COVER ME

Duration : 60-75 minutes | Design : Bram Verbiest | Artwork: Bruno Cerkvenik

Summary and goal of the game

Cover Me is a game in which every player is the chief editor of a trendy magazine. The players try to influence the upcoming fashion trends with the models they put on the cover of their magazines.
Every player has a portfolio of cover models at his disposal from which he's able to choose one to put on that month's cover. Every season the cover models are compared to the current trends. For each magazine the most trendy cover model is chosen, which will receive a spot in the season special. If the model represents all three fashion trends (the model is completely trendy) or none at all (alternative model) she will raise the magazine's prestige.
Each year models with a new color will be available, which can raise the magazine's prestige even more in the future. The game is played over 3 years or 12 seasons (rounds). The chief editor who was able to raise the most prestige at the end of the game is the winner.

Contents of the game

- 162 cover model cards*, each card has a unique combination of the following fashion traits:
  - Hair color: blonde, red/brown, dark
  - Hair length: short, semi-long, long
  - Background pattern (fall-winter color): squared (red), diamond (brown), striped (blue)
  - Clothes color (spring-summer color): yellow, blue, red, green, black, white
- 1 catwalk with fashion track
- 1 double mirror with fashion tracks, season track and year counter
- 10 player cards (2 for each of the 5 players)
- 15 fashion markers
- 10 standees
- 2 markers for the season track and the year counter.
- 1 starting player marker

Before your first game:

- Place the **starting player marker** and the 9 big **fashion markers** for the clothes color and the background pattern on a standee.

* We used real women for the cover model cards. We want to thank everybody for sending in your pictures.

Card layout

On each card you can find **4 symbols** that summarize all the characteristics of the model.

The **first symbol** shows the clothes color (spring-summer color) and matches with the color of the border and corners of the card.

- Yellow
- Green
- Red
- Black
- Blue
- White



The **third symbol** shows the hair color and the hair length.

- Short Hair
- Semi-long Hair
- Long hair
- Blonde hair
- Red/brown hair
- Dark hair

The **second symbol** shows the background pattern (fall-winter color).

- Red squared pattern
- Brown diamond pattern
- Blue striped pattern

To make sure the hair color is easy to recognize it is also repeated as a **fourth symbol**.

- Dark hair
- Red/brown hair
- Blonde hair

The model on the card is always depicted with the same characteristics as these symbols. Also the background pattern is visible on the card. If there is any doubt about the characteristics of the depicted model the symbols are always correct! All models also have a name, but the name isn't important in the game.

Markers

On this page you can find an overview of all the markers included in the game.



background pattern marker



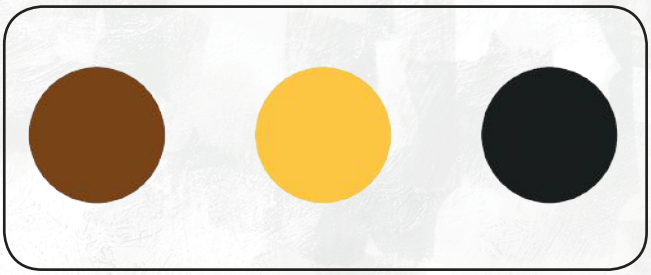
starting player marker



fashion markers



hair length marker



hair color marker

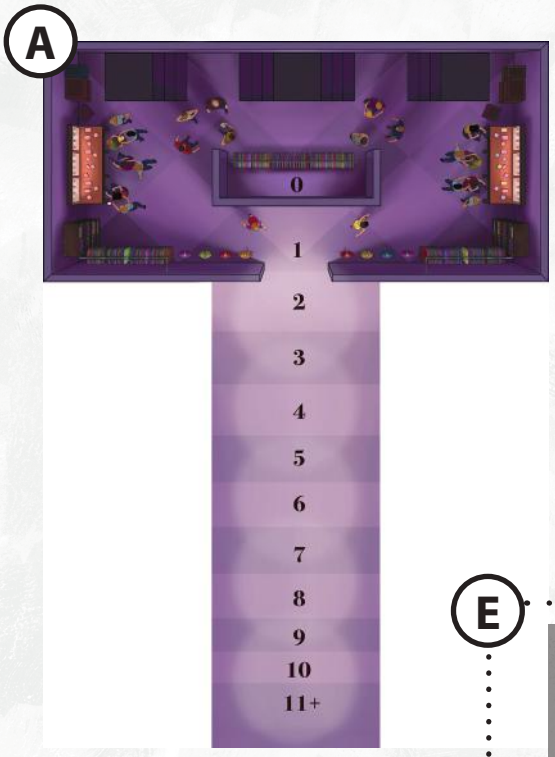


calendar marker

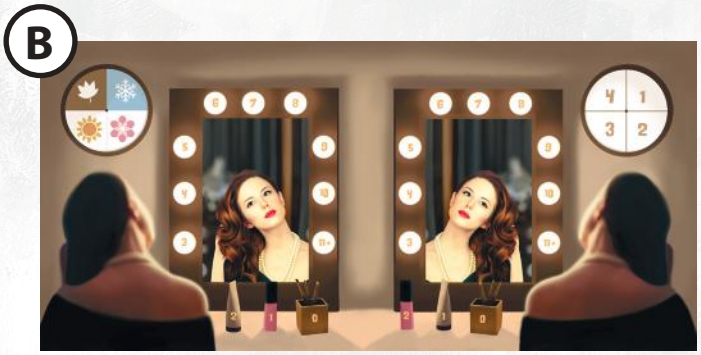


season marker

Set-up for 4 Players

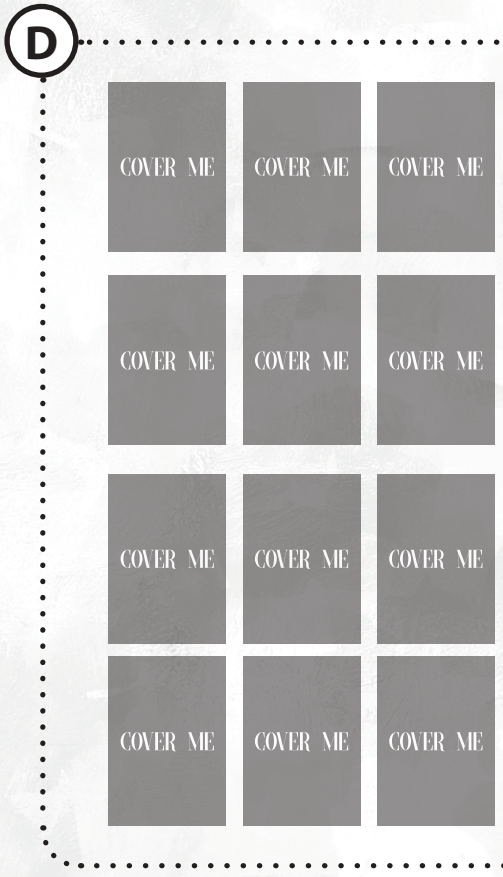








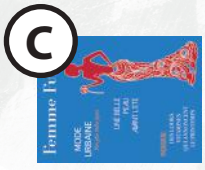




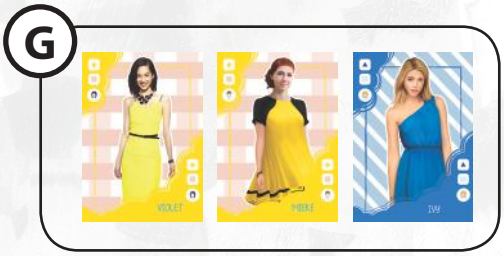
















Preparation

A Place the **Catwalk** on the side, but clearly visible for all players. Place on the catwalk the 3 fashion markers for the background pattern at the 0 space. Put the 6 fashion markers for the clothes color near the catwalk. You'll need them in the next season.

B Place the **Mirror** next to the catwalk. Make sure you still have enough room for the rest of the set-up. Place on the first mirror the 3 fashion markers for the hair length on the 0. Place on the second mirror the 3 fashion markers for the hair color also on 0. Put the year marker on year one and put the season marker on the winter icon (snowflake).

C Every player chooses a **Magazine** and takes the two cards with the corresponding color scheme. Place one of the cards in the middle of the table and put the other card in front of you.

D Leave space in the middle of the table for three columns of cards as depicted in the figure.

E Leave some space for an additional row of cards, the **influence row**. This row can never count more cards as the number of players.

F Take the model cards with clothes color red, yellow and blue. Shuffle these cards in one big pile and put this pile face down on the table. This is the **face down draw pile**.

G Keep taking the top card of the face down draw pile and sort it by hair color until you have turned at least one card of each type. If the hair color was already turned you put the card on top of the already turned card with the matching hair color. If the hair color wasn't turned yet, create a new pile for this hair color. Keep on doing this until you have created a third pile (the last pile will consist of only 1 card). The result will be you have 3 **open draw piles** based on hair color.

H Sort all model cards with clothes color green, black and white in 3 separate stacks. Shuffle the 27 cards with the green clothes color and put them face down next to the open draw piles. This is the **next draw pile**.

I Do the same with the cards with the black clothes color and put them aside for now.

J Also do the same with the cards with the white clothes color. These last two piles will enter the game later and represent the rise of new trends.

K Reserve a place to put the **discard pile**. Players can look at the cards in the discard pile at any time.

The **most colorful player** becomes the **starting player** and receives the starting player marker.

Draw two cards from the face down draw pile and put them face up in the **influence row** (E). Adjust the fashion tracks based on the models in the influence row (see Game overview, point 1).
Deal each player 6 cards from the face down draw pile (F). Starting from the starting player and clockwise every player takes one card from the open draw piles (G) or the face down draw pile (F). Repeat this process until everybody has **9 cards** in his hand.

Every time **when one of the three open draw piles is depleted** (this will happen many times because there is always one pile with only one card), you turn a new card from the face down draw pile and sort it based on the hair color until the three open draw piles again have at least one card. Keep on using this method during the game every time one of the open draw piles is depleted.

Game Overview

Each year has four seasons starting with winter and ending with fall.

Each season has the following order:

1. Playing model cards from your hand
2. Select the most trendy model for every magazine.
3. Evaluate the season special (scoring) and replenish your hand.
4. Starting a new year *(only after fall)*.

1. Playing model cards from your hand.

Every month (game round) each magazine publishes a new **edition** with a different cover model. Every season you'll need **three cover models**. Each month all players place one cover model **face down** on the table next to the player card matching their color. After all players made their choice the cards are turned face up and the trends are adjusted on the fashion tracks by moving the **fashion markers**.

Trends are tracked as follows:
Every season there are three fashion traits active: **hair color, hair length** and depending on the season the **background pattern** or the **clothes color.** In fall and winter the clothes color isn't important. In spring and summer the background pattern isn't important and can be ignored.

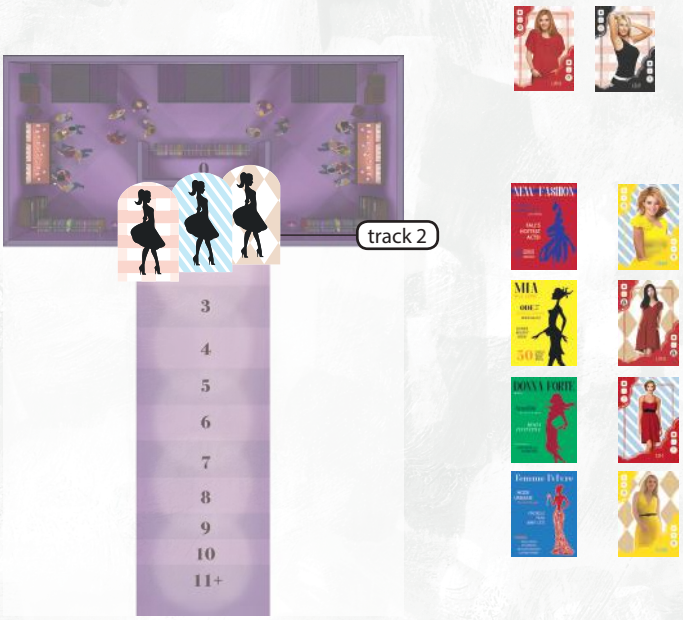
For each of the **active traits** the corresponding characteristics of the cards played by the players and the cards in the influence row are counted. Move the fashion marker one place forward on the fashion track for each model that has the corresponding symbol depicted on the card. The characteristic that is dominant will become the **trend**. If there are multiple dominant characteristics they all become trends.
For example, if most models have long hair, long hair will become the trend of the trait hair length.

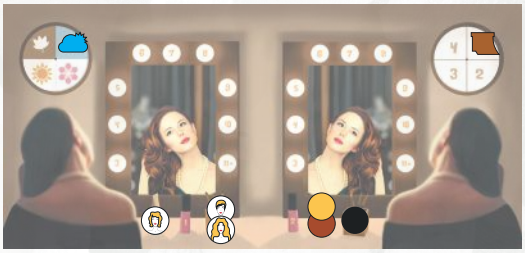
Example (winter, month 1):
Every player places the card chosen face down on the table. When everybody has placed the card, they are turned face up and the characteristics are adjusted on the fashion tracks. Don't forget to also count the influence row.

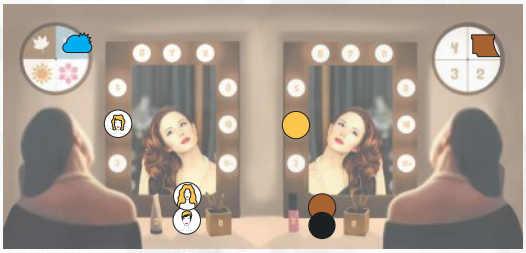
before



after

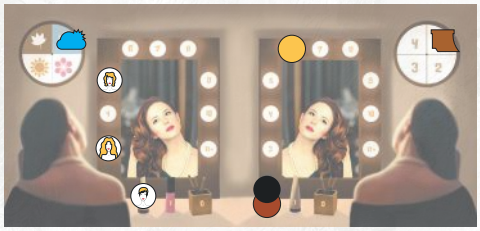






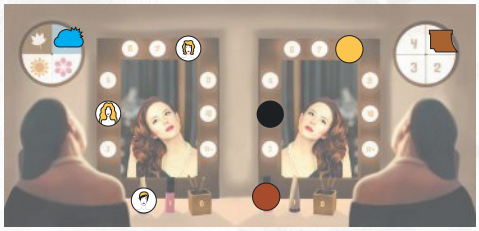
Example (winter, month 2): In month 2 every player puts a new model face down on the table. They are turned face up and the fashion tracks are adjusted again.





Example (winter, month 3): And you do the same for a third time before the season is finished.

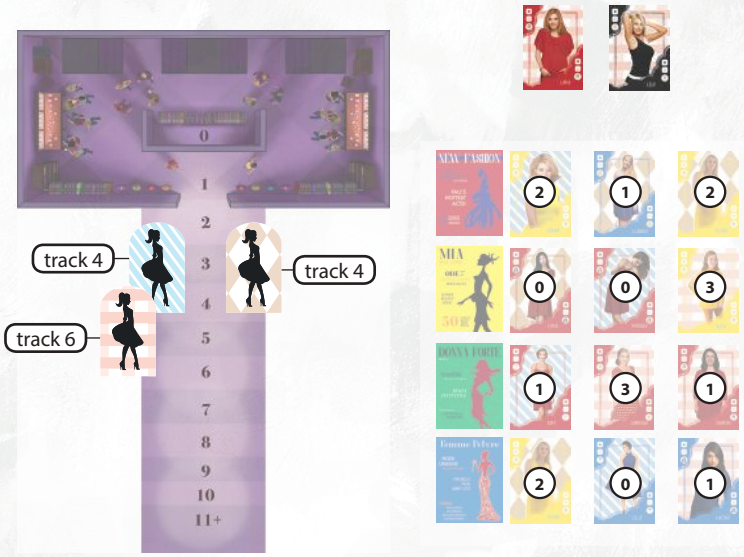




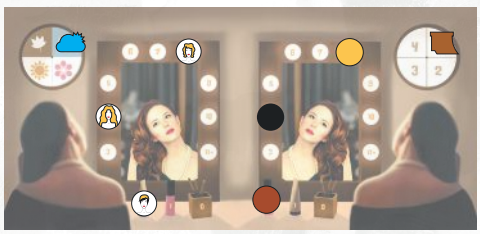
2. Select the most trendy model for every magazine

At the end of the season, after all players turned their third card face up, you can determine the **trend value** for each cover model on the table. How **trendy** a cover model is, will be determined by adding up the characteristics that match the trends on the fashion tracks. If a characteristic of a model matches a trend, the trend value of the model is increased by one. This means each cover model has always a **trend value** of 0, 1, 2 or 3.

For each player the **most trendy model** is determined. The model that has the highest trend value will be placed in the season special and remains on the table. The cover models that won't feature in the season special will be picked up and return to the **hand of the player**.
If more cover models have the **same highest trend** value (except when the value is 0) the player chooses one of these models to feature in the season special and returns the other models to his hand.
When **all models have a trend value of 0** they will all feature in the season special and they remain all on the table. This is the only situation where you can leave more as one model on the table.

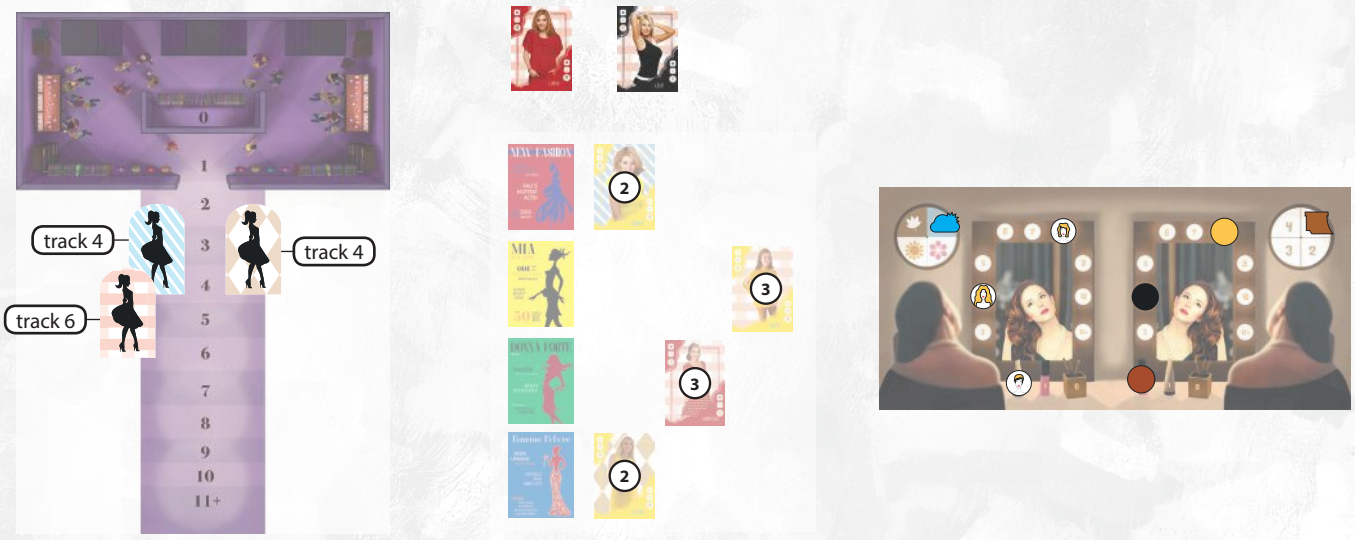


Example (continuation of previous example):
On the right you can see the trend value of each model. A model scores one point for the squared red background pattern, one for blonde hair and one for semi-long hair.



The players left their most trendy model on the table and they returned the other cards to their hand. If there are more models with the highest score, the player chooses one of the models to remain on the table. Only when you have 3 models with a trend value of 0, you can leave more as one of your models on the table.

The yellow player and the green player are the only ones who managed to feature a model that is completely trendy (trend value of 3). The red player had a choice between the first and third card he played as his most trendy cover model, he chooses in this case to leave the first card he played on the table and he returns the other cards to his hand. The blue player doesn't have any choice. He leaves the best scoring model on the table.



3. Evaluate the season special and replenish your hand

A) Clean up
All cards in the **influence row** are **discarded**.

B) Scoring or adding a card to the influence row
For each model in the season special we now determine her future. If the model has a **trend value** of **3** the player scores prestige and the card is put **face down underneath the player card** in front of the player. Keep in mind that you can only score one model with a trend value of 3 each season. At the end of the game you count the total prestige earned based on all cards scored.

When the cover model in the season special has a **trend value of 1 or 2** the card is put in the **influence row.** As a result the model will influence the fashion trends the next season. In the influence row there can only be as much cards present as the number of players. It is also possible the row is empty when all players scored prestige the last round.

When there are 3 models in the season special because **all of them** had a **trend value of 0**, they will **all score prestige** and you put the 3 models together face down underneath the player card in front of the player. Remark: Scoring prestige this way is difficult, but has the potential to change the score drastically.

Example (continuation of previous example): The green and yellow player put a model with trend value 3 in the season special and have to put the model underneath their player card. The models in the season special of the other players are moved to the influence row.



C) Replenish hand
Starting with the first player and going clockwise each player takes a new card until they all have 9 cards in their hands.

* If the player **scored prestige**
Take a new card from the **open draw piles** (G in the set-up figure) or the **face down draw pile** (F in the set-up figure). If needed refill an open draw pile immediately when it is emptied. When all 3 cards were scored the player can take all 3 cards when it's his turn to replenish his hand one after another. Should the face down draw pile ever be depleted, shuffle the discard pile and use it as a new face down draw pile.

* If the player **didn't score prestige**
Take the two top cards of the **next draw pile** (H in the set-up figure). He **keeps one card** and puts the other card at the bottom of the **next draw pile** (H).

D) Preparing for the next season
Adjust the season on the season track and **pass the starting player marker to the next player** in clockwise order.
All **fashion tracks are reset to 0**. Afterwards adjust the fashion tracks based on the cover models in the influence row.

Attention:
Keep in mind you use the background pattern markers in fall and winter and the clothes color markers in spring and summer.

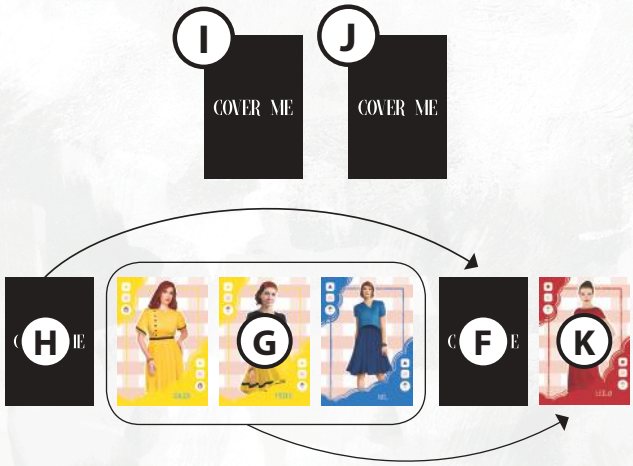
4. Starting a new year

Only after fall, when a full year has been played these steps have to be carried out.

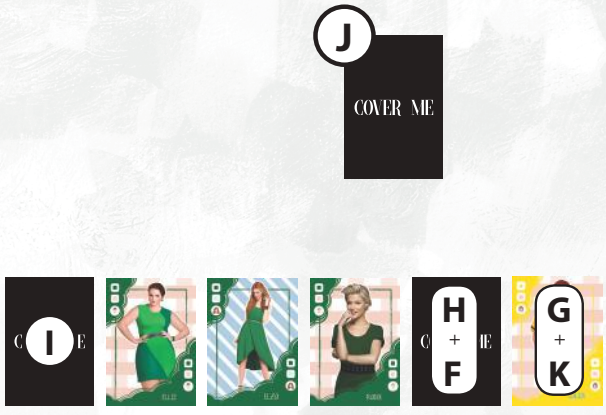
After playing a full year take the following steps:

- Move the **year marker** to the next year
- Place the **next draw pile** (H) with the next spring-summer color (in year one this is green, in year 2 this is black and in year 3 this is white) on top of the present face down pile (F).
- Place the **3 open draw piles** (G) on the discard pile (K).
- Turn cards from the new face down draw pile and **form again 3 open draw piles** based on the hair color. Further in the game it is possible the cards which are just placed on the face down draw pile are depleted and the 'old' colors return to the game again.
- Place the deck with the cards representing the **next clothes color** (black in year 1, white in year 2) to form the next draw pile.
- Beginning with the starting player and in clockwise order a player may put one of the cards in his hand on the discard pile and choose a card from an open draw pile or the face down draw pile. If one of the open draw piles is depleted keep turning cards until there are again 3 open draw piles.

Example: situation before end of the year actions:



Example: situation after the end of the year actions:



At the end of the last year you can skip this step.

End of the game

The game ends after the **fall season of the third** year has been played.

The players now pick-up **all the cards** they stored **below their player card** during the game and put them face up in front of them. All players count the point value of all cards. The result is the prestige they gathered. Every color has a value you can find in the table below. The player with the most prestige gathered is the winner of the game.

If there is a **draw** the player who gathered the most cards is the winner. If there still is a draw, the player who gathered the most cards with the highest prestige value (5) is the winner. If there still is a draw, check the number of cards with the next-to-highest prestige value and so on. If all prestige values are used and there is still a draw the players decide they want to play an additional season or share the victory.

Example:
The player has 2 yellow, 1 red, 1 blue, 2 green, 0 black and 1 white model.
He scores 4x2 + 2x3 +0x4 + 1x5 = 19 prestige.

Yellow	2 points
Red	2 points
Blue	2 points
Green	3 points
Black	4 points
White	5 points



Gaming tips

- Try to obtain enough of the same characteristics (mainly hair color, hair length and background pattern) so you can try to establish a trend. But too many of the same characteristics is also not a good idea because your options to get in on other trends are very limited.
- Scoring every season is almost impossible. If you notice during a season you probably won't be able to fulfill all 3 trends, it could be more interesting to play cards with a low point value to change trends in the disadvantage of the other players.
- Cover models with a color that just joined the game are very difficult to score in spring and summer because the clothes color is scarce. In fall and winter they aren't more difficult to score because the clothes color isn't important in these seasons.
- Be careful if you just follow the current trends. This will make the result predictable and it will be less difficult for your opponents to score 3 models with a trend value of 0.

Rules adjustments with 2 players

In a game with 2 players there are a few changes to the rules. In the game **two fictional players** will join and play cover models every month.

Set-up

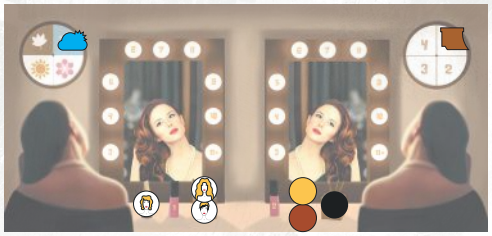
Leave some space for **two additional rows** below the rows you use for both players. You can use two spare player cards that aren't in use for these players if you like to.
Take **12 cards** of the face down draw pile without looking at them and place them as a separate pile close to the two new rows for the fictional players. This is the draw pile for the fictional players.

Placing of the cover models for the new season

Each month, before the players place their face down cards on the table, you also draw **two cards** from the draw pile of the fictional players and place them in their rows. The card of the last fictional player can be placed face up. As a result the players are shown one of the two cards before they have to put their card face down on the table. After both players played their card face down, all cards are turned open. When you adjust the fashion tracks the characteristics of all 4 cover models on the table are counted.

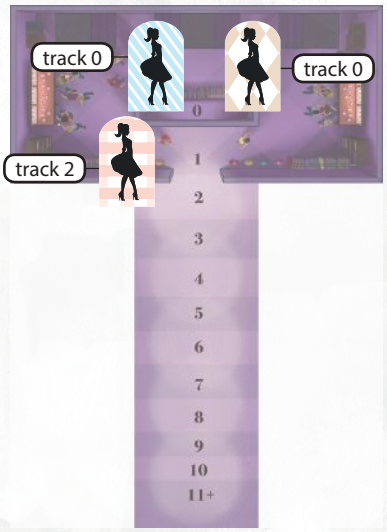
> Tip: Don't adjust the characteristics of the card that is placed face up on the table before all players have put their card face down on the table. There is a risk you will count the characteristics of this card twice if you do this. Is there any doubt, you can always count the characteristics of the models on the table again and adjust the position of the markers if needed.

Example (winter, month 1): This is the situation after all players placed their card face down on the table. One of the cards of the fictional players is already face up. The other card is turned face up together with the cards of the players. The face up card isn't counted on the fashion track yet.









Selecting the most trendy cover model of each magazine

The most trendy cover model of the players is selected the same way as in the game with 3 players or more, but now you also have to select the most trendy cover model for the fictional players. When there is a draw the first placed cover model will be selected to appear in the season special, even if all models score 0 trend points. The 4 other cards are returned to the draw pile of the fictional players.

Evaluate the season special and replenish the hand

For the **fictional players** the following rules are active:

A) Scoring or adding a card to the influence row

The most trendy cover model of each row is placed in the influence row. It doesn't matter how high the trend value is. Fictional players will never score.

B) Replenish hand

Take one card of the face down draw pile and one card of the next draw pile. Place these cards on the draw pile for the fictional players and shuffle the pile thoroughly. The pile always counts 12 cards in the beginning of a season.

This way, the draw pile of the fictional players will consist of cover models that are already known to the players so they can try to predict the dominant characteristics in the pile, but every season there are also two new models added so the pile can never be fully known.

The variant we just explained is a suggestion for beginning players who don't have much experience in playing Cover Me. If you start to know the game we advise to try the advanced variant. This variant is explained below.

Variants

Longer game:
Instead of 3 years you can also play 4 years. For the final year you keep on playing without the renewal of the piles. Because there is no next draw pile you always take cards from the open draw piles or the face down draw pile.

Shorter game:
If you want a shorter game you play for 4 years, but every year you only play a spring and a fall season. You start with a spring season and play for the clothes color. The next season will be the fall season and you play for the backgronud pattern. After these 2 season you start a new year. In the fourth year there is no next draw pile anymore, so you always take cards from the open draw piles or the face down draw pile.

All cards have the same value:
Choose one clothes color and remove these cards from the game. Deal each player face down a card from each remaining clothes color. Shuffle the remaining cards in one big pile. Create the open piles like you are used to. Each player picks a card until all players have 9 cards in their hand.
Scoring or not scoring (moving cards to the influence row) is done in the same way as in the base game but you always take a new card from the open draw piles or the face down pile.
Step 4 never takes place in this variant. You only move the year marker.
This way you can also choose for a longer or a shorter game. If the draw pile is ever depleted just shuffle the discard pile to form a new draw pile.
Each card has the same prestige value. The end score is just the number of cards underneath your player card. In case of a draw you can choose to play a new season until a winner is determined or share the victory.

Advanced variant for 2 players:

For players who like a bigger challenge, a lower luck factor and more control we developed this strategic variant. This time there are no fictional players, but the players each control two magazines. One of them is the primary magazine and this can score prestige points. The other can be used to influence the trends, but doesn't score prestige.

Set-up
Make sure there is room for an additional row of cards below the main row of each player.
Deal each player 9 cards from the face down draw pile (F). Starting with the start player, the players take in turn a card from the open draw piles (G). Repeat this until both players have 12 cards in their hand.

Playing model cards from your hand
Each month both players put **two cover models** face down on the table. One in the row with their player card (primary magazine) and one below in their second row (secondary magazine).
When adjusting the fashion tracks the characteristics of the models in all four rows are counted.

Selecting the most trendy cover model for each magazine
For each row you select the most trendy cover model just like you would do in a game with 3 or more players.
If more models have the same highest trend value (except when this is 0) the player chooses one of the cards to put in the season special.

Evaluate the season special and replenish your hand
A) Scoring or adding a card to the influence row
For each cover model in the season special the future is determined. This will happen twice for each player. For cover models with trend value 1 or 2 the same rules are used as in the base game.
If the model has a trend value of 3 or 0 there is a difference between both rows:
For the primary row the normal rules apply: the card (or cards should they all have a trend value of 0) is placed face down underneath the player card in front of the player.
For the secondary row the card (or cards should they all have a trend value of 0) is placed underneath the player card in the middle of the table. At the end of the game these cards are only important in case of a draw.
B) Replenish hand
In player turn the players replenish their hand.
A player does this for both rows at once. In the case he has a trend value of 1 or 2 for both models in the season special the player takes 4 cards of the next draw pile and keeps 2 of them (instead of taking two times 2 cards and keep 1).

End of the game
In case of a draw the values of the cards underneath the player card in the middle of the table are also counted. In the case there is still a draw the players use the tie breakers of the normal game and they count all the cards earned (you also count the cards underneath the player card in the middle of the table).