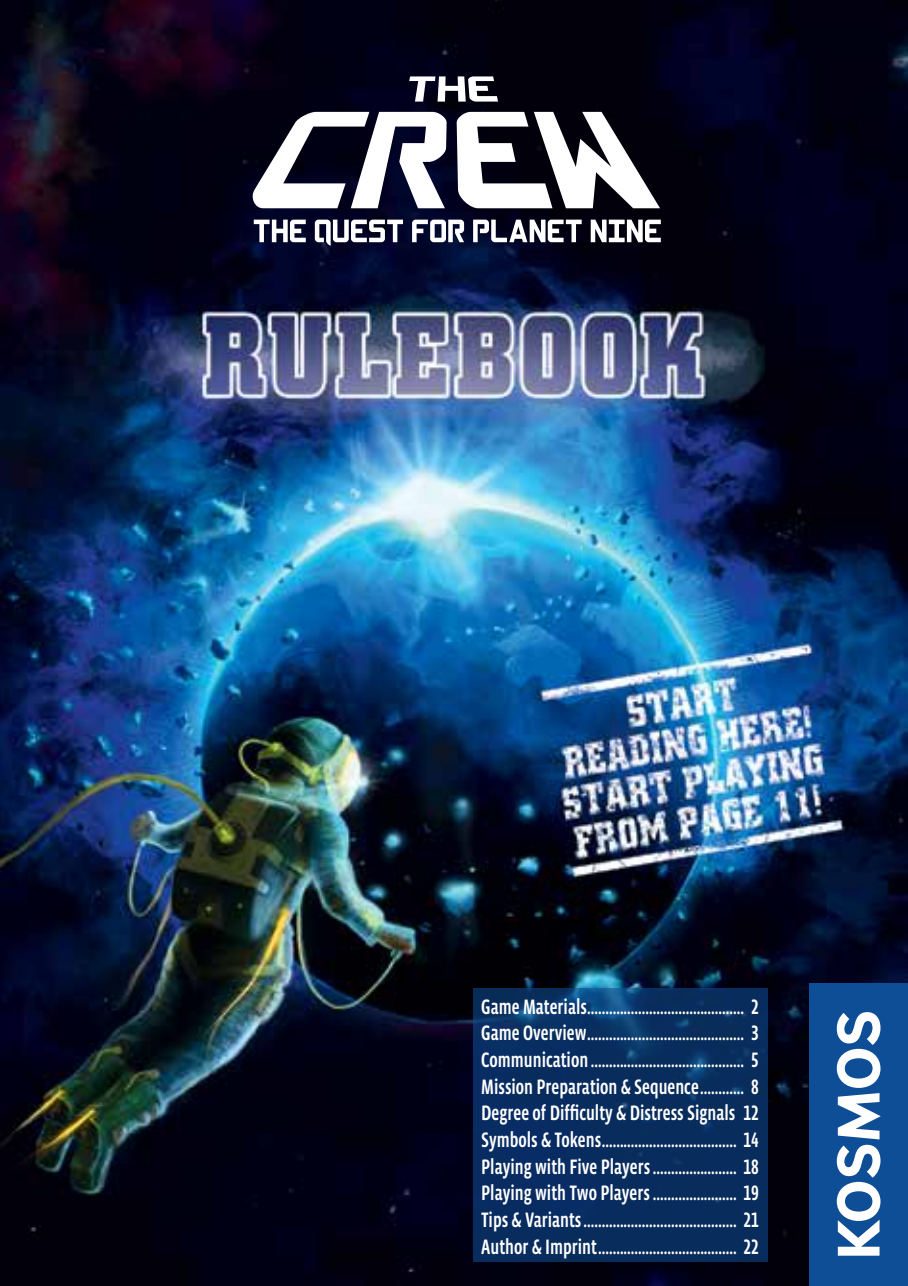
THE CREW
THE QUEST FOR PLANET NINE

RULEBOOK



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Ages
10+
Players
3–5*

*** two-player variant is on page 19**

Astronauts wanted! Scientists say there is a mysterious ninth planet located at the edge of our solar system. But despite all of their efforts, so far they have been unable to provide substantial evidence of its existence. Join this exciting space adventure to find out if the theories are just science fiction or if you will discover Planet Nine.

In this cooperative trick-taking game you need to complete 50 different missions. But you will only succeed if you can work together as a team. To master the challenges and achieve your mission, communication will be essential — but in space, things can be more difficult than you expect …

GAME MATERIALS

40 Large cards (playing cards)
- 36 Color cards *in four colors with the values 1-9*
- 4 Rocket cards *with the values 1-4*



5 Large reminder cards



36 Small cards (task cards)



16 Tokens
- 10 task tokens
- 5 radio communication tokens
- 1 distress signal token



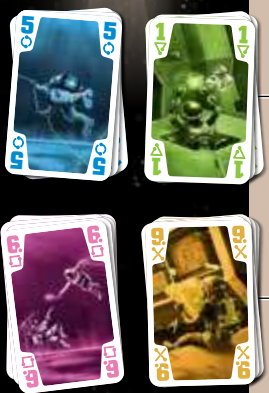
1 commander token



1 rulebook/logbook







The Crew is a cooperative, mission-based trick-taking game. What does this mean?

Cooperative

You win together, or you lose together — only if each of you is successful, and you help each other, will you be able to complete the missions and win the game.

Mission-based

Your journey spans 50 different missions, each with a unique win condition, which you play through consecutively as a cohesive story. But you can also play the missions out of order if that is your preference. **The missions can be found in the logbook at the end of this rulebook.**

You will probably not be able to play through this adventure all at once. Therefore, it is best to get together on several different occasions to play through all of the missions. The first few missions rarely take more than five minutes to complete. However, later on, you will need more time for each individual mission, as they get progressively harder.

Trick-taking game

All of the cards are distributed to "The Crew" (the players), and then, in turn order each player plays one of his or her own cards face up in the middle of the table. This playing of one card by each is called the **"trick."** The player who places the card with the highest value wins the trick, but only if that player has followed suit.

There are **five card suits**: pink, blue, green, yellow, and rocket cards. **Following suit** means that each player must "follow" the suit choice of the first player; i.e., you have to play a card of the same type. Only if you do not have a card of this suit may you play a card of a different suit.

ATTENTION

If you cannot easily distinguish between the colors of the cards, you can use these four symbols instead:



Each color of the cards has also been assigned a symbol.

The Crew offers you a story, but you can just as easily play missions of your choice, because no two attempts will work out the same way. Play the way you enjoy the most.

This column contains a brief and concise overview of the most important rules — so you can quickly find your way back into the game after a long break.

In each round, each crew member plays a card in a clockwise order. These cards make up the trick. The highest card played wins the trick.

The initial card played sets the suit that must be played for each trick. This is applicable for both color cards and rocket cards.

If a suit cannot be followed, then any card of your choice can be played.

Only cards of the designated suit can win the trick, unless they are rockets. You are not required to win a trick.

Rockets are trump cards and win in any trick. If there are several rockets in a trick, the rocket card with the highest value wins the trick.

Tricks that are won are set aside face down; only the last trick can be looked at.

However, the trick can only be won with cards that have followed suit. The card with the highest numeric value in the designated suit wins the trick. A trick that has been won is set aside face down. You may only take a look at the cards from the trick won most recently.

During a trick, there is no mandate to play a specific card. If you have multiple cards that you can play, you may play a low card, even though you would have been able to win the trick with a higher card. In other words, you are not forced to win the trick.

The rocket cards are trump cards. This means that they always win the trick, no matter which other cards are in play. During a color-suited trick, a rocket may only be played if a card in the color suit cannot be played. If a rocket card is played first, this will establish the suit and must be followed if possible. If several rockets are in contention, the one with the highest value wins.

The following examples show which card type (or suit) has to be played – i.e., which card was first played in the trick:



The yellow 8 and 6 were played following the suit established by the first card played, the yellow 2. 8 is higher and thus wins the trick.



The green 3 establishes the suit. 5 is higher and thus wins the trick. Because even though 9 had the highest value it did not follow suit and thus cannot win.

In The Crew, it's always about the right players winning the right tricks. You're really going to need to coordinate to accomplish the mission.

Communication





An important rule in this game is that you cannot talk about the cards in your hand. You are not allowed to show, say or suggest to other crew members which cards you have. But there is a possibility of communication in the form of **radio communication tokens**. Each of you has one radio communication token, which can be used exactly once per mission. It may be used at any time before a trick, but never during it. If you fail in a mission attempt, you may of course use it again during the next attempt.

If there are task cards in the game, you must first divide them among you, before you can communicate. We will explain task cards on page 8.

Rule of thumb for the exchange of information:

If you know something only because you know your own cards, you are not allowed to talk about this information.

The maximum is one communication per crew member per mission attempt.

Communication can only happen after the task distribution phase and then every time before a trick begins, but never during the trick.



The blue 3 was played. 7 is higher and would win the trick. However the 1 card is a rocket card, and rocket cards are trump cards, so it wins the trick.



The first card played was the 3 of rockets. As such 2 and 4 both played rockets as well. The highest rocket in the trick is the 4; therefore it wins the trick.

Communication:

1. Lay out one color card (no rocket cards)
2. Place the radio communication token
   - › Top = highest
   - › middle = single
   - › bottom = lowest
3. Take a reminder card into your hand

If you want to communicate, take one of your **color cards** and put it face up in front of you so everyone can see it. This card remains part of your set of cards, so it can be played in the normal way. The only difference is that every other crew member now knows you have this card as well. Then place your radio communication token with the green side up on the card to give your crew members even more information:

- › At the top, if it is your highest card of this color.
- › In the middle, if it is your only card of this color.
- › At the bottom, if it is your lowest card of this color.



Your highest pink card | *Your only yellow card* | *Your lowest green card*

Rocket cards can never be communicated.

One of these conditions must apply; Otherwise, you are not allowed to choose that card to communicate with. **Rocket cards may never be communicated!**



6 *cannot be communicated, as it is neither the highest nor the lowest, nor is it the only yellow card in the hand. The rocket may never be communicated. All of the other cards can be communicated.*

The placement of the radio communication tokens may not be changed if the statement is no longer correct. For example, a communicated “highest” card may become the “only” card during the game. Nevertheless, the radio communication token may not be moved.



After placing a card and radio communication token, take one of the **reminder cards** into your hand. Its purpose is to remind you that your communicated card is still on the table. If you play it, you can put down the reminder card again. When you do this, flip the radio communication token to the red side to indicate that you have already communicated in this mission.

Reminder cards look different from all other cards on both sides of the card, so your crew members can see that you have a reminder card in your hand.



The placement of the radio communication tokens must not be changed, even if the statement is no longer accurate.

Reminder cards are discarded as soon as the communicated card is played.

MISSION PREPARATION

Carry out the following steps before each mission:

1. Shuffle the 40 large playing cards and distribute them face down and equally to all crew members.

   If there are three of you playing, one person will get one more card than the rest. After the last trick, the card that is left remains unplayed.
2. Each person puts a radio communication token with the green side up in front of himself or herself. Put a reminder card for everyone at the ready.
3. Place the distress signal token face down.
4. Shuffle the 36 small task cards and put them down as a concealed pile. Keep the task tokens handy.

Playing cards are distributed to the crew members — these are used to play with.

Task cards specify which playing card must be won in a specific trick.

MISSION SEQUENCE

In most missions you will have to fulfill a certain number of tasks. These tasks are indicated with **task cards,** which are smaller versions of the color cards. Unless a mission dictates otherwise, crew members divide mission tasks among themselves. You can discern how many tasks there are by means of this symbol: 4

Take the specified number of task cards from the task card deck and place them face up in the center of the table. All other task cards are not required for carrying out the current mission. Now look at the cards in your hands. Whoever has the four rocket announces this and is the **commander** for the current mission. This crew member receives the commander token as a reminder.

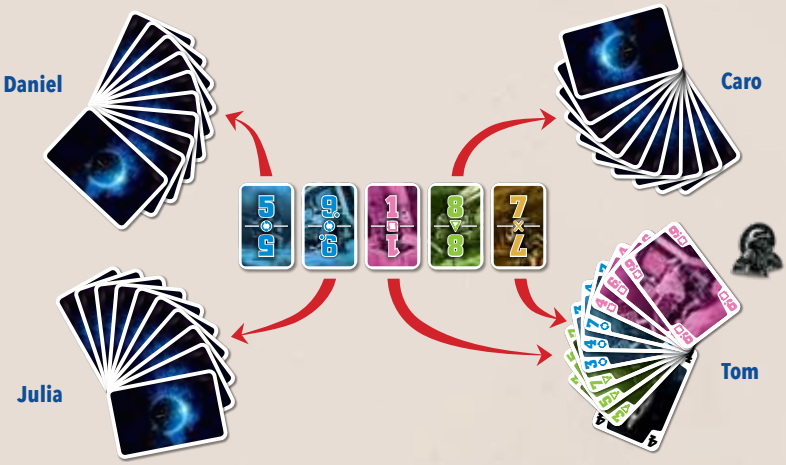
Whoever has the four rocket gets the commander token for the current mission attempt. The commander is still a member of the crew.

Your commander will always be the first to choose a task card from the center of the table and place it face up in front of himself or herself. Then everyone else will take a task card.

Each crew member selects a task card one at a time until all the tasks have been distributed. Each player could get several tasks and not all players will necessarily have the same number of tasks.

In the first missions there are only a few tasks. Not everyone will have a task and the tasks are often played out quickly.

Task cards are divided clockwise among the crew members, starting with the commander.



Example setup and card distribution for mission 18 in the logbook: *Tom has the* 4 *rocket. This means he is the commander for this mission and will be the first to choose one of the task cards. He chooses the pink* 1*, since he has the pink* 9 *in his hand and the pink* 1 *should be easy to win. Julia and Daniel each choose a blue task. Caro only has the choice between green and yellow and decides to play green. Since there is still a task in the middle, Tom has to take the remaining yellow task card. It won't be easy to fulfill this task since his hand does not contain any yellow cards.*

Each task specifies a playing card that must be won. A task is fulfilled when its owner wins the corresponding playing card in a trick.

When all the tasks of the respective mission are fulfilled, you have completed the mission.

If a task is fulfilled by a crew member who does not possess the appropriate task card or if a crew member violates a special rule, you have lost.

The commander always starts the first trick. All further tricks are started by the person who won the previous trick.

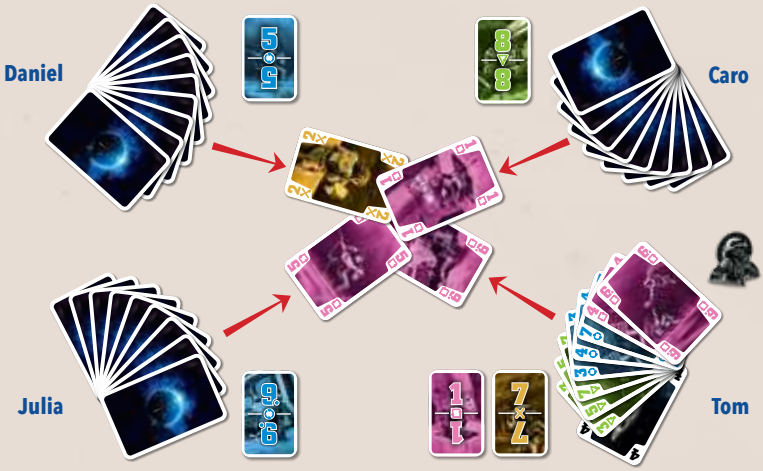
A task is fulfilled when a crew member wins a trick containing the playing card matching one of his or her task cards. He or she then turns the corresponding task card over, face down in front of himself or herself. **A crew member can also fulfill several tasks with the same trick.** As soon as each one of you has completed your own tasks, you have completed the mission successfully and can start the next mission immediately. Upon the successful completion of a mission you should enter in the logbook how many attempts you needed to complete that mission.

If a player wins even a single playing card for which another player has the corresponding task card, you lose immediately and have to restart the mission from the beginning. **For each new attempt, you reshuffle all the cards, deal each crew member new cards, and receive new tasks.**

Once all the tasks have been distributed, the commander starts the first trick. And then for the remainder of the mission attempt, the person who won the previous trick always starts the next trick.

Some missions do not use task cards. During these missions, the commander will start the first trick.





As commander, Tom starts the game. He opens the first trick with his pink 9 and hopes to win the pink 1. Julia plays a pink 5 in the trick. Daniel does not have any pink cards in his hand and therefore plays a card of his choice: the yellow 2. Caro has a pink 1 and plays it in the trick. Tom has the highest value of the pink cards played and thus wins the trick. His task, to win the pink 1, is thereby fulfilled and he turns over his task card.

LET'S GO!

You now know all the basic rules and can start with your first mission. To do so, flip this book over and read the logbook.

On pages 12 and 13, you will find information about the degree of difficulty and a help system, in case you need some support. Starting from page 14, new rules and symbols are explained. You will come across them in your logbook.

Starting on page 19, the game is explained for playing with two players.

The commander is always the player with the four rocket. The duties of the commander are:

1. start the selection of the tasks
2. start the first trick
3. implement the special rules of individual missions

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

A well-intentioned piece of advice: Do not be under the illusion that the tasks ahead are always easy. You will find that with every game you get better and every setback improves your understanding of the processes and your ability to play the game. In general, the 50 missions get increasingly more difficult as you progress. We therefore recommend that you play them in order. With four players, in the first mission alone there are **over 42 trillion** possible ways that the cards can be distributed and in later missions the number is even greater. It can therefore happen that a mission proves to be surprisingly simple or unexpectedly difficult due to the card distribution. Accept that — the universe does not cooperate. The gameplay of The Crew will vary depending on the number of players. Playing with three players will be a smaller challenge than playing with four or even five players (see pages 18 and 21).

You may also experience a situation when looking at your (remaining) cards where you become convinced that you cannot accomplish the mission. Withhold the urge to communicate this to your crew members or to reveal your cards. Far too often a detail is overlooked, forgotten, or too hastily judged. In such a situation, simply play out the round — it won't take long, and you may still emerge victorious.

A distress signal can be sent out before the first trick of a mission. The distress signal token is turned to its active side and the distress signal field is circled in the logbook.

If the distress signal is activated, each crew member may pass one card to his neighbor. Rockets may not be passed on!

HELP MECHANIC: DISTRESS SIGNALS

When the going gets tough, you can count on the support of your ground team even when you're in space. At the beginning of each mission, after distributing all of the playing cards and, if applicable, task cards, but before any crew member communicates, you can send a distress signal to the control center on Earth. In order to do so, decide together whether you want to make use of this assistance, then turn

the distress signal token to its active side (satellite).

Distress signal token

active   **inactive**

Then immediately circle the distress signal field of the current mission in the logbook. Each crew member now has to hand over one of his or her cards to his or her neighbor. Rocket cards cannot be passed on! Decide together if you will pass the cards to the left or the right. Everyone has to pass in the same direction! Then the mission starts and follows the standard rules.

The distress signal token will remain active until you complete the current mission. No matter how many tries you need, at the beginning of each attempt you can pass a card to the left or to the right to a crew member next to you. Even if you don't use it, the token remains active. Only when you start a new mission do you turn the token over again to inactive.

The use of the distress signal token will be noted in your score. After each successful mission, you will enter in the logbook the number of attempts that you needed to complete the mission. If your distress signal field is circled, you must increase this number by one.

Use this help at your own discretion. If you want your adventure to be a bit easier overall, you can use the help immediately on your first attempt. Each mission can also be completed without the use of the distress signal token!

Either all crew members have to pass on a card or none, and all have to choose the same direction.

Rockets are never passed on.

The distress signal token remains active until the current mission is completed and increases the number of attempts for this mission by one.

ALL missions can be completed without the distress signal. Are you up to the challenge?

EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS IN THE LOGBOOK

Task tokens make the fulfillment of tasks more difficult through additional conditions.

Task tokens

In many of the missions, task tokens are used. Each token is then assigned to a task card. These specify the conditions for the respective card, that must be observed while fulfilling the task.

There are the following task tokens:



*The task must be fulfilled **first**.*



*The task must be fulfilled **last**.*



*The task must be fulfilled **second**.*



*The task must be fulfilled anytime **before** ».*



*The task must be fulfilled **third**.*



*The task must be fulfilled anytime **after** ›.*



*The task must be fulfilled **fourth**.*



*The task must be fulfilled anytime **after** ».*



*The task must be fulfilled **fifth**.*



*The task must be fulfilled anytime **after** ».*

If the condition of a task token is not fulfilled, you have lost.

Violating the task order condition will immediately cause the mission to fail.

The task token 

does not mean that the task must be fulfilled in the first trick — it only has to be fulfilled first out of all the pending tasks.

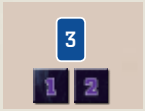
It can happen that several tasks with task tokens are won by a single crew member in the same trick. If these task tokens are consecutive, for example, 1 and 2 ,or » and », both are considered to have been correctly fulfilled, regardless of which was played first.

The mission description shows how many task cards and which task tokens are to be used. If you are playing with task tokens, first place the indicated task tokens face up in the center of the table. Then draw the task cards and place them from left to right, starting with the first task token. No token may be assigned to more than one card.

It is possible to win multiple tasks with task tokens in the same trick if the tokens are consecutive.

Set up:

1. **Lay out the tokens**
2. **Lay out the tasks from left to right starting with the first task token**



The mission specifies to use three task cards as well as task tokens one and two.



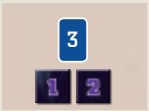
Initially the tokens have to be placed next to each other.



Then the task cards are drawn and are placed next to each other, face up from left to right, starting with the first token.

The distribution of the task cards happens as previously described. If you take a task card, you must also take any corresponding task token.

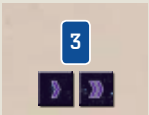
Number and arrow tokens both specify an order. Arrow tokens give you more flexibility in fulfilling your tasks than the number tokens:



This mission requires three task cards and task tokens one and two.



In this case, first the blue 6, then the green 3, and finally the pink 1 must be won.



This mission requires three task cards and the first two arrow tokens.



Here the blue 6 must be won before the green 3. Whether the pink 1 is won before the blue 6, between the blue 6 and the green 3, or is won after the green 3, does not matter.

Dead zone



If your mission shows this symbol, your communications have been disrupted and you only have limited communication. When you want to communicate, place your card in front of you as you normally would. It must meet one of the three conditions (highest, single, or lowest of the cards in your hand, in the color suit). You are not however, allowed to place your radio communication token on the card. Instead flip it over to the red side and put it next to the card. The other crew members must now use their intuition to decide what information is being transmitted.

The dead zone requires the use of intuition. Communicate a card, but do not place a radio communication token on it.

Disruption

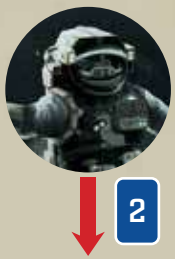
If a mission shows this symbol, your communication is completely interrupted for a short period of time. The number will tell you during which trick communication can begin once again. Until then, no crew member can communicate about a card. Starting from the named trick, regular communication rules apply.

The disruption only permits communication starting from the specified trick.

In this case you cannot communicate during the first two tricks of the mission. Starting with the third trick – in other words, directly before the third trick – you may start communicating again.



Commander's decision



If a mission displays this symbol, place the specified number of task cards face down in the middle of the table. After each player has reviewed their cards, your commander asks each crew member, whether they see themselves fit to take on all of the tasks. It may only be answered with "yes" or "no." Afterwards, your commander decides who

In case of the commander's decision, the crew member specified must fulfill all tasks.

In the case of the commander's distribution, the tasks are distributed evenly among all the crew.

actually receives the assignment and reveals the task cards. The mission is fulfilled when the crew member has completed all the tasks. Your commander may not choose himself or herself.

Commander's distribution



If a mission displays this symbol, your commander takes over the distribution of the task cards. Prepare the mission as usual, but do not place any task cards open in the middle of the table. Your commander now uncovers a task card and asks each crew member in turn whether he or she wants to take on the task. It may only be answered with "yes" or "no." Afterwards, your commander decides who actually receives the assignment. He or she can also choose himself or herself. Repeat the process until all of the tasks are distributed. Note, however, that the tasks must be evenly distributed: At the end of the distribution, no one may have two tasks more than another crew member. If task tokens are in use, they must be distributed with the task cards; i.e., the first task token with the first task card, etc.

When playing with five players, there is an additional rule from mission 25 on, which is indicated by a golden frame around the mission number.



PLAYING WITH FIVE PLAYERS

The basic sequence of the game does not change with five crew members. But you must be aware that with five players, the game presents a special challenge. Above all, in the later stages of your adventure, it brings an enormous increase in the degree of difficulty. But if you are playing with five players, eternal fame is certain.

All rules apply as previously described, there is only one **additional rule for missions with task cards added**. These may be used from mission 25 onwards. As a reminder, all missions from 25 on, where this additional rule

applies, have a golden border around their mission numbers. After you have distributed the playing cards and the task cards and before the first trick starts, one crew member can hand over his or her own task card to another crew member. Decide together who hands over a task card and who should take it on without revealing anything about your cards. You may also use this additional rule in missions 27 and 37.

After handing over the task card, one crew member has one more task and one member has one less than before. The total number of tasks does not change, so you may not place a task back on the stack. You do **not** have to increase the number of attempts in the logbook by one when you use this additional rule.

Before the first trick begins, a crew member can handover his or her own task to another crew member.

PLAYING WITH TWO PLAYERS

The Crew is best when played with a crew of three or more. Nevertheless, you can also explore the infinite vastness of outer space with the following mission structure:

1. Put the four rocket card aside.
2. With the rest of the 39 large playing cards, put seven face down in a row, one next to another. Then put an additional seven cards face up in a row on the first seven covered cards.
3. Shuffle the four rocket in with the remaining cards and distribute these face down and evenly among both of the crew members, so that each has 13 cards.
4. Each crew member puts a radio communication token with its green side up in front of himself or herself, as well as a reminder card.
5. Place the distress signal tokens face down.
6. Shuffle the 36 small task cards and display them as a face-down stack. Keep the task tokens handy.

When playing with two players, a third crew member is simulated by JARVIS, by means of a double row of 14 cards.

When playing with two players, the commander role is also carried out by the player with the four rocket. The tasks of the commander remain unchanged (starts the task selection, starts the first trick, and, if necessary, follows any special rules of the missions).

Your commander chooses the tasks for JARVIS and plays the cards for JARVIS. Both of these things are decided without any discussion.

Additionally, your commander takes over the administration of JARVIS. JARVIS is an artificial intelligence system that will accompany you on your adventure. It is represented by the double row of 14 cards that offer solutions to each situation. Since JARVIS is an entity without a body, your commander must make decisions for it. JARVIS is treated as a third crew member. However, during JARVIS' turn to play, your commander always decides which of the open cards should be played in the trick. The second crew member cannot thereby discuss it. Even when choosing the task cards, your commander will decide which tasks JARVIS will take. Treat JARVIS just like any other crew member and decide where JARVIS should "sit."



Example of JARVIS' play area at the beginning of a mission.

Only face-up cards from JARVIS can be played.

Only the face-up cards from JARVIS can be played. when a face-up card has been played, the card below will be revealed, but only after the completion of the trick and not before.

TIPS AND VARIANTS

- No communication is also communication. This means that often, you can directly attempt to win your tasks, when no one communicates.
- Most of the time it is easier to win a card that you don't have in your hand. This is especially true for the low-value cards.
- With rockets, you can easily win cards of a color you do not have in hand.
- Don't forget that the four rocket **always** wins a trick, as it is the highest card in the game.
- Being able to fulfill multiple tasks in one go is worth gold. Consider this when choosing your tasks.
- If you only have the eight and the nine of one color in your hand, it is preferable to communicate the eight as the lowest card instead of the nine as the highest. So you can make it clear that you also have the nine.

Challenge for Three

If you want a greater challenge for three players, try the following variant:

- When setting up the game, return all green playing cards and task cards as well as the rocket card with the value of one to the box. Then start playing with the usual rules.
- All special rules for the missions in the logbook apply.
- Only missions 13 and 44 are affected by this change. You do not have to win a trick with the rocket card with the value one.

CREATE YOUR OWN MISSIONS

In case 50 missions are not enough for you, you can also design your own missions with the material.

Simply combine any number of tasks and task tokens with any special rules of your choosing.

If you then think up a little story around it, you have now created your own personal adventure!

THE AUTHOR



Thomas Sing, born in 1961, lives in the town of Constance on Lake Constance. Some years ago, the graduate economist bought a large corner store with his friends. This gave him enough time for his hobbies: mathematics, Miss Lupun, and of course, inventing games.

During his schooldays, Thomas Sing was a world record holder in Ludo and thus made his way into the Guinness Book of Records.

His first game for Kosmos, The Crew, has brought together the popular worlds of trick-taking games and cooperative games in a fascinating and entirely original way.

The author and publisher would like to thank all the play testers and rules reviewers who were there in the beginning for the contributions that made The Crew what it is today. This applies in particular to Marco Armbruster, Wolfgang Schmidts, and the Kosmos editorial team.
A special thank you goes to Klaus, Ralf, and Volker, who were always ready to explore the depths of the universe.

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Art. No.: 691868

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691868-02-060320