

The Antique's Mystery — Rule Book

1. Game Overview

The Antique's Mystery is a competitive strategy game for collectors seeking priceless artifacts—though not all treasures are what they seem.

Throughout the game, players will **bluff, auction, evaluate authenticity, and attempt to deceive others** to maximize their final profits.

At the end of the game, only the shrewdest collector will emerge victorious.

2. Objective

The goal of the game is to **finish with the most money**.

Players earn money by acquiring **authentic artifacts** and correctly placing **suspicion tokens**, while losing money if they end up with **fraudulent pieces**.

3. Game Components

Component	Description
5 Artifact Cards	Items to be auctioned.
5 Price Tags	Possible price values (varied dollar amounts).
5 Verification Tokens	3 Authentic tokens and 2 Fake tokens to assign to artifacts.
3 Suspicion Tokens	Used to accuse others of selling fakes.
\$7,000 Coins/Tokens	in $(4 \times \$1,000, 4 \times \$500, 10 \times \$100)$. Represents the player's available funds.
1 Appraiser Role Card	Assigned to one player only.
Timer	Used to limit auction bidding (45 seconds per auction).

4. Game Setup

i. Assign Roles

- Choose one player to be the Appraiser.
- All other players become Collectors.

ii. Distribute Resources

- Each Collector receives:
 - \$7,000 in currency
 - 5 Artifact Cards
 - 5 Price Tags
 - 5 Verification Tokens (3 Authentic, 2 Fake)
 - 3 Suspicion Tokens

iii. Secret Preparation

- Each Collector secretly assigns one Price Tag and one Verification Token to each Artifact Card.
- These cards are placed face down.

iv. Appraiser Setup

- The Appraiser selects 3 artifacts from the total pool to be marked as Rare.
- Rare artifacts will be worth double their value if Genuine.

5. Game Structure

The game is played over three rounds, each comprising two main phases.

Rounds 1 & 2 — The Auction Rounds

Phase 1: Pitching

1. The group collectively selects one artifact to place on the auction block.
2. The owner of the artifact gives a brief persuasive pitch:
 - They may truthfully defend its authenticity...
 - or they may attempt to deceive other players.
3. After all players have pitched their artifacts for the round, players may place Suspicion Tokens on artifacts they suspect to be fake.

Phase 2: Auctioning

1. The Appraiser begins a 45-second timed auction.
2. Bids must increase by at least \$100 with each raise.
3. When time expires, the highest bidder wins the artifact.
4. The payment goes into the Appraiser's money pool.
5. If no one bids, the artifact returns to its original owner.

Round 3 — The Customs & Appraisal Phase

Phase 1: Appraisal

The Appraiser reveals each artifact's Price Tag and Authenticity Token.

Artifact Type Result

Authentic Player gains the value shown (+\$500, +\$1500, or +\$2500).

Fake Player loses \$1,000.

Rare (Authentic) Value is doubled.

Rare (Fake) Still counts as a Fake → -\$1000.

Phase 2: Suspicion Resolution

Players who placed a correct suspicion token earn +\$500 from the artifact's final owner.

Incorrect suspicions have no penalty.

6. End of Game & Winning

After all artifacts are revealed and all money transfers are completed:

- i. Each player totals their remaining money.
- ii. The player with the highest total wealth wins.
- iii. Tiebreaker: The player with more Authentic Artifacts wins.
- iv. If still tied → shared victory.

7. Appraiser Role Summary

The Appraiser must:

- Oversee auction timing and bidding.
- Track and store payments.
- Reveal artifacts during customs.

- Ensure fairness and resolve disputes.

The Appraiser does not bid in auctions.

8. Example Reveal Scenario

An Ancient Vase is revealed:

- Price Tag: \$2,000
- Verification Token: Fake

The owner loses \$1,000. A player who placed a suspicion token on it earns \$500 from the owner.

9. Optional Game Variants

Variant Rule Change

Short Game Play 2 rounds instead of 3.

High Stakes
Mode Mode

Fake artifacts cost -\$3000 instead of -\$1000.

Double Bluff Before Round 3, each player may secretly swap either the Price Tag or Verification Token on one artifact.

10. Artifact Reference List

- Jade Frog Statue
- Ming Dynasty Painting
- Ancient Vase
- Jade Comb
- Porcelain Platter
- Bronze Cauldron
- Ruby Crown
- Bronze Axe
- Jade Dragon
- Dragon Ring
- Glazed Horse
- White Carved Plate
- Blue Glazed Washer
- Simu Wu Ding
- Dynasty Tea Set
- Ceremonial Armour
- Dynasty Gold Cup
- Bronze Mask
- Oracle Bones