Happy Little Dinosaurs



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Happy Little Dinosaurs. In this game, you are a Dinosaur, and life repeatedly tries to punch you in the face. You'll do your best to avoid Natural, Predatory, and Emotional disasters while dodging Meteors, and much like in the real world, you'll probably fail. But keep picking yourself back up, because the first Dinosaur to reach 50 points (or the last Dinosaur standing) wins the game! Yay!

HOW TO START

Inside this box, you'll find the following components:

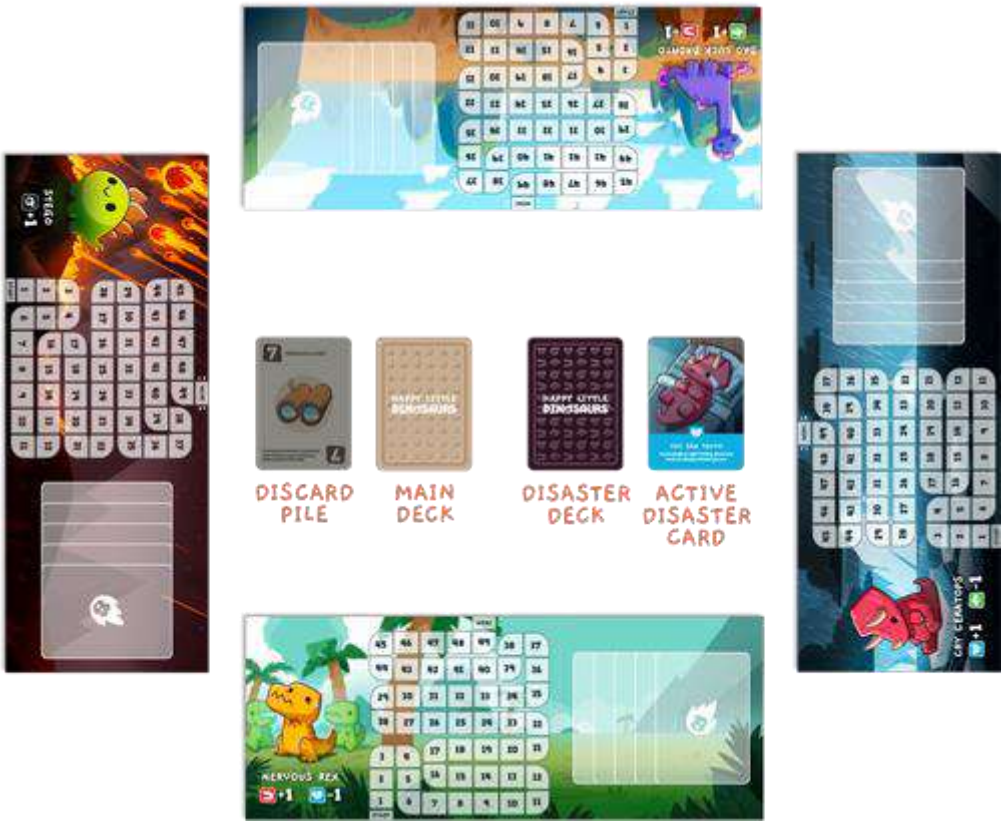
- 4 Dinosaur player boards
- 4 Dinosaur meeples
- 1 Main deck (53 Point cards and 16 Instant cards)
- 1 Disaster deck (28 Disaster cards)

Start by having each player choose a Dinosaur player board and corresponding Dinosaur meeple. Your player board includes your Dinosaur character, your Escape Route (which you'll use to collect your points), and your Disaster Area (in which you will collect Disaster cards throughout the game). Place any remaining Dinosaur player boards back in the box; you will not use them this game.



Next, separate the light-backed cards from the dark-backed cards. Shuffle the lightbacked cards together, then deal five cards to each player. Place the remaining stack of cards face-down in the center of the table to form the Main deck. Leave space to the right of the deck for a discard pile.

Shuffle the dark-backed cards together to form the Disaster deck and place it facedown on the table to the left of the Main deck.



Now you're ready to play Happy Little Dinosaurs!

HOW TO PLAY

Each round, players will play Point cards from their hands in the hopes of collecting points and avoiding disasters. To start a round, flip the top card of the Disaster deck

face-up and read it aloud. Each player must choose a Point card from their hand and place it face-down. If a player does not have any Point cards in their hand during this part of the round, that player must discard their hand and draw 5 new cards (and repeat the process until they have a Point card that they can play face-down). After all players have placed a Point card facedown, all players will reveal their Point cards simultaneously.

In each round, scoring occurs after all players reveal their cards. The player with the highest score in the round collects points equal to their score and should move their Dinosaur meeple along the Escape Route on their player board accordingly. The player with the lowest score adds the face-up Disaster card to their Disaster Area. If a player adds a Disaster card to their Disaster Area, they may discard a card from their hand. A player's base score equals the point value of the face-up Point card in front of them, but that score can go up or down based on bonuses from Dinosaur Traits, Point card effects, and Instant card effects (which will be explained in the subsequent sections).

At the end of the round, each player moves their Dinosaur meeple forward on their Escape Route a number of spaces equal to the number of disasters in their Disaster Area. Each player then draws cards from the Main deck until they have 5 cards in their hand. Before the next round begins, clear the table by moving all face-up Point cards and Instant cards to the discard pile. If at any time the Main deck has no remaining cards, shuffle the discard pile and place it facedown to form a new Main deck.

DISASTER CARDS

The Dinosaur world is full of disasters, just like real life! There are three main types of Disaster cards in addition to Meteor cards (which are extra disastrous). Each type of Disaster card is denoted by a color and a symbol: 

If you collect three Disaster cards of the same type or three different types of Disaster cards, you are eliminated from the game and must immediately discard your hand.



Meteor cards are special Disaster cards that act as any of the three types of Disaster cards. You can think of Meteors as the chameleons of Disaster cards. This means that

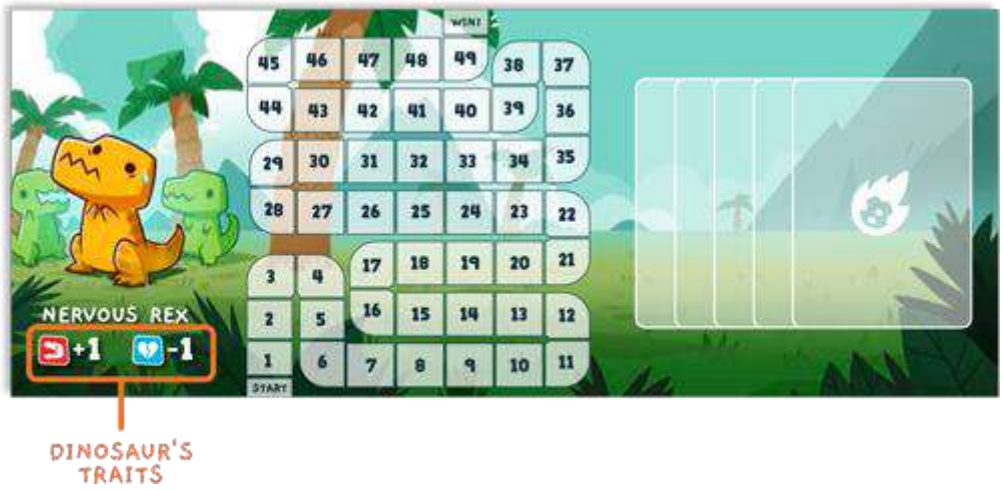
you will be eliminated from the game if you collect a Meteor card in addition to any two other Disaster cards.



But Disaster cards aren't all bad. For each Disaster card in your Disaster Area, move your Dinosaur meeple forward 1 space on your Escape Route at the end of each round. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger!

DINOSAUR TRAITS

Each Dinosaur player board has your Dinosaur's traits listed in the bottom left corner.



These traits will give you advantages or disadvantages when facing certain types of Disaster cards. The advantages and disadvantages of your Dinosaur Traits are added to or subtracted from your Point card's value each round. For example, if you are playing as Nervous Rex, you will add 1 point to your score each round when facing a Predatory Disaster card and subtract 1 point from your score each round when facing an Emotional Disaster card.

POINT CARDS

Point cards feature various weapons, trinkets, and good luck charms that you will use to try to collect points and avoid disasters. Each has a point value between 0 and 9 that is used for scoring during the round.



Some Point cards simply show a point value, while others also have a card effect. These card effects may allow players to draw or discard cards, swap Point cards with another player, or even alter the round's scoring rules. Unless otherwise specified, players may use their Point card's effect after revealing their Point card, but before scoring occurs in the round.



If multiple players play Point cards with effects in the same round, the player with the lowest Point card value may use their Point card's effect first.* If two players play a Point card with the same value, the player with the fewest total collected points on their Escape Route may use their Point card's effect first. If multiple players are tied for Point card number value and total points collected, the youngest player may use their Point card's effect first. Point card effects can only be used once per card per round.

- There are a few key exceptions to this order of using Point card effects. These exceptions are card effects that specify when the effect occurs by stating “During this round” or “During scoring this round.” If a card states “During this round,” its effect occurs before the effects of any other Point cards in the round, regardless of those cards’ point values. If a card states “During scoring this round,” its effect occurs when you calculate scores after all other Point card effects have been used.

INSTANT CARDS

You can use Instant cards to tip the odds in your favor or save your Dinosaur in a pinch. Instant cards state when you can play them.

If an Instant card states “Play this card during scoring,” you may play that card when scores are being calculated after all Point card effects have been used.







If an Instant card states “Play this card if you would add a Disaster card to your Disaster Area this round,” you may play that card if you have the lowest score after scoring is complete to avoid adding a Disaster card to your Disaster Area (or if another player sends a Disaster card your way).





RESOLVING TIES

In some rounds, multiple players will have the same score after adding Point card values, bonuses from Disaster cards, advantages and disadvantages from Dinosaur Traits, and the effects of Instant cards.

If multiple players tie for the highest score in a round, each of those players collects points equal to their score in the round and moves their Dinosaur meeple forward on their Escape Route.

If multiple players tie for the lowest score in a round, Sudden Death occurs! Each player tied for the lowest score must play another Point card face-down from their hand. When all players are ready, simultaneously flip these cards face-up. The player with the lowest point value during Sudden Death adds the face-up Disaster card to their Disaster Area. During Sudden Death, Dinosaur Traits, Point card effects and Instant cards do not apply. No player involved in Sudden Death collects points for the round, even if their new Point card exceeds the score of the highest-scoring player in the round.

If a tie occurs during Sudden Death, repeat the process until the tie is broken. If at any time one of the players involved in Sudden Death does not have a Point card in their hand to play, that player must add the face-up Disaster card to their Disaster Area. If more than one player runs out of Point cards in their hand during Sudden Death, move the face-up Disaster card to the bottom of the Disaster deck and end the round and just never talk about it again.

If scores are inverted in a round when multiple players tie for the highest or lowest score, the scores of all players involved are inverted. For example, if two players are tied for the lowest score in the round at 3 points each and the highest score in that round is 9 points, both of the players originally tied for the lowest score receive a score of 9 points for the round, and the player who originally had a score of 9 points now receives a score of 3 points. Note: inversion effects do not apply to Sudden Death; during Sudden Death, you always want to play the higher card than your opponent(s) to avoid adding a Disaster card to your Disaster area.

If all players tie, move the face-up Disaster card to the bottom of the Disaster deck and end the round. No player collects points for the round.

HOW TO WIN

There are two ways to win the game:

- Be the first Dinosaur to reach 50 points on your Escape Route.
- Be the last Dinosaur left in the game.

Looks like you've successfully delayed your inevitable extinction. Unfortunately, all of your friends are now dead :(But on the bright side, you're a winner!

2-PLAYER RULES

If you are playing with two players, we suggest that you make a couple of modifications to the standard rules:

Before starting the game, remove all Point cards with a value of 1, 2, or 3 from the Main deck. Eliminate a player only after they collect either four Disaster cards of the same type or two of each of the three types of Disaster cards in their Disaster area.

If you don’t make these modifications, you may find the game to feel less balanced.

HELPFUL REMINDERS

- If you have 5 Instant cards in your hand and no Point cards, discard your hand and draw 5 new cards.
- If scores are inverted in a round, only the player(s) with the highest and lowest scores are affected.
- For each Disaster card in your Disaster Area, move your Dinosaur meeple forward 1 space on your Escape Route at the end of the round.
- To calculate your score in a round, make sure to account for the Disaster cards in your Disaster Area, Dinosaur Traits, Point card effects, and Instant card effects.
- Each time you add a Disaster card to your Disaster Area, you may discard a card from your hand. This is a useful way to get rid of cards you might not want!
- At the end of each round, draw cards until you have 5 cards in your hand.