

Persuasion (D01)

The game of Victorian courtship. Mail intimate letters to woo and marry your perfect match!

Content Warning: This game presents marriage as a win/lose scenario. Although not explicit, cards can be interpreted as representing desperate dependencies and/or unhealthy power dynamics.

Players: 3-8

Play time: 15-30 Minutes

Components:

57 x Trait Cards

10 x Desires Cards

1 x Matrimony Reference Card

40 x Reusable Sticker Trait Seals

8 x Action Cards

8 x Letterbox Cards (1 per crest)

(5 for each family crest)

8 x Rings (1 per crest)

Number of players	3	4	5	6	7	8
Number of each suit to build trait deck from	7	10	12	14	17	19
Number of each suit to build desires deck from, based on the more wanted suit.	2♦ 2♣ 1♥	2♦ 2♣ 1♥	3♦ 2♣ 1♥	3♦ 2♣ 2♥	4♦ 3♣ 2♥	4♦ 3♣ 2♥

Overview

Marry the suitor with a hand that aligns with your desires! Each day, mail a letter (*i.e. card*) to a suitor to try and catch their attention. If you're ignored, replace a trait with one from the deck! When ready, send a proposal to the one! The game ends once all (*but one*) player is engaged, or the deck is empty!

Setup

First form your desires and trait decks by performing the following:

1. Separate trait cards by suit, and desires cards by **more** wanted suit, shuffling the desires stacks.
2. Form a trait deck with an even distribution, referencing the table above.
3. Form a desires deck with a number of cards from each stack, referencing the same table.
4. Return any unused cards to the box. Shuffle these new trait and desires decks separately.

Each player then performs the following:

1. Pick a family crest, taking the matching letterbox card, ring, and 5 trait sticker seals.
2. Place your letterbox in an accessible location near you with your ring next to it.
3. Take an action card and place on the ☀ side.
4. Draw 5 trait cards and place your trait sticker seals on the back of them, then draw a desires card.

Return any unused desires cards to the box.

Conducting a Day (*i.e. Playing a round*)

Take a Morning ☀ Action

Each player performs one of the following:

- **Write Letter:** Deliver any one of the trait cards in your hand to a suitor's letterbox. While not obligatory, it is considered polite to send your first introductory letter to your left neighbor.
- **Propose:** Deliver your own ring to a suitor's letterbox. (*Ideally one with your desired traits*)
- **Break Up:** Return your fiance's ring, then take your own ring back.

Flip your action card to the ☺ side once you've taken your action.

Perform Evening ☽ Correspondence

Wait until all action cards are on the ☺ side, then resolve all items on your letterbox in any order:

- **Influence:** If your letterbox is empty at the beginning of evening, then draw a card from the deck. You may replace any of the trait cards you hold, discarding what's unused.
- **Read Letters (*i.e. Trait cards*):** Take any trait cards into your hand.
- **Proposals (*i.e. Rings*):** When you receive a ring, pick one of the following:
 - **Reject:** Return the ring to the owner's letterbox.
 - **Accept:** Deliver your own ring to the ring owner's letterbox. Both you and the proposer are now engaged and each place your fiance's ring next to your letterbox.
- **Mutual Proposals:** If two players send proposals to each other, they automatically accept.

Once you've resolve all your Evening ☽ Correspondence, flip your action card to the ☀ side. When all cards are on the ☀ side, check the following:

1. If the deck is empty, or all (*but one*) players are engaged, proceed to Matrimony  (*see below*).
2. Otherwise, proceed to the next day (*i.e. next round*) at Take a Morning ☀ Action (*see above*).

Matrimony (*Ending the Game*)

1. Return all cards to their owners.
2. Each player places their own trait and desires cards face up in front of themselves.
3. Win if your fiances (*if any*), meets the condition on your desires card!

Multiple players may enjoy victory.

Etiquette

Suitor's Secrets: All your cards and cards returned to the box during setup are private information.

Discards, rings, and the back of cards in your hand are public information.

All's Fair: Any agreements outside the rules defined here are non-binding.

Stalemates: If multiple players are waiting for others to take action (*like waiting to see a player's recipient before mailing their own letter*), or wish to take the same action simultaneously (*like wanting to use Influence when only one card remains in the deck*) resolve actions clockwise starting with the host of the game. Note that this doesn't apply if one player clearly acted first.

Key Terms

- **Replace:** Moving your sticker seal from one card to another to mark the new card as yours.
- **Suitor:** Any other player besides yourself.
- **Owner:** The player with the letterbox that has a matching family crest to said component.
- **Fiance:** The player with your ring next to their letterbox after a proposal is accepted.
- **Engaged:** A player with another player's ring next to their letterbox.

FAQ

If I propose to someone, and someone else proposes to me, can both proposals be accepted?

You can't accept a proposal without sending the proposer your ring, which is being held by the one you proposed to! If they accept your proposal, you'd have to break up with them before accepting any new proposals, otherwise you'd have to wait for them to reject your proposal and return your ring before you can accept the proposal sent to you.

What if we all proposed to different players, like our left neighbor, in the same round?

Someone would have to reject a proposal since no one has a ring to accept. If nobody wants to, the host would be forced to reject per Stalemates etiquette.

Can I mail someone else's card to another player?

Yes!

What about using Influence to replace another player's card? Can I do that?

Yes!

Can we openly discuss our cards?

Yes!

Developer Notes

This is an early stage prototype to vet the rules, base mechanics, and interactions of the game. If these mechanics function effectively on their own, I can introduce trait and desire card effects to give the cards emergent storytelling potential and introduce interesting player interactions and conflicts.

If you played the game, I would love to hear what you thought of the experience here!

<https://forms.gle/uP7Mf9DeVrRr476P7>