.



7) Jack

Decide which of you will add the **"Jack" specialist card** to your pocket. Afterward, this player must place **one of their pocket cards face down** on the discard pile. The "Jack" specialist card counts as a **J (Jack)**. However, it **does not have a suit**, so it cannot be used for a flush. If you have a four of a kind with the other four Jacks, it counts as a Jack four of a kind with a Jack as a kicker card.



8) Math Whiz

Once the **pocket cards have been dealt in Round 1**, everyone states the **sum of the value of their pocket cards**. 2 to 10 have the values 2–10. J, Q, and K have the value of 10. A has the value of 11.

Example: Arsène has 10, 7 in his hand and says: "I have 17 total." Bonny has Q, 3 and says: "I have 13 total." Trudy has A, 10 and says: "I have 21 total."



9) Con Artist

Once the **pocket cards have been dealt in Round 1** and everyone has looked at their cards, place them **face down in a pile** in the center of the table, **shuffle** them, and **then redistribute** them.

Important: You must only mix the cards that were previously dealt and redistribute them. If you paid attention to which cards you had before they were mixed up, you know two of the cards that are somewhere in your fellow players' hands.



10) Muscle

Decide which of you will take the **"Muscle" specialist card** and place it in front of you. During the showdown, this player beats any other player with a hand of the **same ranking**.

Example: Arsène has the hand 2-2-J-8-7 in the showdown and the "Muscle" specialist card. Bonny has 2-2-A-8-7. Trudy has 8-8-K-7-3. Danny has 7-7-7-8-2. Arsène, Bonny, and Trudy all have a pair. Arsène actually has the weakest pair. However, the "Muscle" specialist card turns his pair into the strongest pair. Danny has a three of a kind, a different rank, and is therefore stronger than Arsène. The correct order of the chips here would be Bonny (1 star), Trudy (2 stars), Arsène (3 stars), Danny (4 stars).

MINI EXPANSION 1: THE JOKERS & MORE

This mini expansion contains two expansion modules, which can be combined with the **base game** and the **more players expansion** individually or together: **The Jokers**, **The 4 Poker Variants**

THE JOKERS

Game materials: 2 joker cards

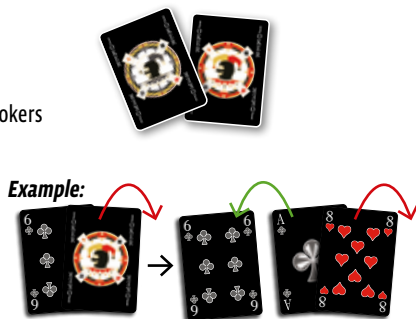
The rules of the base game apply with the following change: Shuffle the two jokers in with the 52 cards of the base game.

What happens if you get a joker as a pocket card?

Tell the other players that you have a joker.

Then place the joker card face down on the discard pile.

Then draw two cards from the deck. Choose one of these cards to keep for your pocket. Place the other card face down on the discard pile without showing it to the other players.



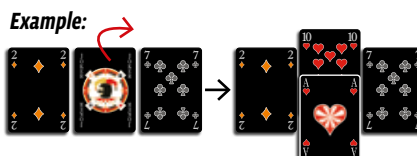
Special case: If one of the two newly-drawn cards is also a joker, you can either ...

... add the other card you drew to your pocket cards

... place the two cards you just drew face down on the discard pile and draw two more cards from the deck. Choose one of these two cards and place it in your pocket cards. Discard the other card.

What happens if one of the community cards is a joker?

Place the joker card face down on the discard pile and draw two new cards from the deck. Place the two new cards stacked on top of each other in the community cards so both are visible:



Special case: If one of the two newly-drawn cards is also a joker, replace it again with two cards from the deck. Then place all three cards stacked on top of each other in the community cards:



To evaluate your poker hand, **you may only use one of the two (or three) stacked cards** — whichever one gives you the best hand.

THE 4 POKER VARIANTS

The base game of *The Gang* uses the rules for the poker variant *Texas Hold 'em*. You can also play *The Gang* with the rules of a different poker variant. The variants differ in how many pocket cards you have, how many community cards there are, and which community cards count for whom.

Choose one of the following four poker variants. Read the rules of the variant and then give it a try.

The variants make the game — depending on the version — a bit more complex, more variable, or just weirder.

There's something for everyone.

You can of course also invent your own poker variations and try those out. Get creative!

Poker variant **OMAHA**

In Round 1, each player is dealt four pocket cards instead of two.

For each player: During the Showdown, you must use exactly two of your four pocket cards — even if you could build a better hand with more or fewer pocket cards.

You must therefore choose the two pocket cards which give you the strongest hand (consisting of five cards) when combined with three of the five community cards.

Poker variant **Seven Card Stud**

In Round 1, each player is dealt three pocket cards instead of two.

There are no community cards.

Instead, in each round (1 to 4) all players are dealt one personal card, which lies face up in front of them. Therefore, after Round 4, there will be four face-up cards in front of each player.

For each player: During the Showdown, you will build the best possible hand (consisting of exactly five cards) out of the seven cards available to you (your three pocket cards + your four personal face-up cards)!

Poker variant *Banana Split*

In Round 1, each player is dealt two pocket cards.

There are no community cards.

Instead, in Rounds 2, 3, and 4, one face-up card is dealt between each pair of neighboring players. Therefore, at the end of Round 4, there will be three face-up cards between each pair of neighboring players.

For each player: During the Showdown, you will build the best possible hand (consisting of exactly five cards) out of the eight cards available to you (your two pocket cards, the three face-up cards to your left, and the three face-up cards to your right)!

Poker variant *Vote of Change*

In Round 1, each player is dealt two pocket cards.

After cards are dealt in Round 1, five community cards are placed in the middle. From then on, at the beginning of each round, you will decide which of the five community cards to discard and replace with a new card from the deck. However, you will not discuss this choice. Instead, each person will decide which card should be replaced. When everyone is ready to vote, one of you will count "3, 2, 1," out loud. On "1," each of you will point to the card that you think should be replaced (you are not allowed to abstain). The card with the most votes will be replaced. If there is a tie for the majority, all of the cards involved in the tie will be replaced.

For each player: During the Showdown, you will build the best possible hand (consisting of exactly five cards) out of the seven cards available to you (your two pocket cards + the five community cards that remain at the end of Round 4)!

MINI EXPANSION 2: THE TOOLS OF THE TRADE

This mini expansion contains two expansion modules, which can be combined with the base game and the more players expansion individually or together: **The Tools, The Extra Vaults**

THE TOOLS

Game materials: 10 tool cards

Shuffle the ten tool cards and **deal one face down** to each player.

If there are fewer than ten players, place any remaining tool cards in the box. Keep your tool card secret until you use it.

You may only use your tool card **once during the entire game**, not once per heist! However, several tool cards may be used during the same heist. As soon as you have used your tool, return the tool card to the box.

The tools make the game easier for you, so we recommend playing **without the specialist cards** from the base game when using the tool cards. (Exception: you will need the specialist cards when using the Burner Phone tool.) We also recommend using the tool cards with the **two extra gold bars**.



VAULT CARDS

Game materials: 5 vault cards, 2 additional gold bars

The rules of the base game apply with the following changes:

To win the game, you must win **five instead of three gold bars**.

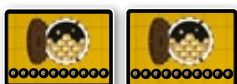
Place the **two additional gold bars** on the **vault space**.

Shuffle the **five vault cards** and place them as a stack **below the vault space**.

If you are successful in a heist, move one of the **gold bars from the vault area to one of the gold bar spaces** to the left (the two pale gold bar spaces at the top are now also being used for the two additional gold bars). **Also turn the top vault card of the stack to the gold side** and place it next to the stack.

If you reveal one of the **two vault cards** that has **numbered chips** pictured on it, the following **extra rule** applies for the next heist:

Turn all **yellow** or **orange** chips to the dark side, depending on which chips are shown on the card. These chips **cannot change owners after they have been taken from the center of the table for the first time**.



MINI EXPANSION 3: THE DEALER

This mini expansion contains **three variants** for the **dealer chip**. Each variant can be combined with the **base game** and the **more players** expansion.

THE DEALER – VARIANT 1

The rules of the base game apply with the following changes:



Choose a person to be **the dealer**. They get the **dealer chip**.

If you are the dealer, in Round 1 of the heist you deal the pocket cards to all players as normal. **However, you also give yourself five additional pocket cards.** (Therefore, you receive $2 + 5 = 7$ pocket cards. The other players get two pocket cards as usual.)

In **Rounds 2, 3, and 4, you do not draw cards from the deck** to place them in the middle of the table as community cards. **Instead, in Round 2 ("The Flop"), you choose 3 of your pocket cards** and play them as **community cards** in the middle of the table.

In **Round 3 ("The Turn"), choose 1 of your pocket cards** and play it as a **community card**. Do the same in **Round 4 ("The River")**.

Therefore, at the end of Round 4, you will be left with the same number of pocket cards as everyone else.

As the dealer you have a **special role** because you decide which of your pocket cards become community cards, and in which order. And you also decide which cards remain in your hand for the showdown.

To begin the next heist, pass the dealer chip to the left. If the next person doesn't want to be the dealer, keep passing the chip until it reaches someone who is willing to take the role.

Note:

For the dealer, if you are playing with the specialist cards and a card refers to "pocket cards," this applies to all of their pocket cards. Therefore, the dealer may have to discard all 7 of their pocket cards and draw 7 new ones at some point.

THE DEALER – VARIANT 2

The rules of the base game apply with the following changes:

Choose a person to be **the dealer**. They get the **dealer chip, but no additional pocket cards**.

In **Round 2**, the dealer draws **4 cards from the deck, secretly** looks at them, and chooses **3 of them** to place as **community cards** in the middle of the table. The remaining card is placed **face down** on the discard pile. Then **pass the dealer chip to the left**.

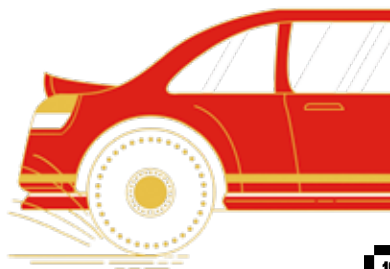
In **Round 3**, the new dealer draws **2 cards from the deck, secretly** looks at them, and chooses **1 of them** to place as a **community card**. The remaining card is placed **face down** on the discard pile. Then **pass the dealer chip to the left**.

In **Round 4** the new dealer draws **2 cards from the deck, secretly** looks at them, and chooses **1 of them** to place as a **community card**. The remaining card is placed **face down** on the discard pile. Then **pass the dealer chip to the left**.

THE DEALER – VARIANT 3

This variant works exactly like Variant 2, except that the dealer chip does not change hands at the end of Rounds 2, 3, and 4, but only at **the beginning of the next heist**.

If the next person doesn't want to be the dealer, keep passing the chip until it reaches someone who is willing to take the role.





THE AUTHORS

John Cooper is a retired NASA engineer. He lives with his wife and their dog in Greenbelt, Maryland.

Kory Heath (1970–2024) was a software engineer who moved from one place to another every few years. In 2000, that other place was Greenbelt, Maryland so that he could develop board games with John Cooper.

The two, along with some friends, invented the games *Zendo*, *Homeworlds*, *Blockers*, and many others that — as the two say — you’ve probably never heard of ;-). *The Gang* is the last game the two developed together and was recognized with a recommendation for the Kennerspiel des Jahres award in 2025.

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