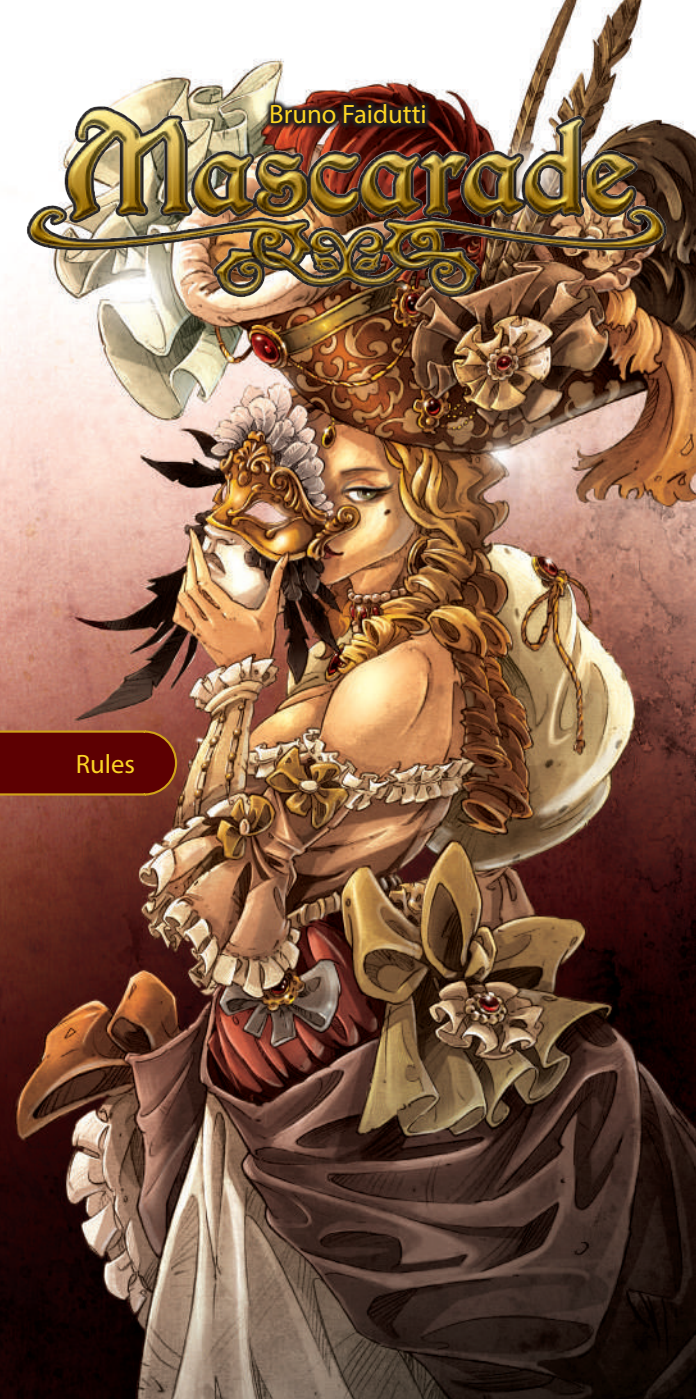
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Mascarade



Rules

Object of the Game

Mascarade is a character-based bluffing game for 2 to 13 players.

Each player has one face-down Character card. During the game, the players will swap characters and no one is ever sure of the card they have in front of themselves!

The object of the game is to use the powers of the characters to obtain **13 gold coins**. However, if any player goes bankrupt, the game immediately ends and the richest player wins the game.

For your first few games, we suggest limiting your group to between 4 and 8 players, as any more or less require an in-depth knowledge of the rules.

Contents

- 13 Character cards
- 1 blank Character card
- 1 Courthouse board
- Gold coins (with a total value of 194)
- 14 Character tokens, including one blank
- 5 Game aids



The game must be played around an opaque table.

4 to 13 players rules

Setup

Each player starts with **6 gold coins**. Throughout the game, the fortune of each player must remain clearly **visible.**
The remaining money is placed in the center of the table, which will become the bank. The courthouse is placed some distance away from the bank.
When playing with 4 or 5 players, take 6 character cards. In a game with 6 to 13 players, take as many cards as there are players. Return the unused cards to the box.

Basic Configuration	Players 4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Judge	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bishop	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
King	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fool				●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Queen	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Thief	●			●						●
Witch		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Spy							●	●	●	●
Peasant (x2)					●	●	●	●	●	●
Cheat	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●
Inquisitor								●	●	●
Widow									●	●

The Character cards are shuffled, and each player receives **one, face up, in front of them**.
With 4 or 5 players, the remaining cards are placed, face up, in the middle of the table.
When all players have taken a good look at the cards, they are all turned over so that they are face down.
The character tokens are used to keep track of which characters are present in the game. Place them next to the courthouse.
The youngest player begins. Play then proceeds in a clockwise direction.

Other Character Choices

For your subsequent games, you can use other character combinations, keeping in mind the following restrictions:

- The Judge must be in play.



- A minimum of one-third, if not more, of the characters should bring money from the bank into the game play.
These characters are: Queen, King, Widow, Fool and the Peasants.

- Both Peasant Characters must always be included in the game play x2

- The 8+ icon indicates that these characters require at least 8 players to be included in play (Peasants, Inquisitor).

- In games with more than five players, you can choose to add one or two cards in the middle of the table, as in games with 4 and 5 players.

Game Turn

The First Four Turns:

The first four turns, meaning the first turns of the first four players, are preparation turns, solely meant to introduce a bit of uncertainty into the game. The first player, the youngest, and the three next players clockwise must all perform the same action. The player whose turn it is takes their card, face down, and one other facedown card of their choice (either that of another player or one from the middle of the table). Then, while being concealed under the table, and without looking at them, the player can swap the two cards – or not – before putting them back in place.

A Game Turn

From the fifth turn on, the game begins in earnest and each player, on their turn, must perform **only one** action from the following three:

- Swap their card – or not (under the table); or
- Secretly look at their card; or
- Announce their character.

WARNING !

If a player has revealed their card during the turn of the player immediately before them (by having called the character announcement of the player to their right, or by having been revealed by the Inquisitor), then the player cannot announce that they are their revealed character. The player will be forced to swap their card – or not – with that of another player.

• Swap their card - or not

This action allows a player to secretly swap – or not - their card with that of another player.

The steps to follow :

- take your card in one hand without looking at it.
- take the card of another player (or one from the middle of the table) in your other hand without looking at it.
- under the table, **out of sight from all the other players**, you may swap the cards – or not, according to your whim.
- finally, keep one of these two cards and return the other card to the player from whom you took it (or replace it in the middle of the table).

Be careful, during this entire process, players are not allowed to look at the cards. Both cards must remain facedown throughout this action! The player whose card was taken is not allowed to look at the card that was returned to them either.

It is possible that the player who performs the action no longer remembers whether or not the cards were swapped or not. Too bad for them.

Example: Adele no longer knows who her character is, but she's almost certain about Bruno's. On her turn, she takes her card as well as Bruno's and under the table, out of sight, she swaps the two cards. She then returns one to Bruno and keeps one for herself.

• Secretly look at their card

This action allows the player to secretly look at their character card.
If a player looks at their card by mistake (after a swap or in any other case), then they MUST perform this action on their turn.

• Announce "their" character

This action is the main activity of the game, as it allows players to activate the powers of the characters.
When a player announces they are a character, the other players, in turn, starting from the one on their left and going clockwise, have the option of calling the active player's announcement by claiming to be the same character as well.

- If no one else claims to be the character, the player applies the power of the character named **without revealing their card**. Therefore, it is possible to use the power of any character in the game without being that character, even without knowing who you are.
- If one or more other players also claim to be that character, all concerned players (the one who made the announcement as well as any other claimants) reveal their cards.
- If one of the players is indeed the announced character, that player immediately uses the character's power (which can happen outside of their turn).

Then, all the other players who had falsely claimed to be the announced character pay a fine of one gold coin to the courthouse.
Finally, all players turn over their cards so that they are again facedown.

Example: Bruno announces "I'm the King."
As no other player claims to also be the King, Bruno immediately applies the power of the King and takes three coins from the bank.
If Adele and Cedric had also claimed to be King; Bruno, Adele and Cedric would have had to reveal their cards, and if none of the three were the King, they each would have had to pay a gold coin to the courthouse.



Example: Cedric is sitting to the left of Bruno.
•1 On his turn, Bruno announces "I'm the King". Cedric calls his bluff by saying "No you're not – I am!" Bruno and Cedric then reveal their cards. Bruno is the Thief and Cedric is the King. Cedric takes three gold coins from the bank, and Bruno pays a fine of one gold coin to the courthouse.
•2 Both cards are then returned to be facedown and the play proceeds to Cedric's turn. As he just revealed his card (the King) during the turn of the player immediately before him, he can't say "I'm the King" - it would be too easy. He's forced to swap his card – or not – with another player.

Spy





The Spy secretly looks at their card and another player's card (or a card in the middle of the table) before swapping their card – or not.

Example: Adele announces "I am the Spy". No other player calls her bluff. Adele looks at her card and that of another player, then swaps – or not – these two cards. Play then continues to the next player.

Bishop





The Bishop takes two gold coins from the richest of the other players. In case of a tie, the Bishop chooses from which player the two coins are taken.

Fool





The Fool receives a gold coin from the bank and swaps – or not – the cards of two other players, under the table and without looking at them.

Inquisitor





Inquisitor: The Inquisitor points at another player. That player must then announce what they believe to be their character, and then reveal their card. If they are wrong, they must pay four gold coins to the Inquisitor. If they aren't wrong, the power has no effect.

There must be atleast 8 players in order to include the inquisitor in play.

Example: Bruno announces "I'm the Inquisitor". Fran calls his bluff and also claims to be the Inquisitor. Bruno and Fran reveal their card. Bruno is the Inquisitor, Fran is the Queen. Bruno chooses another player, Cedric, and asks what he believes his character to be. Cedric answers "I'm the Judge" and reveals his card, a Peasant. Cedric pays four gold coins to Bruno, as he didn't guess his card correctly. Fran pays a fine of 1 gold coin to the courthouse. The cards are returned to their face down positions and play moves on.

Note: if Cedric had answered "I'm a Peasant", he wouldn't have had to pay anything to Bruno.

Judge





The Judge takes all the coins (fines) currently on the courthouse board.

Clarification: If players have falsely claimed to be the Judge and must pay a fine, that fine is paid after the Judge's power is resolved, and therefore those fines will not be claimed by the Judge during this turn.

The Judge is the only mandatory character in each game.

Example: Adele announces "I'm the Judge". Cedric and David call Adele's announcement and also claim to be the Judge. Adele, Cedric and David reveal their cards. Adele is the Witch, Cedric is the Judge, and David is the Spy. Cedric takes all the fines currently on the courthouse, and Adele and David each pay a fine of one gold coin. The cards are returned to being face down and the play proceeds to the player to the left of Adele, Bruno.

Peasant





The Peasant receives a gold coin from the bank. But if both Peasants are revealed during a given turn, they both receive two gold coins from the bank. From unity lies strength!

The Peasants require at least 8 players to be played and always be played in pairs.
Example:

- *Adele announces "I'm a Peasant". No other player calls her bluff. Adele doesn't reveal her card and gets a gold coin from the bank.*
- *Adele announces "I'm a Peasant". Fran says "me too". Adele and Fran reveal their cards and they're indeed Peasants and each receive two gold coins from the bank.*
- *Adele announces "I'm a Peasant". Cedric and Fran say "me too". Adele, Cedric and Fran reveal their cards. Adele and Cedric are both Peasants, and Fran is the Spy. Adele and Cedric each receive two gold coins from the bank, and Fran pays a fine of one gold coin to the Courthouse.*

Queen





The Queen receives two gold coins from the bank.

King





King: The King receives three gold coins from the bank.

Witch





The Witch can swap all of her fortune with that of another player of their choice.

Note: If players have falsely claimed to be the Witch and must pay a fine, the fine is paid after the use of the Witch's power is resolved.

Cheat





If they have 10 gold coins or more, the Cheat wins the game.

Example: Adele, who has 11 gold coins, announces "I'm the Cheat". Cedric, who has 10 gold coins, calls her bluff and also claims to be the cheat. Adele and Cedric reveal their cards. Adele is the Queen, Cedric the Cheat. Cedric just won the game.

If Cedric had less than 10 gold coins, Adele would have paid a fine to the courthouse and the game would have continued.

Widow





The Widow receives coins from the bank to bring her fortune up to 10 coins in total.

Note: If the Widow already has 10 or more gold coins, they receive no gold from the bank, but they doesn't lose any either.

Example: Adele, who only has one gold coin left, announces "I'm the Widow". Harry calls her bluff and claims to be the Widow. Adele and Harry reveal their cards. Adele is the Queen, Harry the Widow. If Harry has less than 10 gold coins, he'll receive coins from the bank until he has a total of 10. Adele pays a fine of one gold coin, and, as she's bankrupt, the game ends and the richest player wins.

Thief





The Thief takes one gold coin from the player to their left and one gold coin from the player to their right.



End of the Game:

As soon as a player has **13 or more gold coins**, the game ends and that player wins.
If any player **loses their last gold coin**, the game ends and the richest player wins.
Tied victories are sometimes possible.



3-player game
(for experienced players)

Setup:
Bishop, Fool, Judge, Queen, King, Witch

With 3 players, 6 character cards are used. Each player gets two characters in front of them, one corresponding to their left hand and the other to their right. Each player begins the game with 6 gold coins, and the money belongs to both of the player's characters.
As in a regular game, the first four turns must be swaps – or not. Then, on their turn, a player can:

- Swap under the table one of their two cards – or not – with an opponent's card or even their other card; or
- Secretly look at one of their cards; or
- Place their hand on one of their cards and announce what they believe that card to be and perform the corresponding action.

If an opponent calls the bluff, they must clearly indicate, by placing their hand on it, which of their two cards they believe to be the named character. Players may contest with only one of their cards.

All the other rules from the regular 4 to 13 player game apply.



2 player game

(for even more experienced players)

Setup:

Bishop, Fool, Judge, Queen, King, Witch

With 2 players, the game also uses 6 characters. Each player obtains 3 characters in front of them, one corresponding to their left hand, and the other to their right hand. Finally, the third character is placed further back between the two other, and this card is called the protected card.
Each player begins the game with 6 gold coins, and a player's money belongs to all of their characters.
As with a regular game, the first four turns must be swaps – or not. Then, on their turn, a player can:

- Swap under the table one of their two cards – or not – with one of their other cards, including their protected card, or with one of the left or right cards of their opponent. It's forbidden to swap a card with your opponent's protected card.
- Secretly look at one of their cards.
- Place a hand on their left or right card and announce what they believe that card to be, in order to attempt to perform the corresponding action. It's forbidden to announce your protected card during on your turn.

If an opponent calls the announcement, they must do so by clearly placing a hand on one of their three cards that they believe to be the announced character. A player can call with only one of their 3 cards, but players are allowed to contest with their protected card.

In short:

- It's forbidden to swap a card with your opponent's protected card.
- It's forbidden to make an announcement with your protected card during on your turn.
- You can swap a card with your own protected card.
- You can call the opponent's announced character with your protected card.
- All the other rules from the regular 4 to 13 player game apply.

Credits

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The author of Mascarade would like to thank specifically Hervé Marly, Alain Pissinier and Bruno Cathala.

The Sombrero-wearing Belgians would like to thank Tibi, Freddy, Eric J., Marcus, Murielle, Alexis K., Philippe K., Yves Dohogne, Romain, the survivors of Belgo 14, Fabien Ducat, Eric Hanuise, Christward Conrad, Jean-François Dejoie, Elfine, Gwendoline, Tanguy, Hélène, Brigitte.

Mascarade is a REPOS PRODUCTION game.
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