

ROWDY PARTNERS

RULEBOOK



HOWDY PARTNERS! In the sun-baked dust of Dusty Gulch, where shadows stretch long and strange, disagreements find resolution not with a six-shooter, but in the Rowdy Ring. Here, common sense yields to the thrill of a wrestling match, proving that in this corner of the Wild West, might makes right—one suplex at a time.



COMPONENTS



3 Headliner Wrestler Boards



6 Wrestler Boards



3 Manager Boards



36 Move Cards



1 Rowdy Ring Board
& 2 Team Trackers



1 Play Board



4 Health & 2 Pop Track Markers



36 Pop Tokens (incl. Cheat)
(12 damage, 6 tag, 2 "-2", 2 "+2",
4 suits, 10 coins)



9 Wrestler Character Tokens
6 Signature Move Tokens

WHAT IS TRICK-TAKING?



We would like to introduce you, generally, to this type of game. In these games, players play a card from their hand each round (called a “trick”). The trick is won by a player based on certain rules. These rules determine what type of trick-taking game you are playing. The winner of the trick usually leads the next trick. The overall objective of the game can vary but often involves winning specific tricks, avoiding certain cards, or accumulating the most points based on the tricks won.

In Rowdy Partners, your goal is to damage to the opposing team through taking tricks. It is a partner trick-taking game. Low cards take tricks.

Here are some of the key elements of trick-taking games and some related words:

TRICKS

A round of play where each player plays one card.

SUIT

In a trick-taking game, a “suit” refers to the categories into which the cards in a deck are divided. Each card belongs to a specific suit. While the exact number and names of suits vary depending on the game, the most common suits are: Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs, and Spades. **Rowdy Partners has 4 suits (Hats, Horsehoes, Stars, and Tombstones); wild cards count as any suit.**



FOLLOWING SUIT

Players are often required to “follow suit.” You must play a card of the same suit as the card that led (started) the trick, if you have one. If you don’t have a card of the leading suit, you can play any card. Playing any card can be referred to as “sloughing off” or “playing off.”

WINNING THE TRICK

The trick is won based on a hierarchy of cards. **Unlike other trick-taking games, the lowest number in a trick wins.** Some games have trump suits, where cards of that suit outrank all other suits. Rowdy Partners has no trump suit.

LEADING THE NEXT TRICK

The winner of the trick typically leads the next trick, choosing which suit will be played. This gives a strategic advantage.

SCORING

Scoring varies widely between trick-taking games. Some games award points for winning specific tricks, and other games penalize players for taking certain cards. **In Rowdy Partners players will assume the roles of wrestlers and be playing to pin their opponents by depleting all of their health.**

HAND MANAGEMENT

Trick-taking games heavily emphasize hand management. Players need to decide which cards to play at what time. Careful consideration of both the immediate trick and the overall strategy of the game should be taken. Anticipating your opponents’ plays and trying to control the flow of the game is crucial.

Examples of popular trick-taking games include: Hearts, Spades, Bridge, Euchre, and Whist. Trick-taking games combine elements of chance and skill. While the initial distribution of cards is random, skilled players can use strategy, observation, and memory to maximize the chances of winning.



SET-UP



★ 4 PLAYER SETUP

- 1 Place the **Rowdy Ring** and **Play Board** in the center of the table.
- 2 Pick a **Wrestler** and take the matching wrestler board, the wrestler character token, health track marker, and any signature move tokens for that wrestler.
- 3 Place **health track markers** on the character's max health.
- 4 Place your team's wrestler tokens in your **Team Tracker** in the **Rowdy Ring**. See the side panel on the next page.



- 5 Pick a player to be your **partner**. Sit next to one another, and combine your two wrestler boards to form your **Pop Track**. Place the Pop track marker on the first space at the bottom of the combined boards. If there is an icon on this space, gain that benefit to start the game.
- 6 Place all other **tokens** near the board. Cheats (green pop tokens with a mask on one side; the other sides have a variety of benefits) are flipped facedown and shuffled.



4

Choose a team to go first. Position their tokens in the Team Trackers so the “1/4” is showing underneath your wrestlers. The opposing wrestlers will do the same thing, except position the other team so the “3/2” is showing. Each team should read all of the text out loud for abilities on their character boards.

One player from each team will always be in the ring — at the “1” & “2” positions.

Only got two or three of ya?
Stand back - you'll want to check
page 10 for 2 & 3 player setup rules.

HOW TO PLAY

Rowdy Partners teams play in rounds. Each round consists of eight tricks. Rounds are repeated until one wrestler is pinned by reaching the end of their respective health track.

ROUND SET UP

Shuffle all of the cards together. Deal each wrestler 8 cards. The remaining 4 cards go to the “burn” pile face down, they will not be used during the round and cannot be looked at. This is a temporary pile to the side of the Play Board.



The lead wrestler is in the ring (#1 position) and will play the first card. This is the lead card for the current trick. All wrestlers must play, in wrestler order, a card from their hand.

PLAYING CARDS

Cards are played onto spaces on the **Play Board**. The **Play Board** organizes cards in the trick and dictates which wrestler goes next. The wrestler character token is on the #1 position in the Rowdy Ring and plays the first card onto the #1 slot of the Play Board. The wrestler in the #2 position then plays their card on the #2 spot. In turn order, the #3 wrestler and #4 wrestler play their respective cards.

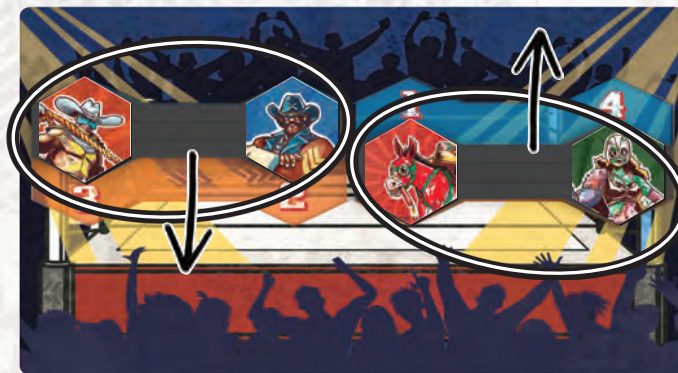
RESOLVING THE TRICK

The wrestler who played the lowest card of the leading suit wins the trick. Immediately—deal damage to the wrestler in the ring of the opposite team equal to the strength of the card that won the trick. Reduce the health of the wrestler who took the damage by the strength of the winning card, including any modifiers. When a wrestler's Health marker reaches the zero (0) space, any excess damage is forfeited. This wrestler is in danger of being pinned (*Dealing Damage pg. 7*)



Carlos does 5 damage to Kate, who was at the second stop sign space, but she only goes to the next stop sign space.

Next, the player's character who won the trick will now be in the ring. Adjust the team tracker to reflect the player order, if needed. The winning player will lead the next trick (headliners will never switch positions as they cover both parts of one side of the Play Board).



Example #1: Because the teammates in the #2/3 positions won the trick, the winning player (Nat) will move to position 1.



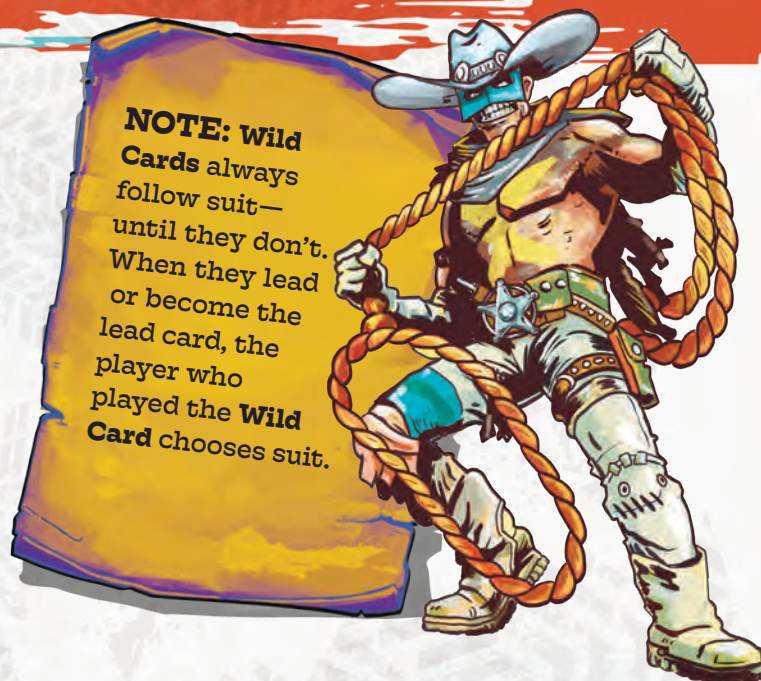
Example #2: Because Nat is in position #3 and won the trick, Nat will rotate to position #2 and Lawman will rotate to position #3. Then, the teammates (Nat #2 and Lawman #3) will slide down to reveal their new position of #1/4, while Dynamite and Grace will slide up to reveal their new positions of #2/3.

★ WHAT CARDS CAN BE PLAYED?

- The **first card** played in the trick can be **any card**. It sets the suit for the trick.
- If leading with a **Wild Card**, declare the suit when playing it.
- Following wrestlers must **match** the lead suit if possible. Wild cards may be played and count as following.
- If a wrestler does not have a card of the lead suit or does not want to play a Wild card, they may choose to play **any card of any suit**. These cards are off-suit unless a Counter occurs.
- Playing a Wild card or a token which changes the suit of a card is **always optional**.
- Pop tokens may be added to cards only when played (see section on page 8 for Pop Tokens)

★ COUNTERS

When a card is played of the same value as another card on the board, flip both cards of the same value face-down. Both cards are now out of the trick and ignored; they remain on the Play Board, filling the respective spaces.



NOTE: Wild Cards always follow suit—until they don't. When they lead or become the lead card, the player who played the **Wild Card** chooses suit.

The earliest remaining played card in the trick on the Play Board now determines the lead suit. If the card is a **Wild**, the wrestler who played the **Wild Card** immediately declares its suit, just like when playing a **Wild** to lead a trick.

If there is no card face-up on the Play Board, the next card played the lead suit. Play continues until all 4 spaces on the Play Board have been filled with cards.

If a card is modified, it has its modified value and not the printed value. *E.g. Andre plays a 4 Star with a -1 pop token; Andre has played a 3 and it can be countered with another 3.*

★ DEALING DAMAGE

If one wrestler loses all their health, your team **loses the game**. Near the end of the health track are 4 unique spaces for the health marker—the **Pin Zone**. Each Stop sign



represents your final struggle to gain the upper hand on your opponents. No matter how much damage you take in a single trick, **you cannot move past more than one Stop sign per trick**. The last space, shown with a skull, means that your team has lost the game.

Each time a wrestler would take damage from a trick when on a Stop sign, make sure the wrestler took enough damage to advance the Health marker.

To move from **Zero to One** take **1 or more damage**.

To move from **One to Two** take **2 or more damage**.

To move from **Two to Three** take **3 or more damage**.

If the wrestler takes more damage than the listed amount, the health marker will only advance one space when starting on these spaces.

If the wrestler takes less damage than the listed requirement, do not move the marker.

★ CONTINUE GAMEPLAY

If wrestlers still have cards in hand, the wrestler now in position #1 plays the new lead card for the next trick.

When no wrestler has won a trick (i.e. all cards have been countered), gameplay will proceed with the wrestler in position #1 playing the new lead card.

After 8 rounds, shuffle all of the cards and deal new hands to each wrestler following the rules from Set Up. The wrestler in position #1 now plays the new lead card for the next trick.

★ PREPARING FOR THE NEXT TRICK

Remove all cards from the Play Board. Place them face down in the Discard pile.

Remove all tokens from the Play Board. Pop tokens return to the common supply except for Cheat tokens. Cheats are placed in their own discard until all Cheat tokens have been depleted; only in this case are these tokens shuffled and returned face-down to the supply. Wrestler tokens return to wrestler boards.

TOKENS



Tokens are used by wrestlers to modify their cards and for other special effects. These include Pop tokens and signature move tokens.

★ EARNING POP TOKENS

Cards marked by the Pop icons on cards earn teams Pop movement. When playing a card with Pop icon(s), move the Pop track marker up that many spaces (1 or 2) on the connected track.

For example, this card has 2 Pop icons



If a space moved through or into has an icon, take the matching token and place it beside your wrestler's board.

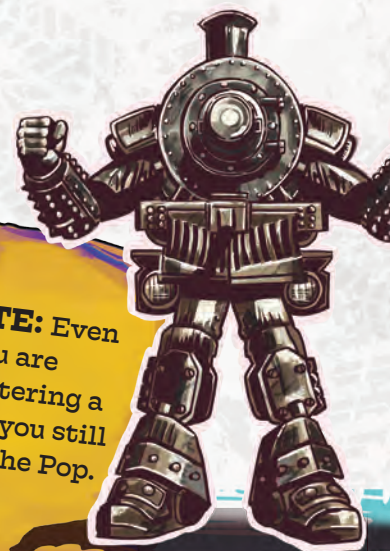
★ SPENDING TOKENS

Tokens are only used on your turn.

You may use multiple tokens at the same time to stack effects.

Tokens earned on a turn may not be used during that same turn. Your tokens only affect your cards (*unless otherwise stated*).

NOTE: Even if you are Countering a card, you still gain the Pop.





TAG

When: Before EITHER wrestler on your team has played a card for the trick.

How: Swap position numbers of your character with your partner. The new in-ring wrestler plays the first card for your team.

See more info on page 6.



COIN

When: When you play your card.

How: Place Coin token(s) on your own card to modify it's value. Your card is now the modified value. Modifying cards can cause counters!

Cards can be modified higher than "8" or lower than "1".

Negative values deal no damage. However, a zero or negative value can cause a player to win the trick without dealing damage.

See more info on page 7.



CHEATS

When: When you play your card.

How: Cheats are kept face-down until you play them. Reveal cheats to modify values or suits on your card. (See the reference page at the end of the rules for a list of Cheats).



DAMAGE

When: When you play your card.

How: If the modified card wins the trick, deal one extra damage (per token) to the in-ring opponent.



SIGNATURE MOVE TOKENS & SPECIAL POWERS

Some wrestlers have specific tokens (diamond-shaped). These tokens have a matching space on the character board. When earned, remove the token from the board to show it is available. After using the token, return it to the wrestler board.

When the Pop track marker is moved over a wrestler's signature move icon, that specific wrestler gains their signature move. If the wrestler already has their signature move, nothing happens. Signature tokens are played when a wrestler plays a card, following the normal play rules.



LAWMAN - THE LARIAT

Change your card to follow the lead suit. No effect when leading.



DYNAMITE - SHORT FUSE

Modify any face-up card +1. You may play this on other wrestler's cards too! This may cause a counter. *For example, Dynamite played by the final player of a trick could cause the opposing cards in slot #2 and #3 to counter each other!*



AMAZING GRACE - MERCY & DAMNATION

Play with a card and modify it +2 or -2.

TABLE TALK!

Table talk about suits in a player's hand, number of cards played, card numbers in a hand, etc. are all **not allowed**.

Players might want to encourage tokens, such as Teamwork, to be used by saying, "I'm really hurting here partner" or something similar. We really don't want to police you on this, but table talk isn't allowed in the spirit of this type of trick-taking.



PLAYING A HEADLINER (2-3 PLAYERS)

Players without teammates play as **Headliners**.

Headliners are big-time wrestlers that act as a 1-player team, wrestling other Headliners (1v1) or tag-teams (1v2). *Headliners all have 20 health.*

★ HEADLINER SETUP

Setup is the same as normal mode with the following exceptions:

- 1 Choose a Headliner and any Manager board. Connect the boards to form your Pop track. These boards are sized differently than normal wrestler characters.



- 2 Take the Manager's matching **signature move token**.



- 3 Headliners have a special piece that goes in the ring which shows them on both the sides. This piece will slide up and down when in the Rowdy Ring to show if they are in the #1 & #4 or the #2 & #3 positions.

★ THE MANAGER DIAMOND (EACH ROUND)

- 1 Deal the Headliner player 8 cards for their hand and 8 cards as shown in the manager diamond (see right). Place the Manager's signature move token in the middle of the diamond (red icon in diagram below).
- 2 Setup your Manager diamond cards face-down.
- 3 Place the Manager's signature move token in the middle of the diamond (highlighted shape).
- 4 Flip the lowest card in the Manager diamond face-up.



★ PLAYING AS A HEADLINER

As a Headliner, play 2 cards per trick. Depending on wrestler position, play all cards in either the 1 & 4 slots or the 2 & 3 slots.

After a card is played from the Manager diamond (and after any tokens or effects are applied), reveal any newly uncovered cards face-up before the next card is played. If the Manager's signature move token is fully uncovered (the bottom 3 cards of the diamond have been played), gain it for use on future turns.

Face-up cards in your Manager diamond are treated like an extension of your hand for purposes of following suit and when choosing a card to play. *During a trick, cards may be played both from the diamond, both cards from your hand, or 1 from each.*




★ WINNING TRICKS AND TAKING DAMAGE

Headliners never swap positions since they occupy both. When Headliners win a trick move the token to take the lead position (1&4). When a Headliner lose a trick, take the damage as normal. The Headliners are then moved into the the follow position (2&3).


★ SPECIAL ABILITIES & MANAGERS

Headliners have special abilities. Some abilities always apply. Make sure to read your ability out loud before the match begins. Manager abilities work just like other tokens and are spent after being used.


THE RICH GET RICHER

After you play a 2, gain + .

GO WILD

After you play a Wild, gain .

RUNAWAY LEADER

When you lead a trick, give it .

FAQS



When can I play as a Headliner?

When playing without a teammate, you will play as a Headliner with a Manager. So, in three-player games one person will play as a Headliner, and in two-player games both players play as Headliners.

What are Pop tokens?

Pop tokens are various types of tokens shown on the Pop track of each wrestler board. Each type of token is spent for its effect and returned to the supply after being used.

When can I use a Pop token?

When you play a card into the trick. All Pop tokens, including the Tag token, must be played before you take your turn.

The Tag token must be played before either player on the team plays a card into the trick.

Who is considered “in the Ring?”

The player's whose character icons are on the Team Trackers next to the 1 and 2 spaces are both considered in the Ring. These players may move positions depending on who wins the trick or if the Tag Pop token is used. Headliners are always considered in the Ring.

Who do Pop tokens belong to? I thought they were my team's Pop tokens?

Pop tokens belong to the player who earned them. The player who cause the pop track marker to advance onto or past a pop icon earns these tokens and the tokens belong to that player.

Who can use a signature token?

Only the wrestler who owns the Signature Token and has unlocked it.

How are cheats discarded?

Cheats are discarded from play, face-down. Only shuffle and return all of these discarded cheats if you run out during the game. In other words, cheats will only be returned to play if you have used all of them once.

CHOOSE YOUR 'RASSLER!

Each fighter comes with unique advantages. Mix and match partners to find combinations that cover all of your bases -or- double-down on your weaknesses to live dangerously.

LAWMAN



Despite his rough edges, everyone loves Lawman. With his white hat, shiny star, and trusty lariat, our buckaroo with a heart of gold can lasso a trick before things get out of hand.

DYNAMITE



Known for sudden outbursts, Dynamite often meddles where she doesn't belong. You'll have a blast throwing explosives onto other player's cards, causing them to counter each other. Warning: handle with care!

AMAZING GRACE



Grace got the Wretch's hand in marriage, and she'll use it to pound her opponents into the mat. She's the **flexible** choice. When she rears back, best to pray for her mercy because you won't like the other thing.

THE WRETCH



Cheating death and everything else, the Wretch doesn't much care for rules. This sneaky southpaw dug through the graveyard for his bride, and he'll dig through the cheat pile for something to bury his enemies.

NAT GREAVES



Putting the "armed" in armed forces, Nat uses his impressive "guns" to lay the smack down. You may think his ability isn't worth writing home about, but many an enemy have surrendered to his relentless assaults.

THUNDER



Hailing from a long line of hi-flyers, nobody knows the ropes like Thunder. He's the type of heel you love to hate. When he enters the ring, the crowd goes boooom! Keep tagging, keep popping, and really pour it on.

HEADLINERS & MANAGERS

Let's meet our Headliners and their Managers. You can switch them around too, but you'll find some pairings to be more natural than others. Jumble things up for an extra challenge.

BIG MONEY



Big Money could buy this whole town, but he can't buy the Rowdy Belt, goodness knows he's tried! With his steady flow of funds, you'll be amazed at how often Big Money can cash in.

BEAN COUNTER



The devil in the details, Bean Counter is equal parts sinister and calculating. When this boorish bookkeeper manages your ledger, your worst assets get a whole lot more valuable, funny that!

GRIZZABELLE



She's powerful. She's stunning. She's also sneaking up behind you making threatening animal noises. As if wilds weren't powerful enough, this feral fighter also gets cheats? Who let her in this match?

JACK DANDY



What can we say about Jack Dandy? No.... really... what even is he? As fast as fast can be. A blur of furry fury. A true wildcard, that's for sure. Opponents best dodge his late-round suit shifting, else they'll get the horns.

WHISTLESTOP



The march of progress personified! There's nothing loco about loving this locomotive. Whistlestop gets extra damage when leading a trick, so if it builds a full head of steam, everyone best step aside!

COACH



If you absolutely, positively need the lead, Coach will put you right back on track. When she cracks the whip, everyone falls right into line, even your opponents.

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Durdle Games would like to thank: The Back Porch Saloon-
where many rowdy times here had.



Durdle Games



Capstone
Games



ROUND ORDER



Rowdy Partners, the team trick-taking game, is played over a series of rounds. Each round is composed of 8 tricks. The team that first pins one of their opponents wins!

- 1 Round Setup – Deal 8 Cards to each player or Manager. 4 Cards go to the Burn Pile.
- 2 Lead Wrestler – Play the lead card of the trick, other wrestlers must follow suit. Watch out for Counters (cards of the same number) which cancel other cards.
- 3 Lowest Card Wins: Deal damage and possibly change who is in the ring.
- 4 Whoever won the previous trick leads the next trick.
- 5 At the end of the round, if no wrestler has lost all their health by being pinned, prepare for the next round.

Headliners and Managers are only for players without a teammate – i.e. Headliners play alone. Headliners have 20 health.

ICON REFERENCE



HAT SUIT



TAG



HORSESHOE SUIT



CHEATS

+2 (2x)
-2 (2x)
Damage (2x)
Suits (4x)
Tag (2x)



STAR SUIT



TOMBSTONE SUIT



DAMAGE



GAIN POP



COIN



Watch to learn
How to Play!

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