Kasper Lapp
GARDENERS

1-4 | 15' | 10+

CONTENTS

- **36** Garden tiles
  - 16 A tiles
  - 9 B tiles
  - 11 C tiles

  You will find the letter (A/B/C) on the back of the tile.
- **1** sand timer
- **1** rulebook

- **97** Constraint cards
  - 17 **Training** cards
    - *6* Training A cards
    - *6* Training B cards
    - *5* Training C cards
  - 59 **Standard** cards
  - 21 **Expert** cards
    + 2 warning cards that say
    Do not open this packet!

OVERVIEW & GOAL OF THE GAME

You are gardeners for a fickle and capricious king, who has a very specific idea of how he wants his magnificent garden arranged; however, he finds it whimsical to disseminate his different directives separately to the different gardeners. Moreover, the king forgets everything, all the time; as soon as you meet his expectations, you will find yourself starting all over again!

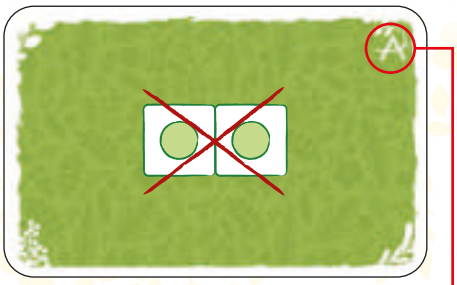
Gardeners is a **simultaneous cooperative** game that you will play in **silence** and in **real time**. Within the duration of the sand timer, you must arrange as many gardens as possible, always using the same tiles, but obeying different constraints from round to round. Everyone must **deduce** the current constraints by observing where tiles are placed or removed.

The goal of the game is to score as many Constraint cards as possible.

CARD ANATOMY

The **back** (white border) indicates **the type of constraint** to respect (which **all** players will know).

The **front** (colored border) indicates **the constraint** to respect (which only the player who has the card will know).



If there is a letter in a corner, it will indicate Training A, B, or C (see pages 8 – 13).



SETUP

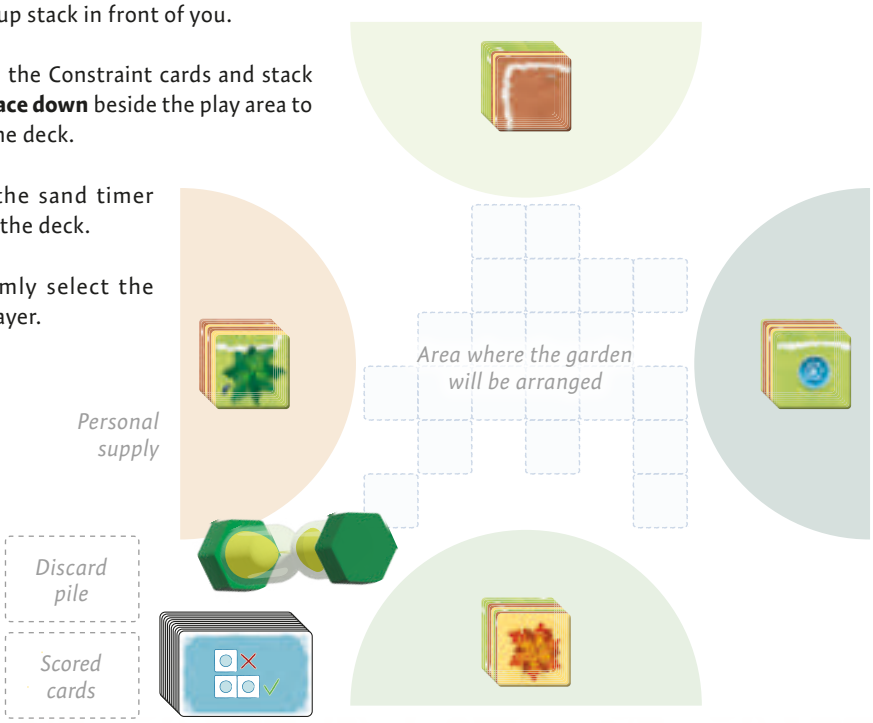
Distribute the Garden tiles evenly to everyone. Place the tiles you receive in a face-up stack in front of you.

Shuffle the Constraint cards and stack them **face down** beside the play area to form the deck.

Place the sand timer beside the deck.

Randomly select the first player.

EXAMPLE
4-player setup



PLAYING THE GAME

A game of *Gardeners* consists of a variable number of rounds; the game ends when the sand timer runs out.

Each round comprises 3 phases:

1. **Draw a Constraint card** *3*
2. **Arrange the garden** *4*
3. **Check the garden** *6*

IMPORTANT

During the game, you cannot communicate **in any way** about what to do or not to do with regards to arranging the garden.

1 Draw a Constraint Card

At the beginning of the first round, the first player draws a Constraint card, reads it silently, and places it face down in front of them, so that everyone can see the back of the card, and thus the type of constraint, but not what that constraint is. (In the first round, you only need to respect one constraint.) Flip the sand timer over.

At the beginning of the subsequent rounds, the player to the left of whoever drew a constraint card at the start of the last round draws one. (Now you must respect several constraints.)

However, when a fourth card comes into play, move the oldest card **face up** beside the deck. This card is considered **scored**. This also means you will play with **no more than 3 Constraint cards at a time**.

Scored cards no longer affect the garden's arrangement. At the end of the game, they are worth 1 point each.

IMPORTANT

Each tile can be used to respect multiple constraints!

NOTE

Constraint cards (representing the king's wishes) are the rules that everyone must respect this round, but only the card's owner knows the exact constraint; the other players must guess it (this is the heart of the game!). Not everyone will have a Constraint card in front of them at every point of the game. On page 18, you will find an explanation of the iconography used on the cards.

Too difficult?

Sometimes the king imposes constraints whose combination is too difficult, or even impossible (although this is rare, noticing that a combination of cards is unsolvable is part of the game!). Therefore, **at any time**, you are allowed to discard the Constraint card in front of you **face down** beside the deck. Each but the first that the group discards this way will lose you 1 point at the end of the game. You must **immediately** draw a new one, which applies immediately.

Discarded cards no longer affect the garden's arrangement.

2-Player Game

In a 2-player game, the first player will draw the third Constraint card, as well, ending up with 2 of them. In subsequent rounds, follow the usual rules for bringing a new card into play; this means that you essentially take turns having 2 cards in front of you.

2 Arrange the Garden

As soon as the sand timer starts, you must work **together** to arrange the garden, which will **always** end up as a square.

There are no turns in the game: **Everyone plays at the same time**. Each player can only perform one action at a time: **adding** or **removing** a tile (we suggest using only one hand to play). However, you can perform multiple actions in a row with no downtime between them.

NOTE

The size of the garden varies according to the game mode:

- **Training A** ..... *Page 8* ..... 4 × 4 tiles
- **Training B** ..... *Page 10* ..... 5 × 5 tiles
- **Training C** ..... *Page 12* ..... 6 × 6 tiles
- **Beginner** mode ..... *Page 14* ..... 6 × 6 tiles
- **Normal** mode ..... *Page 15* ..... 6 × 6 tiles
- **Solo** mode ..... *Page 16* ..... 6 × 6 tiles

ADDING A TILE

Your Personal Supply

All the tiles you play to arrange the garden come from your personal supply. Your personal supply includes both your initial stack of tiles and, **beside them**, tiles removed from the garden and given to you during the game (see *Removing a Tile*, page 5).

EXAMPLE

This is how your personal supply will look during the game:



At the beginning of the game.



During the game, if your initial stack still exists.



During the game, after your initial stack is gone.

Your personal supply might even be completely empty at some point!

At the beginning of the first round, someone (anyone) will place a first tile into the play area.

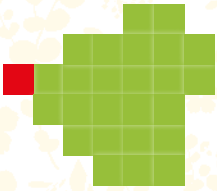
Anyone can add tiles to the garden by placing them orthogonally adjacent to at least one tile that is already part of the garden.

You can only add tiles **from your personal supply** to the garden.

If you add a tile from your stack to the garden, it must be the topmost tile in the stack.

The placed tiles must always fit within the **maximum size** of the garden.

In the following example, the size of the garden is limited to 6 × 6.



EXAMPLE

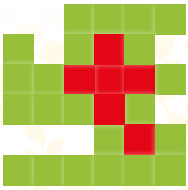
The red tile would be an illegal placement, because it would make the garden be more than 6 tiles wide.

REMOVING A TILE

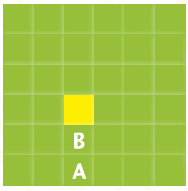
While arranging the garden, some tiles may be placed incorrectly on the first try, because everyone needs a chance to figure out what the constraints are.

Removing tiles allows you to rearrange the garden so you can ultimately respect all of the constraints in effect for the round.

You can only remove tiles from the edge of the garden.



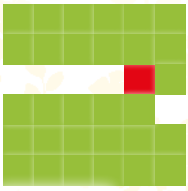
EXAMPLE
Only the green tiles can be removed!



EXAMPLE
Before you can remove the yellow tile, you must – for example – first remove tile A and then tile B.

When you remove a tile from the garden, **you cannot**:

- simply move a tile within the garden, from one place to another.
- simply rotate a tile within the garden.
- split the garden.

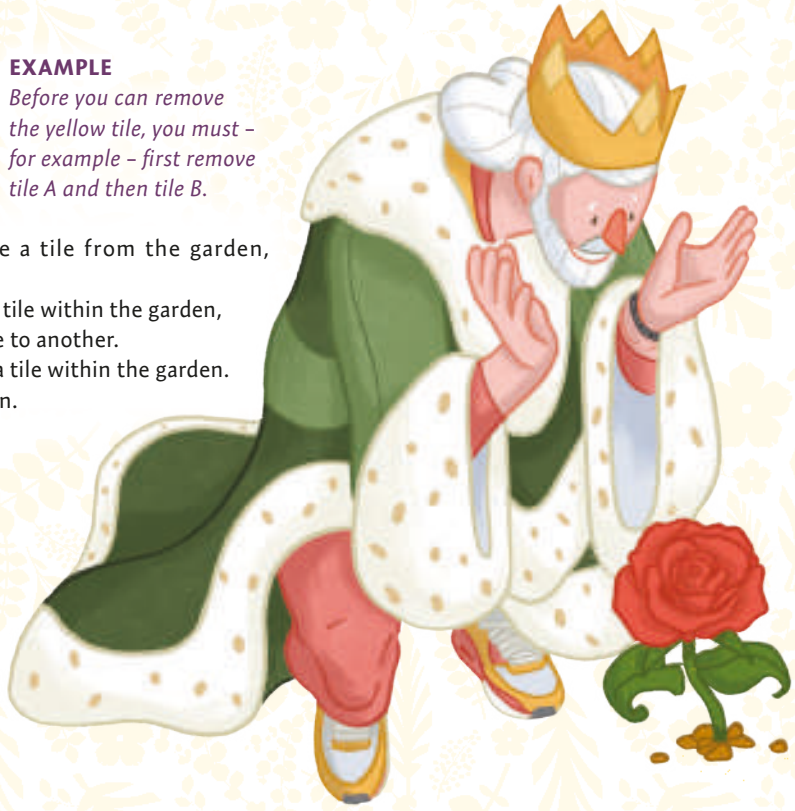


EXAMPLE
The red tile cannot be removed, because it would split the garden.

When you remove a tile from the garden, you must **immediately** place it in **another** player's personal supply. Do not stack tiles that you receive this way; leave them **beside** each other on the table. You can immediately place such tiles back in the garden, if you wish, in any order you like.

If you want to reposition a tile, you must **give it to another player** and hope that they understand what you want done with it.

Once all of the garden tiles have been placed, and no one wants to remove any more, move on to Phase *3 • Check the Garden*, on the following page.



3 Check the Garden

The players with Constraint cards secretly check whether the garden's arrangement complies with its constraint. Then they must make an announcement, as follows...

If **at least one player** with a Constraint card has announced, ***"His Majesty is angry!"*** then the garden is **invalid**! You must return to *2 • Arrange the Garden*.

If **all players** with a Constraint card have announced, ***"His Majesty is thrilled!"*** then the garden is **validated**.

IMPORTANT

- In either case, all face-down cards must stay face down at this stage!
- Do not lay the sand timer down during this phase! **Never** lay the sand timer down!

REMEMBER

When checking the garden, only check the cards in front of players. Cards that have been scored or discarded will only be used in the final scoring.

EXAMPLE

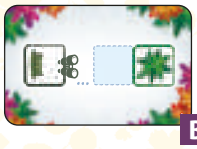
During Phase 3 of the second round, we must ensure that the garden conforms to the 2 Constraint cards in play.

A



Constraint A: *Each path must be connected to at least one other path.*

Constraint B: *Each bench must face a green tree.*



B



In this first case, we have respected Constraint **A**, *but not* **B** *(the error is marked with red in the illustration). So, we must continue arranging the garden.*



In this second case, we have respected both constraints; the garden is thus validated!

Now that the garden has been validated, the round is complete.
A new round can commence (see *1 • Draw a Constraint Card*, page 3).

IMPORTANT

Leave the garden in the middle of the table as it is: **This is the starting point for the new round** that is about to begin. Thus, you will have to start by removing tiles from the garden (see page 5) before you can add any.

END OF THE GAME

As soon as the sand timer runs out, the game ends **immediately**.

Calculate your final score as follows:

- Each **scored** Constraint card (placed **face up** beside the deck) **earns you 1 point**.
- Each **discarded** Constraint card (placed **face down** beside the deck), **except the first**, **loses you 1 point**. ***Example:*** *3 cards have been discarded. So, you lose 2 points.*

The table below indicates your level of success according to your score:

0 – 2 pts	**Ouch!**	*Did you forget to do the training exercises and Beginner mode before taking on Normal mode?*
3 – 4 pt	**It's a start**	*Good! You understand how this works.*
5 – 7 pts	**You're progressing well**	*You have your feet on the right path.*
8 – 9 pts	**Bravo!**	*What a great success!*
10 – 11 pts	**Impressive!**	*True champions!*
12+ pts	**You have become experts!**	*It's time to play with the Expert cards. You can open the packet of Expert cards and add them to the Standard cards.*

***Now you know all the rules of* Gardeners.**

But we know that its original mechanisms can confuse new players. Therefore, we strongly suggest that you absorb these rules little by little, using the ***training exercises*** *and* ***Beginner mode*** *before playing a game in Normal mode.*

Here is a summary of the following pages:

- **Training exercises** ..... *page 8*
- **Beginner mode** ..... *page 14*
- **Normal mode** ..... *page 15*
- **Solo mode** ..... *page 16*

TRAINING EXERCISES

Before each training exercise, show and explain the backs and fronts of the Constraint cards that will be used, so everyone knows what to expect. Then shuffle them.

During training, when someone draws a card, the previous player **reveals** theirs **without discarding it**. Therefore, among the Constraint cards for the round, **only one is face down at a time**. All the rest will be face up.

NOTE

Gardeners only reveals its addictive gaming potential once you are playing in **Normal** mode (see page 15). So don't form a final opinion on the game if you've only practiced in training sessions or played in Beginner mode, both of which by definition only offer **incomplete gameplay**!

Training Exercise A

CONTENTS USED

6	Constraint A cards
2	Proximity Constraint cards
2	Distance Constraint cards
2	Agglomeration Constraint cards
16	A Garden tiles

You are arranging a 4 × 4 square of tiles.

GOAL OF THE GAME

No pressure here: Leave the sand timer in the box.
You "simply" need to complete the 4 × 4 garden,
6 times in a row, respecting the Constraint cards drawn round after round.

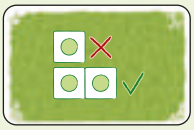
END OF THE GAME

The game is immediately over when a player must – after a validation – draw a Constraint card but the deck is empty.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE *CONSTRAINT* CARDS USED

PROXIMITY CONSTRAINT

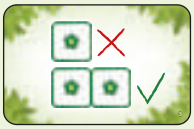
Back of the card



This type of Constraint card specifies that an element cannot be alone, and that it must always be orthogonally adjacent to at least one **identical** element.

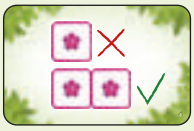
Front #1

A green flower must always be orthogonally adjacent to at least one other green flower.



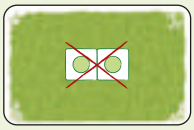
Front #2

A fuchsia flower must always be orthogonally adjacent to at least one other fuchsia flower.

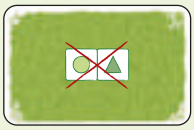


DISTANCE CONSTRAINT

This type of Constraint card specifies that an element cannot be orthogonally adjacent to another specific element.



Back of the first sort of card



Back of the second sort of card

Front #1

Two trees cannot be orthogonally adjacent (regardless of their colors).



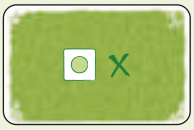
Front #2

An orange flower cannot be orthogonally adjacent to a green flower or a green tree.



AGGLOMERATION CONSTRAINT

Back of the first sort of card



This type of Constraint card specifies that a certain number of elements of the same type (**or** of two types) must be in an orthogonally contiguous group (but any shape).



Back of the second sort of card



Front #1

6 or more Grass tiles — no matter what is on the grass — must be orthogonally contiguous.

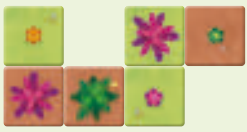


EXAMPLE

Front #2

6 or more flowers and/or trees — regardless of their colors — must be orthogonally contiguous.





EXAMPLE

COMPLETE THIS TRAINING EXERCISE BEFORE READING THE NEXT!

Training Exercise B

CONTENTS USED

6	Constraint B cards
2	Panorama Constraint cards
2	Link Constraint cards
2	Border Constraint cards

1	sand timer
25	Garden tiles: 16 × A, 9 × B

You are arranging a 5 × 5 square of tiles.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Let's add some pressure...
Now you must complete the 5 × 5 garden, 6 times in a row, respecting the Constraint cards drawn, and all of this before the sand timer runs out.

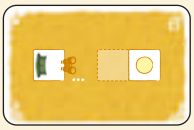
END OF THE GAME

The game is immediately over when a player must – after a validation – draw a Constraint card but the deck is empty.

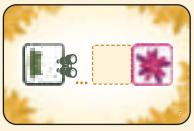
DESCRIPTIONS OF THE *CONSTRAINT* CARDS USED

PANORAMA CONSTRAINT

Back of the card



This type of Constraint card specifies that **all** tiles containing a bench must have the bench facing a sort of particular element, which does not have to be adjacent to the bench; if someone were sitting on the bench, they would see the element if looking straight ahead. Several benches can be in the same line, looking at the same element.



Front #1

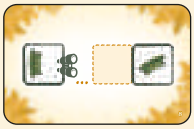
Each bench must face a fuchsia tree.

EXAMPLE

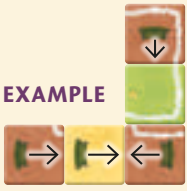


Front #2

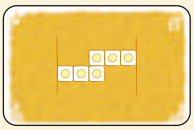
Each bench must face another bench. The benches can face each other, or can be oriented in different directions.



EXAMPLE



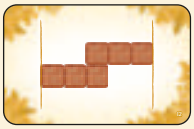
LINK CONSTRAINT


Back of the card

This type of Constraint specifies that you must create a link using a type of element. A link is a contiguous group of orthogonally adjacent tiles that connect two **opposite** sides of the garden (not necessarily in a straight line).

Front #1

The link must be composed from Soil tiles.



Front #2

The link must be composed from tiles that contain a flower, regardless of their colors.



EXAMPLE



NOTE

Don't confuse a **link** (this constraint) with a **path** (white stones on certain tiles)!

BORDER CONSTRAINT

There are two sorts of Border Constraint cards.

The first specifies that **all** elements of a certain type must be on the tiles **on the outer edge** of the garden.


Back of the first sort of card

The second specifies that **all** elements of a certain type must be on the tiles **in the interior** of the garden.


Back of the second sort of card

Front #1

All fuchsia trees and fuchsia flowers must be on the tiles on the outer edge of the garden.



Front #2

All benches must be on the tiles in the interior of the garden.





COMPLETE THIS TRAINING EXERCISE BEFORE READING THE NEXT!

Training Exercise C

CONTENTS USED

5	Constraint C cards
2	Geometry Constraint cards
3	Path Constraint cards

1	sand timer
36	Garden tiles (all of them!)

You are arranging a 6 × 6 square of tiles.

GOAL OF THE GAME

Ever bigger!
In this training exercise, you must still complete the garden (but just 5 times in a row this time) before the sand timer runs out, but in a larger garden.
Now you are arranging a 6 × 6 square of tiles.

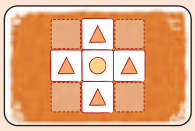
END OF THE GAME

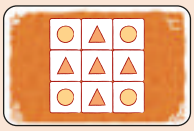
The game is immediately over when a player must – after a validation – draw a Constraint card but the deck is empty.



DESCRIPTIONS OF THE *CONSTRAINT* CARDS USED

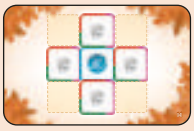
GEOMETRY CONSTRAINT





This type of Constraint card specifies that a certain arrangement of elements must be respected (at least once) in the garden. Its orientation doesn't matter.

Front #1



4 flowers must orthogonally surround a fountain. The color can vary from flower to flower.

Front #2

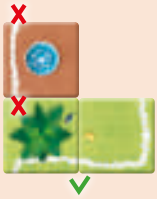


A 3 × 3 square of tiles must have 4 Soil tiles in the corners, and 5 Grass tiles arranged in a cross.

PATH CONSTRAINT

This type of Constraint card specifies that some or all paths must be connected to form a continuous open or closed route.





EXAMPLE
The path on the Soil tile is not connected.

Front #1



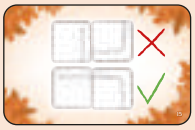
Some paths must be connected to form a continuous **closed** route surrounding at least one bench (and eventually other tiles). It doesn't matter what shape and size it ends up being. The remaining paths have not to be connected.

Front #2



Some paths must be connected to form a continuous **open or closed** path of at least 6 tiles. It doesn't matter what shape it ends up being. The remaining paths have not to be connected.

Front #3



Each path must be connected to at least one other path.

COMPLETE THIS TRAINING EXERCISE BEFORE READING THE NEXT!

BEGINNER MODE

Once you have completed the training exercises, it's time for you to move on to **Beginner** mode.

Return all the training Constraint cards to the box; you won't use them any more.



Beginner mode uses all of the Standard cards (the ones whose fronts have multicolored plants in all 4 corners).

They use the same constraints you learned during training, but they have been enriched with new combinations. The **player aid** on page 18 will help you understand them all.

CONTENTS USED

36	Garden tiles
59	Standard Constraint cards
1	sand timer

You are arranging a 6 × 6 square of tiles.

PLAYING THE GAME

As with the training exercises,
only the last Constraint card drawn remains face down
until it is scored, while the previous one is revealed.

END OF THE GAME

As soon as the sand timer has run out, the game is over.

Evaluate your success level as described on page 7.

NORMAL MODE

Bravo! You finally made it to the Normal mode of *Gardeners*.
The plot thickens!

CONTENTS USED

36	Garden tiles
59	Standard Constraint cards
1	sand timer

You are arranging a 6 × 6 square of tiles.

PLAYING THE GAME

Unlike the training exercises and Beginner mode,
ALL drawn Constraint cards remain face down
until they are scored (still no more than 3 at a time) and that changes everything!

END OF THE GAME

As soon as the sand timer has run out, the game is over.

Evaluate your success level as described on page 7.



SOLO MODE

You play Solo mode the same way as Normal mode (see previous page), but with the following modifications...

Setup

Take all of the Garden tiles and spread them around **higgledy-piggledy**, face up, in the middle of the table. Draw 2 Constraint cards, and place them face up, side by side, in front of you.

Playing the Game

DRAW A *CONSTRAINT* CARD

Skip this phase in the first round.

During this phase, draw a new Constraint card and place it face up beside the others already in front of you.

You do not discard any cards placed in front of you, even when you have more than three.

However, as in Normal mode, **you can always discard cards** if the challenge is too difficult, or even impossible (remember: -1 point per discarded card — except the first — at the end of the game).

ARRANGE THE GARDEN

In Solo mode, you are much more free to arrange the garden than in Normal mode.

You have no personal reserve; you simply place, swap, rotate... the tiles freely within the garden.

CHECK THE GARDEN

No change from the Normal mode rules.

SCORING *CONSTRAINT* CARDS

During the game, you can only score Constraint cards **twice**. You can only score at the end of the round, after all constraints have been verified, and before commencing a new round.

When you decide to score, score **all** your cards: Move them beside the deck, face up. You will count them when you calculate your final score.

If you just scored for the first time, draw two new Constraint cards, and begin a new round.

EXAMPLE

Michael has Gardeners *skills in spades, and has 7 Constraint cards in front of him. At the end of the sixth round, he decides to score for the first time, and thus places the 7 cards beside the deck, face up. Michael then begins a new round by drawing 2 new Constraint cards. He can score a second time later.*

SOLO TRAINING EXERCISES

To do the training exercises in Solo mode, replace Solo mode's Standard deck of cards with the respective training cards (A, B, C) and apply Solo mode's rules to the training exercises.

End of the Game

As soon as you have scored for the second time, or the sand timer has run out, the game is over.

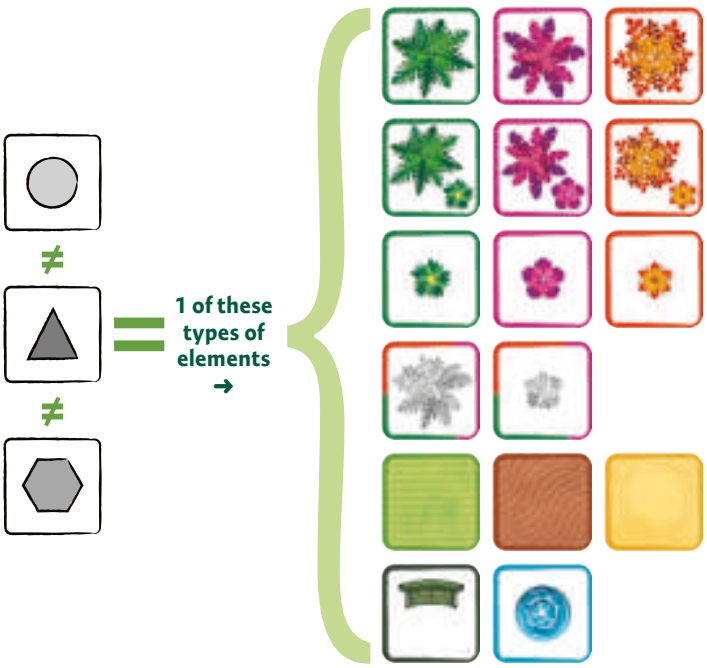
NOTE

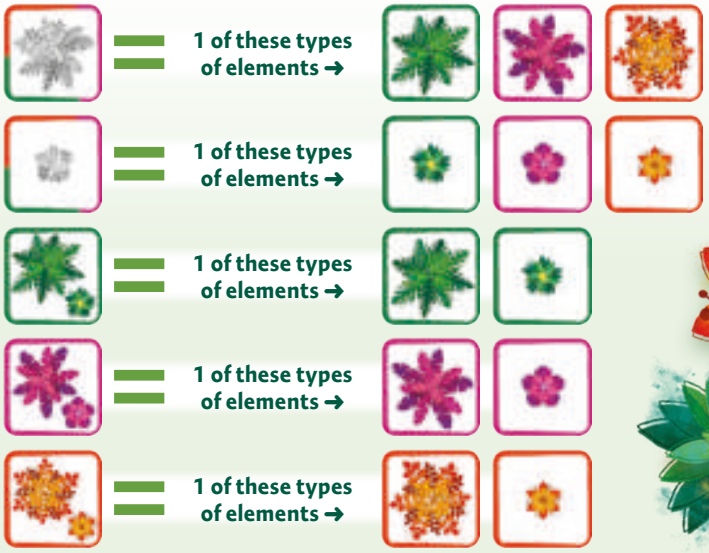
Because the second scoring ends the game, you almost certainly will not use all of the time the sand timer grants you.

Calculate your points the same way as at the end of the game in Normal mode.

The table below indicates your level of success according to your score:

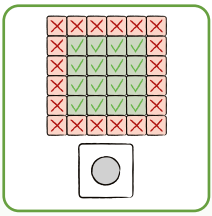
0 – 3 pts	**Ouch!**	*Did you forget to do the training exercises before taking on Normal mode?*
4 – 6 pts	**It's a start**	*Good! You understand how this works.*
7 – 10 pts	**You're progressing well**	*You have your feet on the right path.*
11 – 12 pts	**Bravo!**	*What a great success!*
13 – 14 pts	**Impressive!**	*A true champion!*
15+ pts	**You have become an expert!**	*It's time to play with the Expert cards. You can open the packet of Expert cards and add them to the Standard cards.*



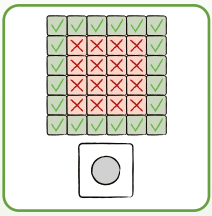


X+ ▶ X represents a **minimum** quantity

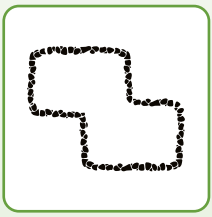
X! ▶ X represents a **precise** quantity



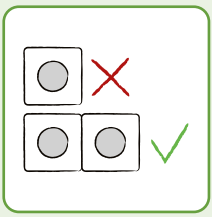
Each ○ must be placed in the **interior** of the garden.



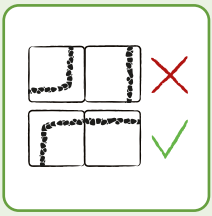
Each ○ must be placed on the **edge** of the garden.



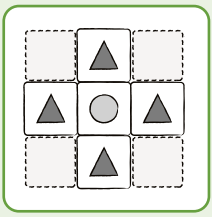
Connect some paths to create at least one continuous closed route (regardless of size and shape).



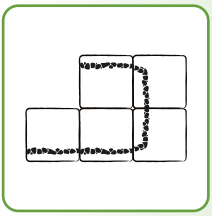
Each ○ must always be adjacent to at least one ○.



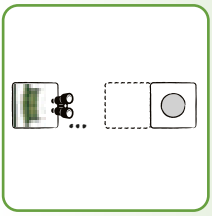
Each path must be connected to at least one other path.



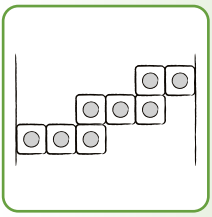
A specific arrangement of elements must be respected precisely, at least one time.



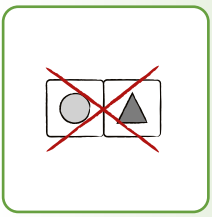
Paths must be connected (regardless of the route created).



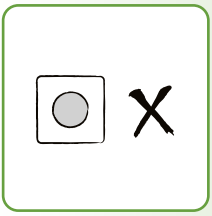
Each bench must face ○, no matter how many tiles are between them.



Connect two opposite borders of the garden, using ○ (regardless of the shape of this link).



○ and △ cannot be orthogonally adjacent.



X ○ must form a contiguous group (regardless of the shape).

This list is not exhaustive. But it is merely to help you to understand the iconography of all of the Constraint cards.



Kasper Lapp is a Danish designer of boardgames and author of children's books. He is known for his game *Magic Maze* (2017), which was nominated for the Spiel des Jahres (the prestigious German game of the year award).

GARDENERS

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The designer & publisher thank all the people and plants that have helped make *Gardeners* possible.