

Persuasion (C03)

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

9 x Desires Cards

8 x Action Cards

56 x Trait Card Sleeves

40 x Crest Stamps

8 x Rings (1 per crest)

(7 for each family crest)

(10 for each family crest)

8 x Letterbox Cards (1 per crest)

Number of players	3	4	5	6	7	8
Number of trait cards	7	7	6	6	5	5
Discards during setup	30	21	17	9	8	1
Resulting deck size	6	8	10	12	14	16

Overview

Marry the suitor with a hand that matches your desires card! Once per round, mail a letter (*i.e. card*) to a suitor to try and catch their attention. When you receive letters, return those letters with a stamp to encourage their advances. When ready, send a proposal to the one! If they accept, they'll be swapping trait cards with you! Instead of sending a letter, you can reflect, returning a stamp to replace a trait with one from the deck. If you are ignored all day, you get to reflect for free, you might be able to fulfill your desires on your own! The game ends once all (*but one*) player is engaged, or the deck is empty!

Setup

Setup by shuffling the trait cards, then separately shuffling the desires cards.

Each player then performs the following:

1. Choose a family crest, taking the matching letterbox card, ring, 7 trait sleeves, and 5 stamps.
2. Place your letterbox in an accessible location near you.
3. Take an action card and place on the ☀ side.
4. Draw a desires card and a number of trait cards depending on the number of players (*see table above*). Sleeve your trait cards, then return any remaining sleeves to the box.

Finally, return a number of trait cards to the box depending on the number of players (*see table above*). Return any unused desires cards to the box as well.

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

Take a Morning ☀ Action

Each player performs one of the following:

- **Write Letter:** Deliver one of your trait cards to a player's letterbox. While not obligatory, it is considered polite to send your first introductory letter to your left neighbor.
- **Mail Proposal:** If you feel confident that enough of a player's trait cards match your desires, deliver one of your trait cards to that player's letterbox with your ring.
- **Reflection:** Return a suitor's stamp, then draw a card from the deck. You may replace one of your traits, discarding what you don't keep.
- **Break Up:** Discard a trait card, then return its sleeve to the box. Return your fiancée's ring, and take your 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 cards on your letterbox in any order:

- **Forsaken:** If your letterbox is empty at the beginning of evening, you may take the Reflection action (*see above*) without returning a stamp.
- **Letters** (*i.e. Trait cards, including cards with rings*): Compare with your desires card. Return trait cards to the owner's letterbox when done, optionally with one of your agreeable stamps on top.
- **Proposals** (*i.e. Rings*): When you receive a ring, choose one of the following:
 - **Reject:** Return the trait card with their ring to the owner's letterbox.
 - **Accept:** Swap the trait card they sent with one of your own (*resleeving them*) before returning with your own ring. Both you and the proposer are now engaged and each place your fiancée's ring next to your letterbox.
 - **Mutual Proposals:** If two players send proposals to each other, then they must both accept the proposals, swapping two unique cards instead of just one.
- **Returns:** When your own card is returned to you, take it back into your hand. Keep included suitor stamps visibly nearby.

Check Availability

Once you've resolve all your Evening ☾ Correspondence and your card has been returned (*if you mailed any*), 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. All players reveal their trait cards and desires cards.
2. If engaged, win a **prim** victory if your fiancée has three trait cards matching your desires card.
3. Win a **proper** victory if your personal hand has four trait cards matching your desires card.

Multiple players may enjoy victory. If a prim **and** proper victory is achieved, give them modest applause.

Etiquette

Suitor's Secrets: All your cards are private 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 take Reflection 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.

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.

Are there no turns?

While there are no turns, you can only take one action per round, so make sure you pay attention to everyone's action card. If players are waiting for others to act, follow the Stalemates etiquette above.

What if I run out of trait cards from breaking up?

Your reputation is ruined, you lose my distinguished guest. Exercise some discretion next time.

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!

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