

# clowder

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**Clowder** is a thrilling tag game with cats. Each player controls two cats that jump from roof to roof collecting treats and attacking other cats. It's a game of **tactical decisions** with impressive escape maneuvers and funny cat puns!

A modular board with 19 hexagonal tiles forms a surface of roofs on the table. The central tile represents the tower where **Petunia** lives. She's a cute little witch apprentice that is searching for a cat companion to help her. She throws treats on the roofs and observes the cats, trying to find the *purrfect* pet! There is also a wild cat on the roofs: **Nyx** is a chaotic cat that changes hands every round. When she moves, she **cracks the roofs**, narrowing the gameplay area. If a player manages to **climb the tower** at the center of the board or **catches three adversary cats**, he draws the attention of Petunia and wins the game.

Clowder is, in its essence, a Light Family Game with hidden movement selection, grid movement, pieces capture, and a bit of take that! It's a tactical and fun game in which players need to calculate the best way to optimize the movement of both of their cats and respond to the dynamic changes of the board.



Clowder has been in development since 2017, with regular testing in both presential and online groups. It was presented in several events such as Diversão Offline, BoardGames São Paulo, ProtoBR, UaiBG, and Mansão das Peças. It received the **2nd place award by the technical jury at UaiBG 2018**.



# COMPONENTS



- a. 19 hexagonal roof tiles;
- b. 8 cat meeples (2 per player);
- c. 28 life markers (7 per player);
- d. 12 numbered tokens (3 per player);
- e. 30 treat markers (10 of each type);
- f. 1 bag;
- g. 1 player aid;
- h. 39 cards (13 of each type);
- i. 12 key tokens (4 of each type);
- j. 1 special cat meeple (Nyx);
- k. 1 Nyx control token.

## DIGITAL VERSIONS



To see the components while reading this manual or to play a virtual match, access the digital versions available on: **Tabletopia** ([bit.ly/clowder-tabletopia](https://bit.ly/clowder-tabletopia)) and **Tabletop Simulator** ([bit.ly/clowder-tts](https://bit.ly/clowder-tts)).

## GAME OBJECTIVE

**Put one of your cats in the central tile or capture 3 opponent cats** (of any color).

## SETUP

Each hexagonal tile represents a roof. Around the central tile, arrange the roofs randomly to form the game board. There will be an inner circle, adjacent to the central tile, and an outer circle.

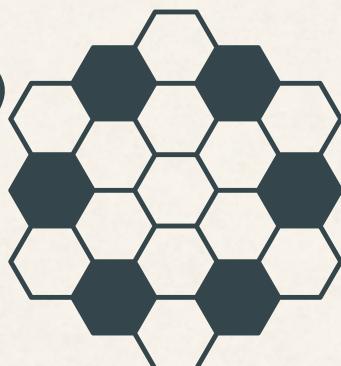
Make sure that each roof of the inner circle **has the number 3 adjacent to the central tile**. If necessary, rotate the roof clockwise to the correct position.

*If you are playing on Tabletopia or TTS, remember to perform the same procedure. Right-click on the tiles of the inner circle and rotate them, as needed.*

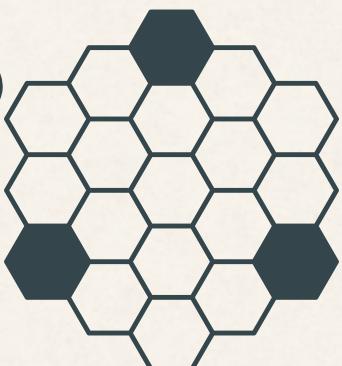
**IMPORTANT:**

In matches for 2 or 3 players, break the roofs (flip the tiles) according to the following diagrams:

**2**  
**PLAYERS**



**3**  
**PLAYERS**

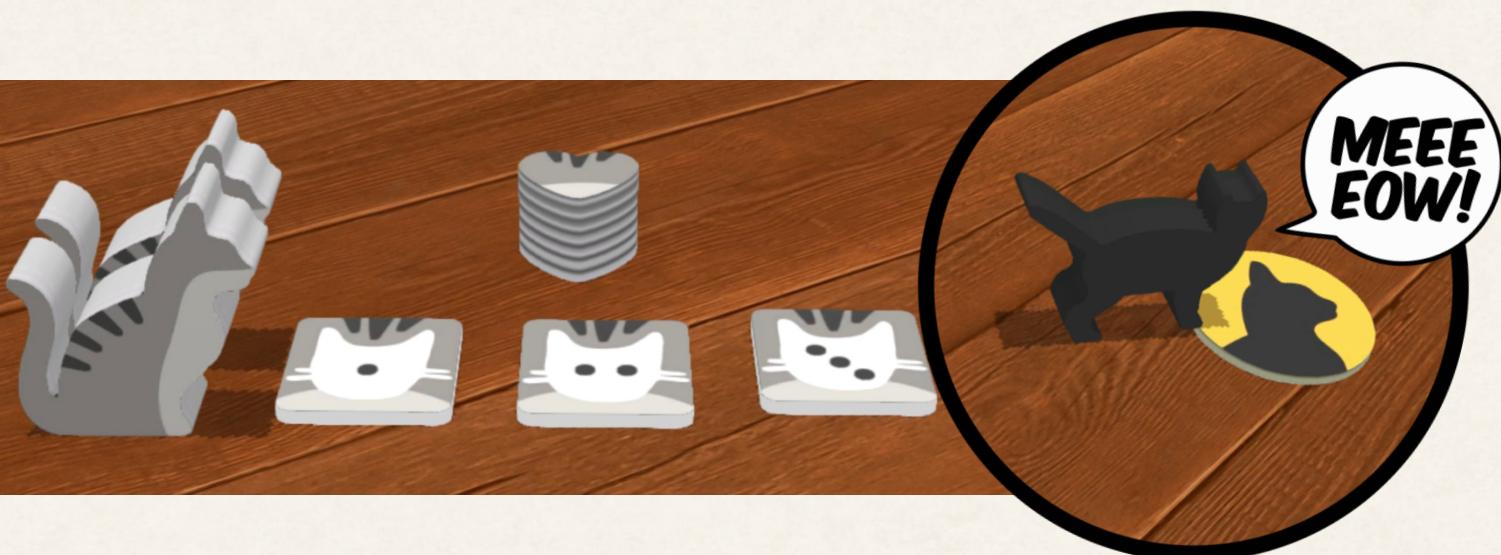


Take treats from the bag and randomly **put one on each roof**. Do not put treats on the central tile (Petunia's tower).

Each player chooses a color and receives its **2 cats**, **3 movement tokens**, and **7 life markers**. The player with the best meow will also receive the **Nyx cat** and its respective **token**.

In clockwise order from the Nyx token, **players take turns positioning one of their cats on the roofs of the outer circle** of the board until all players have positioned their 2 cats. Players **collect the treats** on the roofs they put their cats on.

Then, the holder of the **Nyx token** will also position – still on the outer circle – the **Nyx cat**. The player does not collect the treat (*Don't touch Nyx's treats!*).



Prepare and shuffle the 3 decks of cards, by color. **Red = attack**, **blue = defense** and **yellow = tricks**. Open the first card of each deck to form a **discard pile**. Next to each deck, place the **4 keys of each color**.



Finally, each player **draws one card** from any of the three piles, as they want.

The match is about to start! Next, we will explain in detail the **movement of the cats** and the **purchase of cards/keys**.

## CATS MOVEMENT

### IMPORTANT:

During the movement phase, players will be able to use their cards freely (cards have indications of the correct moment to be used: "only on the player's turn", "before the movement token reveal" or at "any time").

Each player has 3 movement tokens, numbered from 1 to 3. At the start of each round, players secretly select one of them (a). The chosen number indicates the movement that the player will perform with his both cats. The tokens are then revealed (b) and ordered (c), in ascending order. In case of a tie, the order is established in clockwise order from the Nyx token. The movement token chosen on the current round will be retained (and displayed on the table) during the next round. That is, in all rounds after the first one, players will only have 2 movement tokens in their hands to choose from.

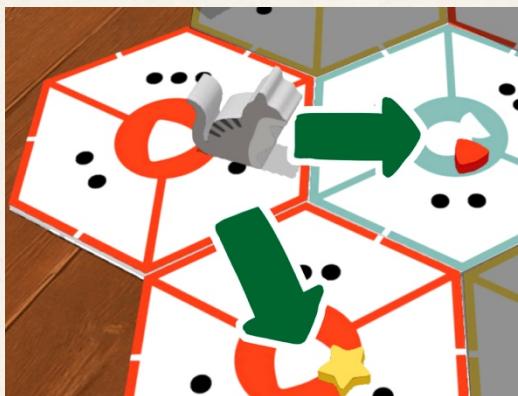


#### IMPORTANT:

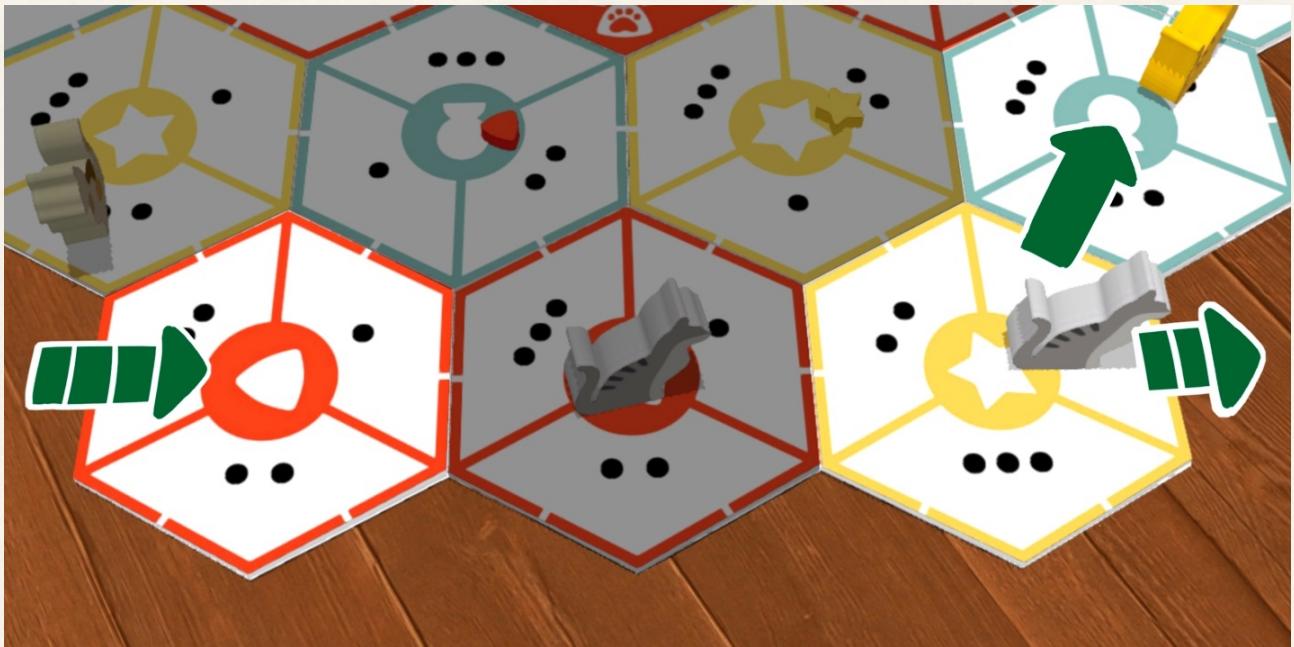
The movement token chosen on the current round will be retained (and displayed on the table) during the next round. That is, in all rounds after the first one, players will only have 2 movement tokens in their hands to choose from.

After the tokens reveal, players must position their cats in one of the three subdivisions of the roofs they are placed, according to the number they've chosen. Cats are "Preparing to jump". It helps to identify which cats are in vulnerable situations.

Notice the image to the side: each area of a roof connects with 2 other adjacent roofs, in contact with the edges of this area. When moving the cat, the player must decide which of the 2 moves is the most interesting. After moving, the player positions the cat on the top of the roof - the circular area in the middle of the tile. This helps to visualize which cats have already moved this round. If there is a treat on the roof, the player collects it.



**A roof tile on the outer circle has connections to roofs on the other side of the board.** In this magic village, there is no way out! (*Imagine the classic digital game Pac-Man, where the character traverses the edge of the image getting to the other side*). See the example below. The gray cat (at bottom right) can, starting from the number 1 area of the yellow roof, move to the adjacent blue roof or cross the board to the red one, on the left side of the image:



**Following the movement order of the round, each player must move his two cats** (in any order) and then shop for cards and keys. A cat can **move to an empty roof**, **an occupied roof** (and try to capture the other cat), or **move to the central tile**.

- a. **Move to an empty roof:** If there is a treat on the roof, the player picks it up.
- b. **Move to a roof occupied by an opponent cat:** In this case, a capture is announced. The adversary has two options. He can **hand over one of his life markers**, **remove the cat of the board** until the next round, and **receive a card**. Or, alternatively, he could **pay 1 treat to distract the capturer and flee away**.





When dodging, the cat needs to **escape through the area marked with the number 1** on the roof (*it's the fastest way out*). To do so, the cat needs to **land on an empty roof** (no cats).

**IMPORTANT:**

If there is no empty roof, **the cat can't escape!**

**REMEMBER:** the **fleeing cat will be able to collect treats** from the roof on which he stops. He will also be able to move after that, if he has not already done so in this round.

- c. **Move a cat to the central tile (Petunia's Tower):** To perform this move, the player needs to be on a **roof adjacent to the central tile**, **choose the correct number** to enter (*at first, 3, but new connections could appear during the gameplay*) and **have the correct key** to unlock the area that he's accessing.



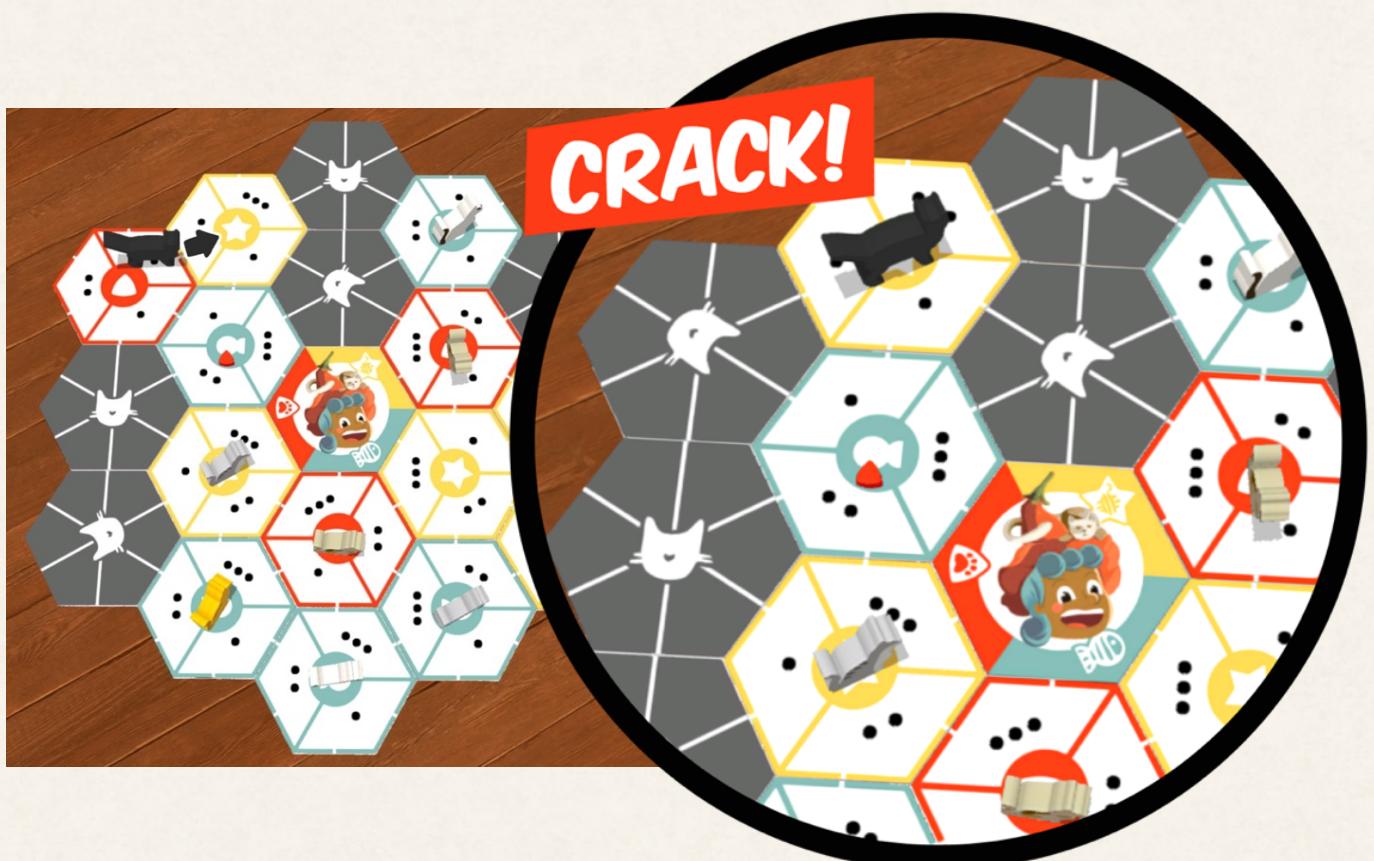
## **IMPORTANT:**

**A cat never moves to the roof where Nyx is.** If this is the only possible movement, he will be paralyzed. Likewise, a cat will **never move to a roof occupied by another cat of the same color** (self-capture is not possible).

**After moving** with his two cats, the player **buys cards and keys** (explained in detail below) then passes the turn. The round continues, repeating the same structure for every player (move/buy). **The last player of the round will also control Nyx.**

**NYX TIME!** After all the other cats have finished moving, Nyx moves. She's essentially an extra cat controlled by the last player of the round. She can even catch other cats for him. But don't touch her treats! You never collect treats where she stops. Likewise, on an escape situation, the treat paid by the opponent must be placed on the roof where Nyx is. Finally, Nyx cannot be used to enter the Petunia's tower. She's a wild cat after all and cannot be a pet.

**Every time Nyx leaves a roof it breaks** (*Nyx have chaotic powers!*). **Flip over the tile** and it will then represent a wrecked roof. (If there was a treat on the roof, discard it). **New adjacencies are formed on the board** because of that, creating a **dynamic board** that is always contracting, conducting players to **more situations of interaction**. See in the image, the lines on broken roofs indicate new connections between the tiles (*it also helps to trace the connections from the edges of the board*):



## SHOPPING PHASE

After moving his cats, the player does his shopping phase. It is the moment where players could buy **cards** and the tower **keys**.

The player is entitled to a free card if he managed to **end his turn with at least two cats on roofs of the same color**. The color of the card corresponds to the color of the roof.

**Observe the example on the side.** Suppose the yellow player controls Nyx for this round. He will receive a **free yellow card** because he ended his turn with two cats on yellow roofs (*after all, Nyx counts as one of his cats during this round*).

In this phase, the player can also **buy cards** by paying **1 treat** for them.

**1 red / blue / yellow treat**  
**= 1 red / blue / yellow card.**



He could also **buy keys** (which gives access to the central tile) by paying **3 treats of the same color**.

**3 red / blue / yellow treats = 1 red / blue / yellow key.**

After the player has finished shopping, the next player does his movement phase.

### IMPORTANT:

**It is not allowed to buy cards, use, and buy again.** Also, players must respect a limit of **3 cards in hand** during the entire game.

## FOR THE FOLLOWING ROUNDS

The movement token used on the last round will be unavailable for the following round. Retrieve it at the end of the round.

If there are **3 or fewer treats on the board** at the start of the round, Petunia throws more on the roofs - randomly distribute **one treat on each roof** with no treats or cats.

Players choose their **movement tokens** (between the two on their hands) and put it **face down** on the table.

**Players who have their cats captured** on last round re-enter them following the **Nyx token order**. This reentry of cats obeys the same rules of initial positioning: **cats must return on the external circle** of roofs and could **collect treats**, if available.

**The game ends as soon as any player enters the central tile or captures 3 opposing cats**, drawing Petunia's attention!

### IMPORTANT:

Cards have indications of the correct moment to be used and it's possible to perform **a combo of actions**. Players must permit response time to their opponents for each new card they put in play. Expect creative use of cards! (*E.g.: A player could use a card to pick up treats from the table and then use those to drop a card that allows him to search the discard pile and finally draw a third card that could block a winning move. If between one card or another no player decides to intervene, the cascade of actions would be valid.*)



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hello, I'm **Fernando Cunha**, I'm 35 years old and I'm from Brazil. I've Graduated in Social Communication and have been working on the **creative market** for the last 15 years, mainly as a Creative Director and Animator. I am a founding partner of **Apiario Creative Studio**, a film production company focused on animation projects.



I am a collector and enthusiast of modern board games and, in the last 3 years, I have focused a good part of my time on the hobby to create new games. In 2018, I won the Hackaton Conecta Gerais with the board game project **Ágora**. Still in 2018, the **Clowder** prototype received the 2nd place prize by the technical jury at **UAI BG**, the principal Board Game event of the state. Since 2019, I'm co-organizing the **Playtest Workshop**, a weekly playtest and study encounter that has been contributing a lot to the growth of the tabletop development scene in Brazil (The encounter happens in **Rio de Janeiro**, **Belo Horizonte**, and also holds an **Online** version for participants from any location). This year, Playtest Workshop hosted a board game only focused hub of **Global Game Jam** in Brazil. In addition to these, I am also one of the organizers of **ProtoBR**, a monthly online event for board game prototypes in its final stage of development that connects authors to the public and potential publishers.

Let's keep talking!

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