

Eleusis

4-8 players

104 cards

Difficulty: Hard

Duration: Long

Deduce the dealer's secret rule for which cards can be legally played.

SETUP

- One player (the dealer) secretly invents a rule for valid card plays.
- Shuffle 2 standard decks together and deal 14 cards to each player.
- The dealer plays one starter card face-up.

SCORING

- Players score fewer points for fewer cards remaining in hand.
- The Prophet scores a bonus if they judge correctly.
- The dealer scores based on how balanced the difficulty of their rule was.

Tip: Test hypotheses systematically; play cards that distinguish between two possible rules rather than guessing randomly.

ON YOUR TURN

- Play a card you believe follows the secret rule.
- Correct cards join the main line; rejected cards go to a sideline with penalty draws.
- Study accepted and rejected cards to deduce the pattern.
- Declare yourself Prophet if you think you know the rule to judge plays instead of the dealer.

Eleusis is a unique inductive logic card game where one player invents a secret rule for card play, and the other players must deduce it through experimentation. It simulates the scientific method, making it both a game and an intellectual exercise.

Objective

As players, deduce the secret rule governing which cards can be legally played. As the dealer (God), create a rule that is discoverable but not trivially obvious.

Setup

1. **Players:** 4 to 8 players.
2. **Deck:** 2 standard 52-card decks shuffled together.
3. **Roles:** One player is the 'dealer' (God) who creates the secret rule. All others are players.
4. **Deal:** Each player receives 14 cards. The dealer plays one starter card.

Gameplay

1. **Playing:** On your turn, play a card you believe follows the secret rule.
2. **Correct Play:** If the dealer accepts it, the card joins the main line of play.
3. **Incorrect Play:** If rejected, the card goes to a sideline and you draw extra penalty cards from the deck.
4. **Deduction:** Study the pattern of accepted and rejected cards to figure out the rule.
5. **Prophet:** A player who thinks they know the rule can declare themselves 'Prophet' and judge plays instead of the dealer.

Example Rules

- 'Play a card of the same color as the previous card.'
- 'Alternate between odd and even numbers.'
- 'The card must be higher if the previous was red, lower if it was black.'
- Rules can be as simple or complex as desired.

Tips and Strategies

- Test hypotheses systematically — play cards that distinguish between possible rules.
- Pay close attention to which cards are rejected, not just which are accepted.
- As the dealer, make your rule complex enough to challenge but fair enough to be discoverable.

Tips & Strategy

Think like a scientist: form a hypothesis, test it with a specific card, and refine based on the result. Avoid random guessing.

The key is distinguishing between hypotheses. If two possible rules both explain accepted cards, play a card that would be valid under one rule but not the other.