

The Game — Local Mode

Objective

Survive contradictions and avoid collapse. You win by maintaining lawful structure through 10 turns without losing parity. Breaking the rules or failing to resolve a contradiction ends the game immediately.

Materials

- 1 standard deck of cards (52 + 2 Jokers).
- Flat surface to arrange cards in a 4×4 grid.
- Paper or tokens to track moves.

Setup

Shuffle the deck and place cards face down in a 4×4 grid. This grid is your Station. The remaining deck is the Draw Pile.

Rules of Play

- Each turn, flip one card from the Station or Draw Pile.
- Numbers (2–10) are tokens: place them in sequence along rows or columns.
- Face Cards (J, Q, K) trigger shifts: J (witness), Q (mass), K (reflection).
- Ace is rest: acts as 1 or 11, but not both at once.
- Red suits (♥♦) are positive; Black suits (♣♠) are negative. Contradictions must resolve by snapping to the opposite color.
- Jokers are wild: they open gates and can reset contradictions but only once per deck.
- Contradictions left unresolved by end of your turn cause immediate loss.

Winning

If you successfully resolve contradictions and complete 10 turns without collapse, you win the round. If you fail at any point, you lose immediately. Multiple players may take turns on separate Stations for parallel play.

Example

Turn 1: Flip ♦5 (positive, token). Place it in sequence along a row. Turn 2: Flip ♠5 (negative, same value). Contradiction! Resolve by snapping to opposite color alignment. Turn 3: Flip Joker. Reset contradictions once — but the Joker is now spent.