

# SKULL

## RULES



Scan the QR code above to watch  
a video that will teach you how to play SKULL.

## CONTENTS

- 6 sets (1 per player) each including:
  - 1 player mat
  - 4 discs (3 Flowers, 1 Skull, identical backs)



Front

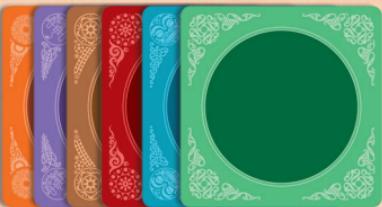


Back



Last Chance Disc

- 1 Last Chance disc
- 1 Rulebook



Player Mats (Blank Side)



Player Mats (Flower Side)

## GOAL OF THE GAME

Win 2 rounds or be the last player remaining after all other players are eliminated.

## GAME OVERVIEW

Skull is a game of bluffing and risk-taking. On your turn, you will either place a disc facedown on your mat or bid the number of discs you think you can flip over without revealing a skull.

## SETUP

Each player chooses a set, places their mat in front of them on the table, blank side up, and takes their 4 discs. The player to have

most recently given someone flowers (or a skull) is the first player.

*A 3 player setup*



## GAME ROUND

### 1) GETTING READY .....

To begin the round, each player secretly chooses a disc from their hand and places it facedown on their mat. The first player must wait until all other players have placed a disc before choosing their own.

*This choice is essential: if you place a flower, you give yourself a chance of winning the round. If you place a skull, you are unlikely to win the round, but can hope to make winning more difficult for your opponents.*

### 2) DECISION MAKING .....

Once everyone has placed a disc facedown, players take turns, starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise.

On your turn, you can PLACE A DISC or OPEN THE BIDDING. Once the bidding has been opened, your options change to OUTBID or PASS.

After you take your turn, play proceeds to the next player in clockwise order.

#### PLACE A DISC

Choose 1 of your remaining discs and place it facedown on your previously played disc (offset by a little so that everyone can see how many discs are in play).

## OPEN THE BIDDING

If you **cannot** or simply **do not want** to place a disc, you can open the bidding by announcing the number of discs you will attempt to flip over without revealing a skull. This number must be less than or equal to the number of discs in play (placed on player mats), and must also be greater than zero.

*By opening the bidding, you are attempting to win the round. This is one of the most critical moments of the round.*

Once any player has opened the bidding, you can no longer place discs on your mat. Instead, on your turn you must now either **OUTBID** or **PASS**.



## • OUTBID

To outbid, indicate that you will attempt to flip **more** discs without revealing a skull by **announcing a number greater** than the current bid (but still less than or equal to the number of discs in play).

*Count all the discs in play  
and take your best guess at how  
many of them are flowers.*

*Your new bid can be higher than  
the previous bid by any amount.*

## • PASS

Push your mat to the center of the table to indicate that you no longer wish to participate in this round of bidding. Your discs remain on your mat and may be flipped by whoever wins the bid.

Play continues clockwise until all but one player have passed. The remaining player wins the bid and becomes the round's **Challenger**.



### 3) RESOLVE THE CHALLENGE .....

As the Challenger, you must flip a number of discs equal to your bid without revealing a skull. If your bid was equal to the number of discs in play, you must flip every disc.

When flipping discs, follow these rules:

- you must flip discs one at a time.
- you cannot flip other players' discs until all of your own discs have been flipped.
- you can only flip the topmost facedown disc on any mat (i.e. you cannot flip discs that are below other facedown discs).

*Once they have flipped all of their own discs, the Challenger can freely switch between player mats as they flip others' discs.*

### SUCCESS

If you flip the number of discs you bid without revealing a skull, you **win** the round. If your player mat is blank side up, flip it so it is flower side up. If it is already flower side up, you win the game!



## FAILURE

As the Challenger, if you flip a skull, you **fail** and must immediately stop flipping discs. Retrieve all your placed discs, shuffle them with those you did not place, and present them facedown to the player whose skull you revealed. That player takes one of your discs and returns it to the box without looking at it.

If you reveal your own **skull**, you take all your discs (placed and unplaced) into your hand and secretly choose one to return to the box, without revealing it. If you lose your last disc, return your mat to the game box. You are eliminated from the game.



*Even though the Challenger cannot flip discs after revealing a skull, the other players may flip theirs to show whether or not they were bluffing...*

## NEW ROUND

Regardless of whether the Challenger wins or fails, everyone retrieves their played discs.

If the former Challenger was not eliminated, they become the first player for the new round. Otherwise, the player whose skull eliminated the former Challenger becomes the first player. If the Challenger eliminated themselves, they choose the first player.

The new round begins with 1) GETTING READY (page 4) and play continues until the game ends in one of two ways.

## END OF GAME

**The game will end in one of two ways:**

- If you win a round as the Challenger and your mat is already flower side up, **you win the game**.
- If all other players have been eliminated, **you win the game**.



## VARIANT

### THE LAST CHANCE DISC

When you fail as the Challenger and have only one disc left after losing a disc, you take the Last Chance disc, which you can use in the next round (and **only** the next round), before returning it to the supply.

Everyone will know that the Last Chance disc is a **flower**.

All the usual rules apply. At the end of the next round, you must return the Last

Chance disc to the supply. If, during this round, you are the Challenger and your bid fails, you lose the Last Chance disc and your own last disc at the same time, and are eliminated.

As the Last Chance disc is only rewarded when you lose a disc and have only one disc remaining, each player can only have the disc **once per game**.



## EPILOG

"I do like games which leave us navigating between truth and bluff. But this bluff must not be the sole key to winning. For me, it is necessary that victory feels deserved! That the winner won because they developed a better strategy than the others. My goal with Skull was to arouse feelings close to those of poker while minimizing the importance of its two fundamentals, money\* and luck. Money: it is simply not necessary to play Skull. This puts all players on equal footing, wealthy or not. Luck: each player has the very same starting hand: 3 flowers and 1 skull. Of course, this hand may change as the game progresses. And I wanted it that way because a bit of uncertainty is required when you take risks. (Otherwise, try chess.)

And there is one last element that I think is so important: that you can say anything you

want while playing Skull! Even the truth! Influencing your opponents is part of the game, and it's downright enjoyable. I dare you to tell the Challenger, "Don't come here; I've placed a skull," and then watch them flip over your skull despite the warning, and then lie about the same thing later in the game! Hehe. And no, bluffing doesn't make you a bad person! It's all part of the game!

I designed Skull with one purpose in mind: to make you have a good time, full of positive emotions. And remember, it's just a game!"

**Hervé Marly**

*\* As Bruno Faidutti, a famous game designer and a friend, says: "Poker is not a card game one plays with money but a money game that one plays with cards."*

## KEEP IN MIND

-  Anyone, including the first player, can open the bidding without placing a second disc.
-  **IMPORTANT:** The Challenger can eliminate themselves if they played a skull on their mat.
-  When you fail a challenge, only you know which disc you lost.
-  If you have no discs left to play, you must open the bidding!

Edited by Adam Marostica and Scott Lewis.

This product has been manufactured with all possible care. However, if you encounter a problem with your game, please contact our Customer Service at [support@asmodee.com](mailto:support@asmodee.com). Your problem will be solved in a timely manner.

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