

Politics in a Nutshell

A three-player political game for all ages

Narrative Overview

In the tri-partisan government of Politica, nobody can seem to come to an agreement. It is up to you to see your political issue resolved by enacting policy in the democratic system. Nothing can stand in your way as you pass bill after bill, shifting the public's opinion this way and that, and spending ludicrous amounts of money to get it done. Unfortunately, the other parties do not want to see you succeed... and you need to get re-elected... and you need money to continue your efforts. Welcome to Politics (in a Nutshell).

Game Overview

This three-player game has players assuming the roles of political parties that wish to get even a single issue into policy. Players must fight against or persuade the public's opinion (as represented by the Overton window) in order to move their issue up in the political window until it becomes policy – while ideally not allowing others to do the same. Further, each party has an issue that their constituents REALLY do not want as Policy. ~15 minutes of play per rounds.

Goal of the Game

Get your issue into policy by moving it into the Policy space of the political window – while also keeping your opposite issue out of the Policy space of the political window.

Components List

- 1 Political Window
- 1 Overton Window
- 5 End-Of-Turn cards
- 35 effort coins
- 15 election tokens
- 6 Issue pawns
- 1 d6 issue randomizer
- 1 d8 turn counter
- 1 rulebook

Setup

Lay out the Overton and Political windows in such a way that all players can easily access them. On both the Overton and Political windows, place a Black, Red and Blue issue pawn onto the Acceptable space and a white, green and yellow pawn onto the Sensible space.

Set the turn tracker to 1. Give each player 3 coins. Determine play order in any method you'd like (maybe least to most politically interested?)

In play order, select a colored pawn to represent your desired policy. Each policy has an opposite policy, that the player must ensure is not policy in order to win – these opposites are determined as such:

- Black – White
- Red – Green
- Blue – Yellow

When each player has chosen a policy, begin playing with the first player to choose.

Player Turns

A turn is considered over after each player has had a chance to act. Each player has a phase during the turn in which they can take specific actions and the other players are restricted to only counter-play. At the end of the turn, each player who does not have the required number of Election Tokens, depending on their time in office (see 7.1), will be ejected from the game (they are no longer in office).

Turn #	Required Election Tokens
1	5
2	4
3	4
4	3
5	3
6	2
7	2
8	1
End of Game	

7.1 Token Requirements

Overton State	↑ _o	↓ _o	↑ _p	↓ _p	Coins
Policy	-	4	1	3	3/1*
Popular	3	3	2	3	2
Sensible	2	3	2	2	2
Acceptable	2	2	2	2	1
Radical	3	2	3	2	0
Unthinkable	4	-	4	1	0

7.2 Overton Window state

Player Phase

At the start of a player's phase, they gain Effort Coins equal to their policy's Overton Window state (see 7.2).

During a player's phase, they can take any number of the following actions:

- Attempt to enact policy surrounding an issue – Firstly, decide which issue you wish to enact policy around. Then, determine whether you wish to shift the policy up or down in the Political Window. Depending on each of these, reference 7.2 and find the relevant Up/Down arrow (marked with a *p*) and the current Overton Window state of the issue. That number is the number of coins required to take this action. If you have the required coins, discard them, and move the issue as you decided. You can only move each issue once per phase.
- Attempt to sway the public surrounding an issue – Like the first action, choose an issue and the direction you wish to move it on the Overton Window. This time, find the relevant Up/Down arrow marked with a *o*. That number is the cost for this action. If you can, discard them and move the issue as you decided. You can only move each issue once per phase.

- Make a “deal” – Choose a “deal” from chart 7.3. This will award you with additional coins and is required to get Election Tokens. You can only take each “deal” once per phase.
 - Sometimes “deal”s will do nothing. If the only outcome is to do nothing, you may not take this deal. If you roll randomly and the outcome does nothing, roll again. For example, if each issue in the game is Policy on the Overton and Political window, then any “deal” that would move an issue upwards cannot be taken.
 - To determine randomness, see the Player Turns – Randomness subsection.

When it is not a player’s phase in the turn, they may still take the following action:

- Filibuster – After a player takes an action that moves an issue on the Political or Overton Windows, you may match their coin payment + 1 to stop this movement. That is, if a player moves an issue in the Overton window from Popular to Sensible (a cost of 3), it can be countered by other players by paying 4.

Coins	Tokens	“Deal” Effect
4	4	A random player’s issue (besides yours) moves up in the Overton Window.
3	3	Your opposing issue moves up in the Overton Window.
2	2	Your opposing issue moves up in the Political Window.
2	1	A random issue (besides yours) moves up in the Political Window.
X	X	Each player must make a secret bid and show you. The higher bidder’s issue moves up in the Political Window and you take their bid in coins and gain their bid in tokens.

7.3 “Deal”s

End of Turn

At the end of a turn, when each player has completed their phase, draw an End of Turn card. These cards affect all players or a random issue.

Randomness

Some “deal”s and end-of-turn cards have random targets. In order to determine which issue is to be targeted, simply roll a d6 and reference the table 7.4. If the rolled number is not ‘valid’ (for example, if targeting a player’s issue and you roll an opposition issue), simply roll again.

D6	Color
1	Black
2	White
3	Red
4	Green
5	Blue
6	Yellow

7.4 Randomness

Game End

In order to win, a turn must end wherein one player has their issue in the Policy space of the Political Window, while their opposite issue is not in the Policy space of the Political Window. If multiple players fulfill this condition, then the winner is the player whose opposite issue is further down on the Political window. If this is a draw once more, then the winner is the player whose opposite issue is further down on the Overton window. Finally, if this is once more a draw, then all players who fulfill these conditions win.