CATsle Builders
～ 猫の城大工 ～

3~5人用 | 30分 | 10歳以上

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Artwork ： Satsuki Nakayama

【Forewords】 We post corrections and rules clarifications on our official website.
Please check it out before playing the game.　　　　Scan for access ⇒

1. Story

It's the Sengoku era and the military is expanding! Many castles were being built and castle carpenters were honing their skills. The best of them can build a perfect castle in the planned territory.
"I'm the best carpenter in the land of the rising sun!" Who really is the best of the best?

2. Components

・Cards: 12 each × 5 colors　Card Ranks: 1 to 12

Gray (Stone)　Green (Gable)　Red (Gate)　Brown (Bridge)　Blue (Moat)　Back is the same

・Blueprint Board： 5 sets (a pair of left and right pieces)

【Front】 Left　Right

【Back】 Left　Right

→ ← Attach the left and the right pieces

The board is used by attaching the two pieces.

The board has 4 columns where you can place cards. Each column has a special meaning denoted by numbers and icons.
More details are explained in 5-4.
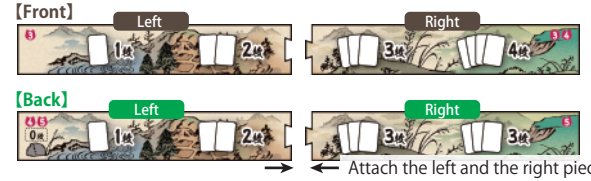
・Rulebook：2 sheets（Each sheet has 4 pages）
The rulebook you are currently reading.

3. Objective and Overview

Your goal is to fill your blueprint board as much as possible without going over the limit.

・Each round, you play multiple tricks, and in each trick, you may be placing cards onto your blueprint board.

・There are 4 columns on your board, and each column must only have 1 suit.

・Each column also has a limit on how many cards you may place. If you are at or below the limit, then you score points. However, if you exceed the limit then you lose points.

・Strategically play your cards and try your best to fill your blueprint board without going over the limit.

・After 3 rounds, the player with the highest score is the winner.

4. Game Setup

4-1：Determining the start player
The player who most recently visited a castle is the start player.　(If no one visited a castle recently then randomly choose a start player.)

4-2：Take the blueprint board
Each player takes the blueprint board and assembles it. Use the appropriate side of the board depending on the player count as marked at the bottom of the board.

Match the number inside the 🐾 icon with the number of players. (The example is for a 4-player game)

Combination Table of "Blueprint Board"

Players	Left	Right
3	Front	Front
4	Back	Front
5	Back	Back

4-3：Find a way to keep your score
A scorekeeping component is not included in the game.
Please use score counters or a pen and paper to keep track of your score

4-4：Preparing the deck
Shuffle all 60 cards face-down to create a deck.

【Additional setup for a 3-player game】 Remove all 12 cards of any one color and return them to the box.
These cards are not used in the game.　　　(The deck will have 48 cards)

5. Round Flow

Round consists of many tricks. In a trick, players play a card from their hand, determine player ranks, and players place cards onto their blueprint board.

【Steps of a trick】
5-1：Play a card　⇒　5-2：Determine player ranks
⇒ 〔5-3：Take Cards　⇒　5-4：Place Cards〕 ⇒　5-5：Prep for the next trick
Each player completes 5-3 and 5-4 individually

5-0：Deal the cards　(At the start of the round only)
Deal the cards face-down to each player.
Deal the appropriate number of cards based on the player count.

Hold your cards so that other players cannot see your hand.

Players	Cards in the deck	Cards to deal	Cards not dealt
3	48 cards	11 cards	15 cards
4	60 cards	14 cards	4 cards
5	60 cards	12 cards	0 card

EX①： 4-player game, after "5-0. Deal the cards"

Blueprint Board

Blueprint Board

Blueprint Board

Blueprint Board

Space where players will be playing cards

Cards dealt : 14 cards each

Cards not dealt are kept to the side

※Special rules for a 3-player game

In a 3-player game, 15 cards are not dealt.

Keep 11 of them and place 4 cards on the side similar to a 4- and 5-player game.

These 11 cards are used in the game, and are explained in details in "10. 3-player game"

5-1：Play a card

・Starting with the Start Player, everyone, in clockwise order, **plays one card face-up from their hand**.
・Start Player can play any card from their hand. Every other player **must follow the rules below**.

◆ Rules of following the suit ◆ (for non-start players)

You must play a card of **the same suit as the Start Player**.

① **If you have a card of that suit :**	② **If you have no card for that suit :**
⇒　You **must play a card of that suit**.	⇒　You **can play any card from your hand**.

EX②：If you have a card of that suit

Start Player played Red [8]

Player Ⓑ has 3 Red cards (Red [2], ...),
so they must play a red card. Player B plays Red [2].

Start player played Red [8]
Player Ⓑ playes Red [2]

Plays one of the Red cards in their hand.

Player Ⓑ 's hand

EX③：If you have no card for that suit

Start Player played Red [8]

Player Ⓒ has no Red card in their hand.
Thus, they can choose to play any card.
Player C plays Blue [10].

Start player played Red [8]
Player Ⓒ playes Blue [10]

Plays any card from their hand.

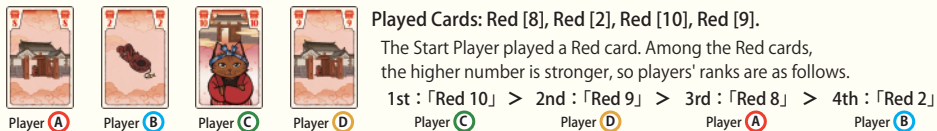Player Ⓒ 's hand

5-2：Determine player ranks

After all players play a card in "5-1: Play a card", compare the strength of the played cards to determine each player's rank in this trick. This is determined by the two conditions below.

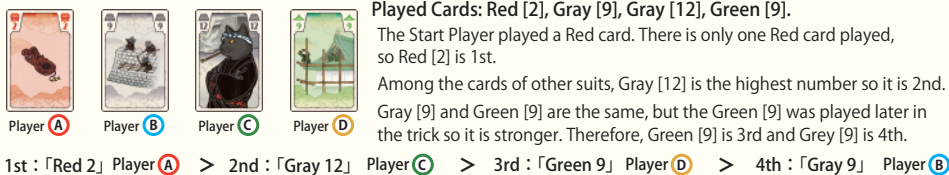| **Condition ①：Same suit as the Start Player**	**Condition ②：Higher cards**

・The cards meeting condition ① are stronger. Then condition ② is used to determine the final ranks.
・There may be **multiple cards of the same number** among the cards that don't match the start player's suit.
　In that case, the cards **played later in the trick are stronger**.

EX④：If all players play the same suit　(Start player is player Ⓐ)

Player Ⓐ　Player Ⓑ　Player Ⓒ　Player Ⓓ

Played Cards: Red [8], Red [2], Red [10], Red [9].
The Start Player played a Red card. Among the Red cards, the higher number is stronger, so players' ranks are as follows.
1st：「Red 10」 > 2nd：「Red 9」 > 3rd：「Red 8」 > 4th：「Red 2」
　　　Player Ⓒ　　　　Player Ⓓ　　　　Player Ⓐ　　　　Player Ⓑ

EX⑤：If there are cards of different suits　(Start player is player Ⓐ)

Player Ⓐ　Player Ⓑ　Player Ⓒ　Player Ⓓ

Played Cards: Red [2], Gray [9], Gray [12], Green [9].
The Start Player played a Red card. There is only one Red card played, so Red [2] is 1st.
Among the cards of other suits, Gray [12] is the highest number so it is 2nd.
Gray [9] and Green [9] are the same, but the Green [9] was played later in the trick so it is stronger. Therefore, Green [9] is 3rd and Grey [9] is 4th.

1st：「Red 2」 Player Ⓐ > 2nd：「Gray 12」 Player Ⓒ > 3rd：「Green 9」 Player Ⓓ > 4th：「Gray 9」 Player Ⓑ

〔5-3：Take cards ⇒ 5-4：Place cards 〕

・Each player **completes 5-3 and 5-4 individually**.
・**Start with the player who ranked 1st in 5-2**, and continue in the order of the ranks.

5-3：Take cards

Players take cards depending on their rank determined in 5-2 Determine player ranks.
Take from the cards played in the current trick.
Depending on the player count, **the ranks that take cards and the number of cards they take change**.
Please see the chart below.

Players	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
3	1 card	2 cards	0 cards		
4	1 card	2 cards	0 cards	0 cards	
5	1 card	1 card	2 cards	0 cards	0 cards

⚠ **NOTE** Players of the ranks marked with 0 cards do not take any card and thus do not place any onto their board in this trick.

5-4：Place cards (Only players that took cards in 5-3 Take cards)

Players that took 1 or more cards place them onto their blueprint board.
For each suit check whether you have a card of that suit **already on your board**.

1) If you <u>have a card</u> of the same suit	⇒	You must add the cards to that column
2) If you <u>don't have any card</u> of that suit	⇒	You may place the cards in any empty column

The number written on each column of your blueprint board indicates **how many cards you may place there without penalties**.
(When placing cards, if you exceed the limit of that column then rotate the card 90 degrees to indicate that you are over the limit.)

⚠ **Tips** More details about scoring can be found in "7. Scoring".
To get the most points, **try to keep your cards on your board at or below the limit for each column**.

EX⑥：Taking cards & Place cards (1)　(Start player is player Ⓐ)

Player Ⓐ　Player Ⓑ　Player Ⓒ　Player Ⓓ

Played Cards：Red [8], Red [2], Blue [12], Green [9]
In a 4-player game, the 1st rank player takes 1 card and the 2nd rank player takes two cards. The 3rd and 4th rank player do not take any cards and do not place any onto their board.

Player Ⓐ 's Blueprint Board

Player Ⓐ is the 1st rank player, so they must take 1 card.
They can choose a Red, Green, or Blue card.

A Red card has already been placed, and the column can only take 1 card. Thus, taking a Red card is not a good idea.

Green cards have been placed as well. There are 2 cards already and the limit is 3, so one more card can be placed. However, that would reach the limit so they chose not to take a Green either.

A Blue card has not been placed on their board, so it may be placed in any empty column. Inspecting their hand, it's probable to take a few more Blue cards this round. They decide to take it and place it in the fourth column with a 4-card limit.

Player Ⓑ 's Blueprint Board
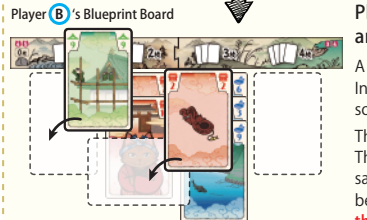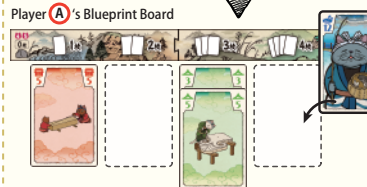
Player Ⓑ is the 2nd rank player, so they must take 2 cards among the remaining Red and Green cards.

A Green card has not been placed, so it can be placed in any empty column. Inspecting their hand, it's unlikely they will take any more Green cards this round, so they decide to place it in the column with a 1-card limit.

The remaining cards are Red 2 and Red 8, so it doesn't matter which card they take. They must take a Red card. A Red card has already been placed, so it must be added to the same column. The column has a 2-card limit and there are already 2 cards, so a card must be added in excess. **Rotate the card 90 degrees and place it in the column to indicate that the column has exceeded its limit**.

"5-4: Place cards" continued (for 4-players and 5-players game)

・In a 4- and 5-player game, there is a "Scrap Area" on the left edge of the blueprint board.
(The limit of Scrap Area is 0 cards)

・Try not to place any cards here as there are only penalties.

・Alternatively, you may strategically choose to place a card of a suit here even if you have empty columns on your blueprint board. Make sure to plan out your round to the best of your ability to maximize your score.

EX⑦ : Taking cards & Place cards (2) (5-player game)

Played Cards: Red [8], Red [2], Blue [12], Green [9].

The columns with a 3-card limit (the third and fourth columns in a 5-player game) already have 3 cards each, so the player doesn't want to take the Red card.

1 Blue card is placed in a column with a 2-card limit, so they can take one more but they think it's better not to take one this trick.

A Green card may be placed in the column with a 1-card limit, or into the Scrap Area. Since it looks like they may take another Green card later this round, they decided to place the Green card in the Scrap Area.

⚠NOTE : In a 5-player game, the card limit of the fourth column is 3 cards.

The goal is now to take 1 Gray card and place it in the first column with a 1-card limit.

5-5 : Preparing for the next trick

・After all players complete 5-3 and 5-4, any remaining cards are discarded.
Place the discarded cards face-down away from players' blueprint boards to prevent mixing them up.

【NOTE】 No player may look at the discarded cards once they are in the discard pile.

・The player who **took 2 cards in 5-3 becomes the next Start Player**.

・Go back to 5-1 and begin the next trick until all cards in your hand have been played.

6. Round end

The round is over when there are no cards left in your hand. Proceed to "7. Scoring"
(The number of tricks changes depending on the number of players.)

7. Scoring

Your score is based on the cards you placed on your blueprint board.

① Score the cards in the column

Your score depends on **whether you exceeded the card limit for each column**.

（1）**If you didn't exceed the limit (at or below the limit)**
You score 1 point for each card in that column

（2）**If you exceeded the limit (over the limit)**
You score -1 point for each card over the limit

⚠NOTE: You get no points for cards at or below the limit if you've exceeded the limit.

If you have any cards in your Scrap Area, you score -1 point for each card there.
EX: 5 cards in a 3-card limit column = -2 points.

② Bonus points for perfect columns

・If your column is **exactly at the limit**, the column is considered a **perfect column**.
You score bonus points **depending on the number of perfect columns**.

・**The** Scrap Area in a 4- and 5-player game is not considered as a column and **does not score a perfect column bonus**.
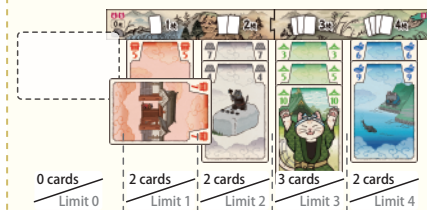
Perfect Columns	0 columns	1 column	2 columns	3 columns	4 columns
Bonus Points	0 points	0 points	1 point	2 points	4 points

The sum of ① and ② above is your score for the round.
Use tokens to track your scores or write them down on a piece of paper.
(If the sum is in the negatives, you score 0 points for the round.)

EX⑧ : Scoring (1)   (4-player game. There is a Scrap Area on the left edge of the Blueprint Board.)

0 cards / Limit 0   2 cards / Limit 1   2 cards / Limit 2   3 cards / Limit 3   2 cards / Limit 4

① Score the Cards in the column
✓ ✗ ✓ ✓ ✓

② Bonus Points for perfect columns
Except for "Scrap Area"
✗ ✓ ✓ ✗

① Score the cards in the column. Check if they exceed the limit.
・The first column has a 1-card limit but there are 2 cards.
Since it exceeds the limit by one, you score -1 point.
・The second, third, and fourth columns are all under the limit, so you score 1 point for each card in these columns. There are 2, 3, and 2 cards, so you score 7 points.
・There is no card in the Scrap Area, so you have no penalties.
・The total score for this round is 6 points which is the sum of -1 and 7 points.

② Bonus points for perfect columns.
・The second and third columns have 2 and 3 cards respectively, which are the limits. Since you have **2 perfect columns you score 1 bonus point**.
・The first column is over the limit, and the fourth column is under the limit, so they are not considered a perfect column.
・Having no cards in the Scrap Area does not count towards a perfect column.

① Score the cards in the column : 6 points ＋ ② Bonus points for perfect columns : 1 point ＝ Total Score 7 points

EX⑨ : Scoring (2)   (5-player game. There is a Scrap Area and the fourth column has a 3-card limit.)

2 cards / Limit 0   1 cards / Limit 1   2 cards / Limit 2   3 cards / Limit 3   3 cards / Limit 3

① Score the Cards in the column
✗ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

② Bonus Points for perfect columns
Except for "Scrap Area"
✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

① Score the cards in the column. Check if they exceed the limit.
・All 4 columns are at or under the limit, so you score 1 point for each card in the column. $1 + 2 + 3 + 3 = 9$ points
(In a 5-player game, the fourth column has a 3-card limit)
・There are 2 cards in the Scrap Area. You score -2 points.
・You add 9 and -2 points for a total of 7 points from (1) Score the cards in the column.

② Bonus points for perfect columns.
・All 4 columns are exactly at the limit so they are all perfect columns.
You score 4 bonus points for 4 perfect columns.
・The cards in the Scrap Area do not count towards the perfect column bonus.

① Score the cards in the column : 7 points ＋ ② Bonus points for perfect columns : 4 point ＝ Total Score 11 points

8. Next round

・The **Start Player of the next round** is the next player in clockwise order from the Start Player of this round.
・Shuffle all cards used in this round to create a new deck.

⚠ NOTE In a 3- or 4-player game, **remember to shuffle the 4 cards kept on the side** that were not used in the round.

・Go back to 5-0: Deal the cards to start the next round.

9. End of the game

・The game is over **after completing 3 rounds**. The player with the highest score wins.

【NOTE : In case of a tie】
・Among the tied players, the player who has the most perfect columns in the final round breaks ties and wins.
・If there is still a tie, then all tied players share the victory.

10. 3-player game
 • **From 5-0 to 5-4 change as follows.**
 • **"5-5 Preparing for the next trick" and later sections remain the same.**

5-0：Deal the cards   (3- player game)
 • Out of the 15 cards remaining in the deck, 11 cards are kept and will be used during the round.
   These 11 cards form a deck called "Extra Card Deck".
   (4 cards are not used in the round. They are kept to the side face-down.)

5-1：Play a card   (3- player game)
 • Before the Start Player plays a card, reveal the top card of the Extra Card Deck and place it face-up.
   This card is called the "Extra Card" .
 • After the card is revealed, the Start Player and the remaining players play cards from their hands following the normal rules.

 【NOTE】 To distinguish between the "Extra Card" and the cards played by each player, either rotate the "Extra Card" 90 degrees and place it on the side, or place the card face-up on top of the "Extra Card Deck".

5-2：Determine player ranks   (3- player game)
 • The Extra Card is not used when determining the player ranks. Only the 3 cards played by the player are used.

5-3：Take cards   (3- player game)
 • After the rank is determined, the 1st place player takes 1 card, and the 2nd place player takes 2 cards.
   When taking a card, you may choose the take the Extra Card in addition to the cards played by the players.

5-4：Place cards   (3- player game)
 • The rules are the same as a 4- and 5-player game, except there is no Scrap Area.

EX⑩：Differences in a 3-player game
【5-0：Deal the cards】
Extra Card Deck (11 cards)
→ Cards not dealt are kept to the side.
Space where players will be playing cards
Blueprint Board
Cards dealt: 11 cards each

【5-1：Play a card】   (Start player is player Ⓐ)
【5-2：Determine player ranks】

The card drawn from the Extra Card Deck   Player Ⓐ   Player Ⓑ   Player Ⓒ

1st：「Red 8」 > 2nd：「Red 2」 > 3rd：「Green 5」
   Player Ⓐ   Player Ⓑ   Player Ⓒ

 • The Start Player played a Red card, so other players must play a Red card if there is one in their hands.
 • The Red suit played by the Start Player is stronger.
 • The Extra Card is Gray 12, and it is not used when determining the player ranks.

【5-3：Taking cards】   【5-4：Place cards 】

 • Player Ⓐ is 1st place, so they take 1 card.
 • Player A already has Red and Green cards matching the column limits, so they don't want to take any more.
 • They decided to take Gray 12 which was the Extra Card, and place it on the column with a 1-card limit.

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11. Q&A   (There is also a variant rule at the end of this section. After playing a few games, try adopting the variant rule.)
Below are frequently asked questions. Please review these first if a rule is unclear.

Q1： May I look at the face-down cards you set to the side in 5-0?
A1： No, you may not. Keep them to the side face-down.

Q2： In 5-3 and 5-4, I need to take 2 cards but my columns are full and I do not wish to take any more cards. May I choose not to take any cards?
A2： No, you may not. You must take cards based on your rank. Play your cards strategically so that you do not exceed your column limits.

Q3： I was a 2nd place in a 4-player game. The rule says that I need to take 2 cards, but can I choose to only take 1?
A3： No, you may not. You must take all cards based on your rank and place all of them onto your Blueprint Board.

Q4： May I place 2 or more suits in the Scrap Area?
A4： No, you may not. Similar to the columns, the Scrap Area may only have cards of a single suit.

Q5： If I have 0 cards in the Scrap Area, will it count towards the perfect column bonus?
A5： No, it does not. Only the columns on your Blueprint Board count towards the perfect column bonus.

Q6： May I place a card in the Scrap Area even if I have empty columns on my blueprint board?
A6： Yes, you may. Although you will score negative points for these cards, this may allow you to score more points by optimizing your columns.

Q7： If my round score is in the negatives, will I lose points?
A7： No, instead score 0 points for the round.

Q8： In a 3-player game, what happens if the Extra Card is the 1st or 2nd in rank?
A8： Extra Card is never used when determining the player ranks, so this is not possible. Please only compare the 3 cards played by the players.

Q9： In a 3-player game, in 4-4 Preparing the deck, which suit should I remove from the game?
A9： You may choose to remove any 1 suit of your choice.

【Variant Rule】 As a variant, you can change "5-5. Next Trick" as follows. The Start Player for the next trick is the player who ranked 1st in the current trick. (instead of being the player who took 2 cards in the current trick.)

12. Postface/Credits
This game is an official arrangement of "Anou" a 2017 Trick Taking Party award winner designed by Matsumoto Yozaemon.
I personally really enjoyed the original game, so I politely asked for permission to repackage the game. Creative thoughts were put into both the rules and the components to make the game even more fun and accessible. Thank you to Satsuki Nakayama for illustrating the wonderful artwork for CATsle, and Yozaemon for allowing me to create this version of the game.
I believe I was able to make this game a simple yet challenging trick-taking game where the game flow changes every time you play.
I sincerely wish that this game will be played and enjoyed by many trick-taking fans.

And, as usual, I ask one thing from the veteran gamers. Please don't tell another player "this is the best move in this situation!"
I strongly believe that being able to "find" the best move by yourself is one of the "fun" in playing a game.
(Of course, how you enjoy a game is up to you and shoudn't be forced by others)
Please enjoy the game and aha moments! I wish you a wonderful game life.

Good Luck and Have Fun!!

**Please check our website before playing the game for the most updated rules and errata.
Also please send us your questions and comments. We love hearing from you!**

Website：http://fukuroudou.info   X（旧 Twitter）：@Fukuroudou_8