

Savage Bowl

trick-taking game

4-5 players

10 years+

30 minutes

Game design: URiO

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English rule translation/rewriting: Ayako @ BCG



Foul play, huh? Show me what you got!

The popular sport of the reptile world, *Savage Bowl*, now became a trick-taking game! Famous for its roughest scrambling for the ball, what the audience is craving for is not "brilliant" goals but cunning and cut-throat foul plays!

In the first half of the game, you'll be applauded for your stealthy foul play behind the referee's back. But in the second half, referees almost give up their job as the audience heats up. Then it's time for you to go wild and show off your fearless foul play! But be careful, too many of them can be easily caught by referees and you'll get ejected from the game!

Components

- 52 Numbered Cards (4 colors, 1 to 13)
- 8 Trump Cards (1 color, 1 to 8, the design of the back side is the same as Numbered Cards)
- 5 Chameleon Cards
- 1 Score Tracking Card
- 1 Yellow Card (for your convenience, there is a summary of the rule printed on the back side of the card)
- 2 Runaway Champ Cards (the cards have two sides. For 5 players, use the side with a palm-shaped icon.)
- 1 Round Marker (in the shape of a reptile)
- 5 Player Cubes (1 each in 5 colors for score tracking)
- 1 Game Progress Sheet (to place a discarded card for each trick in the first half of the game = 5 tricks. One side is for 4 players and the other side is for 5 players. The 5-player side is indicated by a palm-shaped icon.)

Game Setup

When you play this game for the first time, or if you are not familiar with trick-taking games in general, it's recommended not to use the Camereon Cards. In that case, remove and return all the Chameleon Cards to the box and skip any instructions related to them, as indicated as Chameleon Cards in this rules sheet.

1. Place the Game Progress Sheet in the center of the table.
 - a. For 5 players, use the side with a palm-shaped icon.
 - b. For 4 players, use the other side without a palm-shaped icon.
2. Place the Score Tracking Card next to the Game Progress Sheet. Each player selects a Player Cube in the color they choose and place it outside of the 1-point box on the Scoring Card (this means the point is 0).
3. Place the Round Marker on the 1R square on the Game Progress Sheet.
4. Place the Yellow Card on the Game Progress Sheet, in alignment with the frame indicated with "1".
5. Have the Runaway Champ Card(s) ready.
 - a. For 5 players, use the sides with a palm-shaped icon. Place the card with "1" (for 1 bonus point) first and then place the card with "2" (for 2 bonus points) on top of the other card.
 - b. For 4 players, use only one card with no palm-shaped icon and with "2" (for 2 bonus points) on it. Place the card next to the Game Progress Sheet.
6. Prepare for the Numbered Cards and Trump Cards.
 - a. For 5 players, use all the Numbered Cards and Trump Cards.
 - b. For 4 players, use only 1 to 11 of the Numbered Cards (remove all 12 and 13 cards) and all the Trump Cards.
7. Put together the Numbered Cards and Trump Cards and shuffle well. Deal the shuffled cards face down to each player.
 - a. For 5 players, each player receives 12 cards.
 - b. For 4 players, each player receives 13 cards.

- c. The cards dealt to each player are called "hand(s)" from here on. Make sure not to show your hand to other players and show only to yourself.
- d. For 4 players, return the unused Player Cube, Runaway Champ Card with "1", and 8 Number Cards (12 and 13 in 4 colors) to the box. These will not be used for the game.
8. If using the **Chameleon Cards**, Deal a Chameleon Card to each player. The dealt cards become part of each player's hand.
 - a. For 4 players, return the unused Chameleon Card to the box. It will not be used for the game.
9. Determine the first player. A player who got caught for a foul play most recently becomes the first player. If nobody applies, determine the first player properly.

Overview and the Goal of the Game

For 5 players:

A game consists of 5 rounds, and each round consists of 12 tricks. The goal of each round is to win **just 2 tricks**. If you win the third trick, you will be immediately eliminated from the round and score 0 points. If you win less than 2 tricks, you will score 0 points as well. For each round, the first 5 tricks and the rest have different winning conditions. In the first 5 tricks, the second strong player wins the trick and the strongest player gets eliminated from the next trick. For the sixth trick and on, the strongest player wins the trick. The game ends when 5 rounds are played or there is at least one player who has scored 10 points or more. The player with the highest points wins the game. (Please see the *End of a Game* section for more details.)

For 4 players:

A game consists of 4 rounds, and each round consists of 13 tricks. The goal of each round is to win just 3 tricks. If you win the fourth trick, you will be eliminated from the round immediately and score 0 points. If you win less than 3 tricks, you will score 0 points as well. For each round, the first 5 tricks and the rest have different winning conditions. In the first 5 tricks, the second strong player wins the trick and the strongest player gets eliminated from the next trick. For the sixth trick and on, the strongest player wins the trick. The game ends when 4 rounds are played or there is at least one player who has scored 10 points or more. The player with the highest points wins the game. (Please see the *End of a game* section for more details.)

The Flow of a Round (and a Trick)

As mentioned in the previous section, the players play 12 tricks per round for a 5-player game (5 rounds in total) and 13 tricks per round for a 4-player game (4 rounds in total).

The first half of a round (the first to the fifth tricks):

1. The first player of the trick plays a card from their hand (any color, any number, including Trump Cards, except the **Chameleon Card** if using them in the game. For the details on the Chameleon Card, please see the next section.)
2. The next player (to the left of the first player) plays a card from their hand, which **must be the same color as the card that the first player played** if there is any in their hand. Otherwise, play **any card** from their hand. (In a few words using jargon, this is a must-follow trick-taker!)
 - a. The larger the number, the stronger the card is for the cards of the same color. However, a Trump Card always wins over the other 4 colors. (Then within Trump Cards, the same number comparison happens.)
3. Determine who wins the trick (= the second strong player for the first five tricks)
 - a. The strongest player gets the Yellow Card and discards a card from their hand onto the Game Progress Sheet.
4. Check the number of trick(s) won by each player to see if any player needs to be eliminated from the round by exceeding the number of tricks won. (Yes, very savage!)
5. Get ready for the next trick. The player who won the trick becomes the first player of the next trick. The player who received the Yellow Card will not be playing the next trick.
6. Repeat Steps 1 to 5 for 5 times (from the first trick to the fifth trick).

The second half of a round (the sixth trick and on):

1. The first player of the trick plays a card from their hand (any color, any number, including Trump Cards, except the **Chameleon Card** if using them in the game. For the details on the Chameleon Card, please see the next section.)
2. The next player (to the left of the first player) plays a card from their hand, which **must be the same color as the card that the first player played** if there is any in their hand. Otherwise, play **any card** from their hand. (In a few words using jargon, this is a must-follow trick-taker!)
 - a. The larger the number, the stronger the card is for the cards of the same color. However, a Trump Card always wins over the other 4 colors. (Then within Trump Cards, the same number comparison happens.)
3. Determine who wins the trick (= the strongest player).

- a. There is no Yellow Card involved from the sixth trick and on.
4. Check the number of trick(s) won by each player to see if any player needs to be eliminated from the round by exceeding the number of tricks won. (Yes, still very savage!)
5. Get ready for the next trick. The player who won the trick becomes the first player of the next trick.
6. Repeat Steps 1 to 5 until the end of the round.
7. Count the points for each player. (Please see the *End-of-round scoring* section for more details.)
8. Get ready for the next round until the game ends.

What Is Chameleon Card and How To Play It

When played with a Numbered or Trump Card, a **Chameleon Card** copies the color of the card the last player played in the trick. This allows a player to play any card in their hand, without following the color of the card the first player played. Likewise, it allows players to play any card to follow the color the first player played. **Chameleon Cards can copy the 4 colors of the Numbered Cards and the Trump Cards.**

- A Chameleon Card **copies only the color** of the last card, **not the number**. The number will remain as on the card played from hand along with the Chameleon Card.
- A Chameleon Card can be played **only once in a round**. When played, place the card face down on the table to indicate that you have already used it for the round.
- As previously mentioned, the first player of a trick **cannot** play a Chameleon Card.

Runaway Champ Cards

For 5 players:

The first player who won 2 tricks gets the Runaway Champ Card with "2" (for 2 bonus points). The second player who won 2 tricks gets the Runaway Champ card with "1" (for 1 bonus point). These points will remain effective and be added to your final score of the round **only if you survive till the end of the round without getting eliminated** by overwinning the third trick for the round.

For 4 players:

The first player who won 3 tricks gets the Runaway Champ Card with "2" (for 2 bonus points). The points will remain effective and be added to your final score of the round **only if you survive till the end of the round without getting eliminated** by overwinning the fourth trick for the round.

End of a Round

A round ends when 12 tricks are played (for 5 players) or 13 tricks are played (for 4 players). Then, each player counts the points they scored for the round. **For a 4-player game**, please note that there may be a very rare case where only one player remains in the round when the 12th round ends. In such a case, this will end the round without playing the 13th round and no one gets points for the skipped round.

End-of-Round Scoring

The end-of-round scoring consists of two parts: Base Points and Bonus Points.

Base Points

At the end of each round, if a player won 2 tricks (for 5 players) or 3 tricks (for 4 players), they receive the points as in the following table:

	5 players	4 players	Points
End of the 1st round	Won 2 tricks	Won 3 tricks	1 point
End of the 2nd round	2 trick	3 tricks	2 points
End of the 3rd round	2 trick	3 tricks	3 points
End of the 4th round	2 trick	3 tricks	4 points
End of the 5th round	2 trick	n/a	5 points

Bonus Points

In addition to the Base Points above, players will also receive Bonus Points from any Runaway Champ card(s) they have earned in the round, but only if they did not get eliminated from the round by overwinning. The Bonus Points are either 2 points or 1 point (for 5 players) or 2 points (for 4 players).

If players scored any points for the round, move their Player Cubes on the Score Tracking Card to the space respective to their total points.

End of a Game

A game ends when either of the following conditions is met at the end of a round:

- At least one player reached 10 points or more in total at the end-of-round scoring.
- 5 rounds (for 5 players) or 4 rounds (for 4 players) were played.

The player with the most total points wins the game. If there are two or more players with the most total points, the player with the Runaway Champ Card (2 points) becomes the winner. (For a 5-player game, if there is none with the 2-point card, then the player with the 1-point Runaway Champ Card becomes the winner.) If there is no one with Runaway Champ Card(s), all the players with the most total points share the victory. In this case, it doesn't matter if any of the players got eliminated in the last round.

Get Ready for the Next Round

If either of the game-end conditions wasn't met at the end of a round, get ready for the next round.

- Place the Yellow Card on #1 on the Game Progress Sheet.
- Any players who were eliminated from the last round come back to the new round.
- Return the Runaway Champ Card(s) and place it next to the Game Progress Sheet.
- Progress the Round marker one step to indicate the correct number of rounds played
- The player who received the 2-point Runaway Champ Card in the last round becomes the first player for the round, regardless of their round elimination status.
- Gather all the Numbered and Trump Cards, shuffle them well, and deal 12 cards each (5 players) or 13 cards each (4 players).
- Each player adds back a Chameleon Card to their hand.
- Start the new round for the next level of savageness!

Additional Tips and Notes

The effect of the Chameleon Card

The Chameleon Card copies the color of the card the last player played and applies the color to any of the cards you are playing from your hand. Even in the case when the player to your right is already eliminated from the round or not playing the trick because of the Yellow Card, it still copies the color of the last card played in the trick, regardless of any skipped players in between you and the player who played the last card.

Timing to play the Chameleon Card

Unless you are the first player of a trick, you can play the Chameleon Card with any card from your hand, just anytime. When playing the Chameleon Card, you don't have to follow the rule to follow the color of the card the first player of the trick played.

Switching from the first half and the second half (of a round)

It is a little tricky (because this is a trick-taking game) when switching from the first half to the second half of a round at the end of the fifth trick. Here are some additional clarifications:

- The player who got the Yellow Card in the fifth trick will stay out of the next trick and will not rejoin the sixth trick.
- For the sixth trick, the player with the Yellow card plays the Yellow Card (as a null card for the trick).
- To the seventh trick, the player who got the Yellow card in the fifth trick joins back to the round.

The cards you cannot see during the game

All the players are not allowed to see the following cards that are placed face down during the game:

- The cards are discarded and placed on the Game Progress Sheet (for the first 5 tricks of each round).
- The cards won from the tricks that are already played.
- The cards from any eliminated player's hand.