

**Photo Journal: “Swift Swap” (Final version)**  
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Design Constraints: Team Competitive, Set Collection, Played at a High Speed

**Week 1:**

**Initial Design:**

Our initial design concept for a high-speed game is to avoid taking turns as possible during the game so that one game will finish in the shortest possible time. For “Set Collection”, we thought that a card collection rule will be fine. We choose to use poker cards, as one deck of poker cards consist different card categories with balanced overlaps, like black and red, shapes and numbers. Since we want to make a variety of game goals and add some random factors, we made a set of different collection rules. For example, black cards, red cards, cards with number > 7, and no ace. We make this game a 2vs2 team competitive game.

At the beginning, each player will choose one player of the other team as his/her competitor with each other. Then each team randomly select one rule card. One deck of poker cards with 4 Kings and 2 Jokers excluded is then separated into 2 sub-decks, in which each has 12 (A~Q) black cards and 12 red cards, regardless of shapes. Each pair of competitors get one sub-deck, have it shuffled and then each player gets 12 cards from the deck.

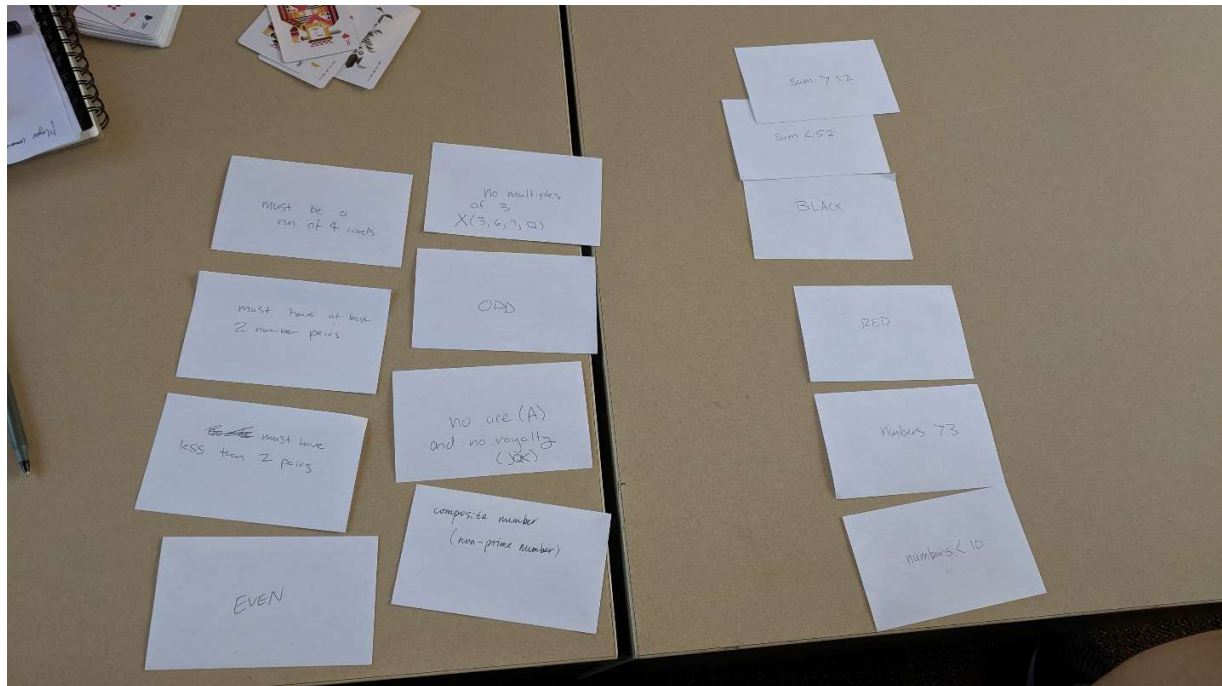
During the game, each player repeatedly swaps a card with his/her competitor, trying to collect 8 cards satisfying his/her team’s selected collection rule. In each pair of competitors, if someone makes an expected collection of 8 cards, he/she can then put the 8 cards onto the table faced down. Continue swapping cards with each other until both of the two competitors complete their collection. The team wins if its players finish their collections sooner than the other team if no error is in their cards collection.

**Revisions:**

Some flaws emerged immediately after we started our playtest. Since our team has only 3 members, we focused on the swap rules during our first discussion. We noticed that some collection rules are quite easy to be satisfied, e.g. “No Ace”, of which 22 cards of the 24-card sub-deck fit the goal. Also, a simple rule with only a one-line description was not interesting & complex enough and we got bored soon after the test started. We then decided to divide the collection rules into a primary rule deck and a secondary one. Each team must draw a card from both the rule decks so that they will get a combination of two collection rules. That greatly increased the variety of the game without making one game last longer. In order to avoid conflicts between two rule cards, we carefully designed the rule deck, making those with conflicts all stay in the same rule deck so that they will never meet. For example, “odd number”, “even number” and “a run of 4 cards” are all in the primary deck.



The next day we invited a friend and had a real 4 people 2vs2 playtest. We found that some collection rules are a bit confusing when we were explaining the rule cards to him. This can be resolved by designing rule cards with clearer statements and some art/pics. Besides, there were not many interactions between different pairs of competitors, as each player only needs to complete his/her own goal faster than his/her competitor. We came up with a rule, allowing the player who has already completed his/her collection to swap 2 cards randomly between another pair of competitors. However, we didn't have this rule tested as all of us had to go home at that time.



Second day playtesting

### Next-step Thoughts:

Add wildcards: wildcards can represent any card.

The 2-card-swap rule mentioned above: Have it tested.

### Responsibilities this week:

Benjamin: Art Design

Zichang: Rules

Marshall: Photo Journal, Playtest Log

Everyone: Prototyping, Design, Playtesting

## Week 2:

### Finalization: Shortening Rules & Modifying items

We planned to add some more features to this game during this week, but then we decided to shorten our rule documents after the game is tested by another group of players. During the playtest, they spent about 12 minutes on reading the rules, and still got confused many times at different aspects after they start a game. Also, the players didn't complete one game 10 minutes after it started, which was quite different from what we had expected. Most of their feedback was to suggest rules be clearer and more intuitive.

For the first pass of simplification, we removed some specific goal cards that will cause many corner cases so that we were able to remove a bunch of special rules. Then we added texts like "Goal A" on the backs of goal cards, separate the poker cards on our own and get a clip for each deck. After that we found another person to read the rules. What he felt was, that texts on the backs of goal cards and the already-separated decks turned out to be better, but the rules book still made him confused about team split and goal cards' combination.





According to his comments, at last, we removed the rule of “combination of two goal cards” and changed it back to “each player simply draws a goal card for himself”. Then we got rid of our former diagrams about team split and created a new simpler one. In this new diagram we didn’t need to plug in the former “goal combination” rule, and it turned out to be much more intuitive than before. Note that for the goal cards, what we actually did was to combine two cards from the former two goal decks **on our own**, and glue them together. It’s a rather simple way of modification but very helpful, since the new goal cards can be folded easily so that goals could be hidden from others easily.



**Responsibilities this week:**

Benjamin: Shortening Rules, Box Design, Art Design (Modification)

Zichang: Shortening Rules

Marshall: Photo Journal, Playtest Log

Everyone: Playtesting, Discussion about rules