

**Overview.** Raven, a trick-taking game for 2 to 6 players, is played with 56 suited cards — Shields, Swords, Axes, and Waters numbered 1/low to 14/high and 4 special cards (“specialists”). Each hand features a different trump suit. Players bid the number of tricks they plan to take (win) during the hand. Each suit has a bid value: 0, 1, 2, or 3. The sum of the discarded suits equal each player’s bid. Players score 1 point per trick taken, plus a bonus for an exact bid.

**Rules for 4 to 6 players. Deal.** The first dealer is the player who draws the highest suited card by random draw. The deal rotates to the left each hand. All the cards are dealt evenly. The standard game is 8 hands, and trump rotates.

<u>Trump</u>	<u>Trump</u>
1 <sup>st</sup> hand: Shields	5 <sup>th</sup> hand: Waters
2 <sup>nd</sup> hand: Swords	6 <sup>th</sup> hand: Axes
3 <sup>rd</sup> hand: Axes	7 <sup>th</sup> hand: Swords
4 <sup>th</sup> hand: Waters	8 <sup>th</sup> hand: Shields

**Bid.** Players bid the number of tricks they plan to take. Bids are concealed and are made by setting aside **face down 3 suited** cards (but only 2 cards in a 5- or 6-player game). These cards are out of the hand and are set aside, in some way that keeps them separate from tricks. The cards encode the bid as follows: a Shield designates 0 tricks; a Sword, 1 trick; an Axe, 2 tricks; and a Waters card, 3 tricks. Example: In a 4-player game, a bid of 3 tricks can be made in several ways:

- ❖ any 3 Swords ( $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ ); **or**
- ❖ any 2 Shields and any 1 Waters ( $0 + 0 + 3 = 3$ ); **or**
- ❖ any 1 Shield, any 1 Sword, and any 1 Axe ( $0 + 1 + 2 = 3$ ).

**Revealed bids.** After the first hand, the player with the highest score must reveal his or her bid by placing their bid cards face up. A revealed bid remains face up throughout the hand. If there is a tie for the lead, all players tied for the lead must reveal their bids and do so simultaneously. Once the revealed bid is made, the other players bid. Players may discuss what they intend to bid or what they have bid, but the actual bids are concealed. On the final hand of the game, all bids are concealed.

**The specialists** are: **Raven:** the highest trump; **Wolf:** the highest non-trump; **Shaman:** a half-step higher than the card it immediately follows; and **Dwarf:** the lowest card.

**Play.** Each player tries to take (win) the exact number of tricks bid. Deception and collusion are allowed and include saying: how many tricks you bid; what cards you hold; that you want a particular trick; that you won’t take a trick; and lying about any or all of these things. You can say what you like, but you cannot show your cards before you play them.

The player left of the dealer leads. Play proceeds clockwise. A player may lead any card **except the Shaman**. Play continues in accordance with the Rules for Proper Card Play.

#### Rules of Proper Card Play:

- ❖ A player who can follow suit must either (1) follow suit or (2) play a specialist.
- ❖ A player who cannot follow suit may play any card.
- ❖ A player may not lead the Shaman.
- ❖ A misplay may be caught and corrected if done so before the next card is played. A misplay is playing a suited card, but failing to follow suit, when able to do so.  
Note: Intentional misplays are considered cheating.

The highest card takes (wins) the trick and leads the next. Any trump is higher than any other suited card. Tricks should be kept neatly so it’s clear how many tricks each player has. Tricks are kept face down and are not to be examined once the next trick is led. Players may review their bids at any time.

#### Prophecy vs. Raven trump/suits:

**Sunburst** (shields) - hand 1 & 8

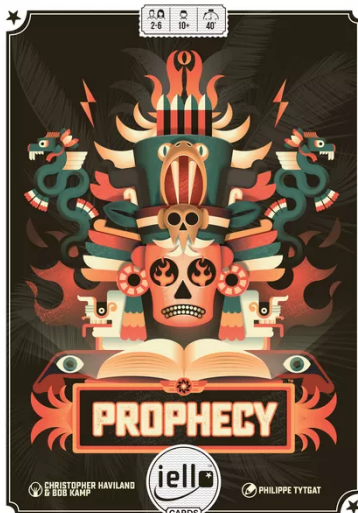
**Spears** (swords) - hand 2 & 7

**Serpents** (axes) - hand 3 & 6

**Eagles** (waters) - hand 4 & 5

### Following suit.

- ❖ A suited lead establishes the suit (Shield, Sword, Axe, or Waters) that must be followed.
- ❖ A Raven lead establishes trump as the led suit. Likewise, if trump is led and a player is holding none except the Raven, that player must play the Raven (or another specialist).
- ❖ A Dwarf lead requires the leader to declare the suit called for (and the Dwarf is the lowest card of that suit).
- ❖ A Wolf lead calls for a non-trump suit, but does not establish which one. The next player must play non-trump (or a specialist). If non-trump is played, it becomes the called-for suit. If a player holds only trump (aside from specialists), trump is permitted but does not establish the called-for suit. The next player would then follow accordingly.



*Prophecy specialists are:*

**Jaguar** the highest trump

**Monkey** the highest non- trump

**Shaman** is half-step higher (than the card it follows/is played on)

**Lizard** the lowest card

**Irregularities.** An **improper bid** contains the wrong number of cards or a specialist. If this occurs, all tricks are played out. Any extra cards are not played. Any trick with too few cards is collected and scored as normal. If the violator was to lead, but has no cards to do so, the lead passes to the left. The violator receives 0 points for the hand; all others score as normal. If a violation of the **Rules of Proper Card Play** occurs, play continues without any fix, except if caught during the trick, the trick plays out without the improper card. For that hand, the violator receives 0 points; all others score as normal.

**Score.** Players score 1 point per trick taken, plus a bonus for making an exact bid: 3 pts with 6 players; 4 pts with 5 players; 5 pts with 4 or 3 players; and 6 pts with 2 players.

**Win.** The player with the most points after 8 hands wins. In case of a tie, the player (of those tied) who earned the most bonuses is the winner.

**Short game.** The short game is only 5 hands, the first four listed above, followed by a “ravenclaw round” in which the only trump is the Raven. (The other specialists function as normal). If the Raven is led, there is no led suit, meaning that the other players may play any card they wish. The Raven wins the trick, unless the Shaman is played next on the Raven.

**Rules for 3 players.** Deal three hands of 17 cards. Bid with three cards; compete for 14 tricks.

**Rules for 2 players.** Deal two hands of 17 cards. Bid with four cards; compete for 13 tricks. No revealed bids.

*These rules reflect the Prophecy update for 2-3 players.*