

CutThroat!

The Card Game that's out for Blood...

For 6-13 Players.

An Animalball Game

by Mike Jones

Materials Needed

1 standard deck of 52 cards

8 "life markers" per player—anything small can work as life markers. Pennies are easiest, but anything roughly that size will work.

Setting Up

Divide the deck of cards into suits (clubs, hearts, spades, diamonds), and then remove extra cards so that there is only one of each suit for each player. Therefore, if there are 9 players, then keep only the Ace through 9 of each suit, and set the rest aside. The excess cards will not be used.

As the cards are dealt out, each player will have a character represented by a card denomination. One character will be the Ace, one will be the 7, one will be the Queen, etc. The four suits for each character each have a specific purpose:

- **Identity Cards (Diamonds):** Shuffle the diamonds together, and deal out one to each player. This card tells you who your character is, and you should keep it face down in front of you. You do not want to reveal your identity to any of the other players.
- **Enemy Cards (Spades):** Shuffle the spades together and deal one to each player. The spade you receive represents your mortal enemy. Mortally wounding your enemy provides bonuses later. Do not reveal your enemy to the other players.

NOTE: don't worry if you get your own character as your enemy card. It will help you later.
- **Life Cards (Clubs):** The life cards should be arranged face up in the center of the table where all the players can easily reach them. Place 8 pennies (your life markers) onto each life card. When a life card runs out of life markers, that character's heart is threatened, and they are in danger of dying.
- **Heart Cards (Hearts):** Next to or underneath each life card, place the matching heart card. As long your character still has life markers, you are safe, but once they are gone, someone else can take your heart card, and you may die (see Mortally Wounded).

Who Goes First: Determine who will take the first turn. For a first game, this is the youngest player in the room. For subsequent games, the first player eliminated from the last game gets to go first. After the first player takes a turn, play continues around the table to the left.

Taking Your Turn

On your turn, you may choose to either Play or Guess:

Play: To make a standard play, remove any two life markers from the life cards still in play. They can be from different life cards or from the same life card. Discard one of the life markers, and then place the other back into play on any life card you choose, including one you just removed a marker from if you wish. You may remove markers from your own character or put them back on your own character if you wish. Just remember that you are initially trying to hide your character's identity.

Guess: To guess, name one player still in the game and which character you think that player has. The named player will then tell you if you are right or wrong. If you are wrong, your turn is over.

If your guess is correct, then the player will turn their identity card face up, and you may now make an **extended play**. In an extended play, you remove *three* life markers from the life cards in play, and at least 2 of them **MUST** come from the character you just revealed if possible. (If that life card does not have enough markers, then the extra markers may come from any life card you choose). Now discard one life marker and place the other two back on any life card(s) you wish.

NOTE: once an identity is revealed, other players may not try to "guess" it again.

Once there are only two characters left whose identity cards have not been revealed, those characters get a **Free Pass**. They reveal their identity cards and other players may no longer guess their identity.

Dying & Death

Mortally Wounded: If you remove the last life marker from a character's life card, the character is mortally wounded. You now take the character's heart card and hold on to it. Play continues normally around the table. When your next turn comes up, if there are any life markers on the character's life card, then you must return the character's heart card, and your turn is over.

If that character still has no life markers, though, then the character is officially dead and out of the game (see below), and you may now make an extended play, removing any three life markers currently in play and placing two of them back on any life card(s) you choose.

Death: When your character is dead, you are out of the game. You reveal your identity and enemy cards (if you have not already) and all four of your cards are removed from the game.

Enemy Cards: At the start of your turn, if your enemy has no life markers on its life card, you may now make an extended play, removing any three life markers currently in play and placing two of them back on any life card(s) you choose. You may not play an enemy card and guess in the same turn.

NOTE: if you happen to be your own enemy, this means that you may use this extended move to try to save yourself.

Additionally, if you are holding the character's heart card AND enemy card at this point (that is, the character is your enemy and you are the one delivering the killing blow), then you get a double extended move in which you remove 4 life markers from the field and then place three of them back on any life card(s) you choose.

Sudden Death: When there are only three characters left in the game, their heart cards are removed from play. Without heart cards, characters are dead as soon as someone removes the last life marker from their life card.

Winning

The last living character is the winner.