

Witch's Shot Delivery Service

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Play Time: 30 min

Player Count: 3~4 players

Age: 7+

(Hexenschuss, "shot by a witch", German word for lumbar pain)

You are a courier for a delivery company. To meet today's quota, you will need to carry a lot of heavy packages. But your strength is limited, and your lumbar vertebrae aren't exactly made of steel or titanium. You could easily hurt your back from repetitive strain during deliveries. To avoid permanent injury, and live up to the Sustainable Development Goals, you'll need to pace yourself. Carry the minimum necessary loads, and pass the rest on to your co-workers. Then you'll avoid becoming a victim of the Witch's Shot, while still fulfilling your quotas.

Components

- 42 Package Cards (4 suits * 10 ranks + 2 black cards)
- 7 Quota / Strength Cards
- 1 Priority Card
- 13 Fatigue Cubes (9 normal + 4 black)
- 4 Priority Tokens
- 12 Oof! Tokens (pain on front, rest on back)
- 4 Paid Vacation Tokens

Features on Package Cards:

Each card has a type of cargo, shown by the color and one of four suit icons (vegetable, potion, book, fish). The 2 black cards do not have a suit icon.

The number at the top is how important the package is, from 1~10, for winning tricks..

Each card has boxes to show how heavy it is. These are counted for trying to meet your quota (bid), and also to check if you get injured by the Witch's Shot. 1~3 have 3 boxes, 4~7 have 2 boxes, 8~10 have 1 box.

A few cards have special icons in the corners. Cards 1~3 show +1p, while each 6 value card has a curse icon (used for an optional rule variant).

Features on Quota/Strength cards.

A large number will show the *exact* number of boxes you must deliver that round, to score bonus points.

Below that is the points you will score, plus the bonus if you meet your quota.

The Strength Gauge (spine) shows how much weight you can lift without getting injured by the Witch's Shot. The largest visible number is your current strength. When your strength is

reduced, the spaces will get covered by tokens or cubes to conceal the numbers, starting at the bottom of the gauge and going upwards.

| Player Count | Game Length | Starting Strength | Suits | Cards to Deal |
|--------------|-------------|-------------------|---|--|
| 3p | 3 rounds | 9 | 3 suits (choose one to remove from game, plus the black doubler card) | 8 cards to each player (5 more in priority row, and last 2 discarded facedown) |
| 4p | 4 rounds | 11 | 4 suits | 9 cards to each player (6 cards in priority row) |

Game Setup:

1. Place the Priority Card in the middle with the 4 cargo tokens. Place the Oof! Tokens, Fatigue Cubes, and Paid Vacation tokens in a supply area. If not playing with the Paid Vacation optional rule, remove those 4 tokens to the box.
2. Arrange the quota cards in order: 0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 in a row. For a 3 player game, remove the "2" quota card to the box.
3. Combine the 42 package cards into a deck. For a 3 player game, first remove all 10 cards of one suit, and remove the "x2" black card, for a deck of 31 cards total.
4. Prepare a method to keep track of scores: poker chips, pen and paper, etc.

The game ends after 4 rounds if there's 4 players, or 3 rounds for 3 players. However, if any player(s) reaches 3 Oof! Tokens, the game will instead finish at the end of that round (complete the hand first). Also, if all players *except one* reach 3 Oof! Tokens in the same round, immediately end the round instead of playing remaining tricks.

Round structure:

1. Receive Packages and Prioritize Cargo (deal cards and rank the suits)
2. Determine Quota (choose bids)
3. Deliver Packages (play tricks)
4. Payday and Reset (score points, setup next round)

Phase 1: Receive Packages and Prioritize Cargo

Shuffle the deck, then deal out 9 cards to all 4 players (8 cards to 3 players). With the leftover cards, reveal them in a row underneath the Quota Cards from left to right. For 4 players, this row should be all 6 remaining cards. For 3 players, use only 5 cards in the row and set aside the 2 remaining cards in a facedown discard pile.

To determine the priority of the cargo types, look for the suit with the most cards in this row (quantity of cards, the number values don't matter). Place the tokens on the priority card in the order from most common to least common. To break ties, the suit closest to the right end of the

row has higher priority. The only way to have a tie is if two types both had 0 cards appear in the row, then both tokens will be placed on the same row (2nd or 3rd, depending on player count). Ignore the black cards, they do not affect ranks.

Phase 2: Determine Quota

Each player will draft one quota card for the current round.

In Round 1, the first player is “whoever most recently did some heavy lifting”, then go in clockwise order until everyone has taken a turn. In Round 1 *ONLY*, the player who picked last will score 1 point.

From Round 2 onward, players choose in order from lowest score to highest (There is no more bonus point for picking last)

Flip over the quota cards to show the Strength Gauge. For a 3 player game, use cubes to mark starting strength as 9 instead of 11. If you have Oof! Tokens from previous rounds, place them starting from the bottom available numbered space, reducing your starting strength.

Phase 3: Deliver Packages

The player who picked the lowest quota will be the lead player for the 1st trick.

[MUST FOLLOW] : Lead with any card from hand. Going clockwise, each player must play a card of the matching suit. If they do not have the lead suit in hand, they can play any card they want. After everyone has played 1 card, check the results.

1. Whoever played the card with the highest priority wins the trick. The highest ranked cargo type wins, if there's multiple of that suit then the highest number value wins. If there's a tie in both suit rank and number, **FIRST** card wins the tie.
2. Check for Witch's Shot: The winner of the trick must “deliver” all the cards played to that trick. Count the number of boxes shown on cards, then compare the total to the winner's current strength.
 - A. If the total boxes are **less than or equal** to current strength, they're safe! That player takes 1 normal fatigue cube and places it on the bottom available space of their strength gauge (temporarily decreasing it for this round).
 - B. If the total packages are **greater** than current strength, they get injured! They must take 1 Oof! Token in addition to the 1 normal fatigue cube, and place both on their strength gauge (permanently decreasing it for the rest of the game).

Whether they got injured or not, the winner keeps only the card they played to win the trick (the boxes on the card will matter later for checking the quota). Discard all the other played cards. The winner leads the next trick.

Phase 4: Payday and Reset

When all players have no more cards left in hand, the round ends.

Each player scores 1 point for each **card** delivered (not boxes). The low cards (1~3) are worth an extra 1 point.

Each player who met their quota exactly scores the bonus points listed on their card. Count the total number of **boxes**, not number of cards. Missing the quota is 0 bonus points, but no penalty.

Return all package cards, quota cards, and fatigue tokens (and Paid Vacation tokens, if using them). Keep Oof! Tokens and points. Check if game is finished, or continue to the next round.

Special Rules for Cards and Tokens

Oof! Token

You get one Oof! Token each time you win a trick containing more boxes than your current strength. These permanently lower your strength, and there is no way to discard them. If you get a 3rd Oof! Token, this will trigger the end of the game – you will keep playing cards as normal but automatically lose all tricks for the rest of that round.

Starting with the next trick after getting one, you may flip your Oof! Token to Rest for one trick, so you can avoid getting more injuries or not to overshoot your quota. Play a card as normal together with the flipped Oof! Token and say, “I have a bad back today”. You will not win that trick. After the trick, return the token to your strength gauge, flipped to the “rest” side, to show that you have spent it but it is still decreasing your max strength. At the end of the round, these will be flipped back up, usable again in the next round. If all players rest in the same trick, discard the trick. There is no winner, and the lead player stays the same.

Black Cards

These cards have 0 value and no suit. They can be played anytime, ignoring Must Follow, but if you have any cards of the lead suit you must reveal one. If a black card is used to lead, the next player may play any card, they will determine the lead suit for that trick.

The black cards are the lowest priority and always lose, unless everyone else uses an Oof! Token to Rest. If two black cards are tied for winning the trick, the first one played breaks the tie as usual.

- One of the black cards is worth 4 boxes.

- The other black card doubles the total of all other boxes played, when checking for Witch's Shot. It is worth 0 boxes when scoring quotas (do not multiply your other boxes). Only used in the 4 player game.

Cards 1~3: unimportant packages

Cards valued 1~3 are each worth 2 points during scoring instead of 1.

Card 6: cursed package (OPTIONAL RULE)

A package that's deceptively heavier than it looks, it'll cause extra strain if you pick it up unawares. Each card of value 6 has a curse icon on it. If you win a trick where someone else plays a 6, you get extra tired. In addition to the normal fatigue cube, you must **also** take 1 black fatigue cube (strength will be reduced by 2). You can only get 1 black fatigue cube per round, so further cursed packages will do nothing to you during that round. The black fatigue cube goes away at the end of the round just like the normal fatigue.

If you play a 6 but win that trick, your own card never affects you. You will not take a black fatigue cube (unless someone else played a 6 as well).

(It is recommended to drop this rule when playing with beginners to trick-taking, as it might be too punishing.)

Paid Vacation token (OPTIONAL RULE)

These tokens work similarly to flipping an Oof! Token to rest for one trick. Instead of flipping them, return them to the supply. If playing with this rule, they can be acquired in 2 ways:

- When drafting quota cards in Round 1 *ONLY*, the player picking last receives a Paid Vacation token instead of 1 point.
- Each round (including Round 1), whoever picked the highest quota will receive a Paid Vacation token.

You can hold only 1 Paid Vacation token at a time. If not used, it will expire: return it to the supply at the end of the round instead of carrying it to the next.

GAME FINISH

At the end of a round, if that was the final round or any player has 3 Oof! Tokens, the game is over. Also, if all players except one have 3 Oof! Tokens, immediately end the round instead of playing remaining tricks. Each player subtracts points for their Oof! Tokens (1 token loses 1 point, 2 tokens loses 4 points, 3 tokens loses 9 points). The player with the most points wins! If there's a tie, the win goes to whoever still has an unspent Paid Vacation token. If still tied, then it's whoever chose the higher quota card in the last round.