

LUCKTAILS



3-5

20

10+

In a Luckshell

Lucktails is a baiting game of inconceivable chances.

Are you going to stick to your initial card or switch to one of the two in the middle of the table? Just because you will be taking a chance either way does not mean that you have to rely on blind luck. After all, the longer you "wait and bait" the more players will drop out of the round before you. Each card that they reveal means additional information for you.

Components

14 +1 cards

8 victory point (VP) cards:



1 VP,



1 VP,



2 VP,



3 VPs,



4 VPs,



5 VPs,



6 VPs,



1 lucktails card

+1 blank card:



(Should you ever visibly damage any of the other cards, you can replace it with this one. Use a permanent marker to write on it.)

1 VP pond:



5 baiting reminders:



40 victory points



25x 1 VP



15x 5 VPs

7 lucktails



Setup

Put the VP pond and all the VPs into the middle of the table.

Take one baiting reminder each.

Decide on a **starting player** for the first round. If you are the starting player, **take all seven lucktails**.

You will play one after the other in clockwise order.

One Round

Deal Cards

If you are this round's starting player, take all eight VP cards and shuffle them, then:

① Deal one face down VP card to each player.

⚡ Nobody may look at these face down VP cards yet! Should you look at your own VP card anyway (out of habit), pay a penalty of 1 VP into the middle of the table, if you can. Then re-shuffle and re-deal the VP cards.

② Deal two VP cards face down and next to each other into the middle of the table.

③ Deal all remaining VP cards face up and next to each other into the middle of the table. For each face up card put one of the lucktails on the corresponding field on the VP pond to show that it is out of this round. (The number of face up VP cards in the middle of the table at the start of a round depends on the number of players.)

⚡ It is the responsibility of the round's starting player to put one of the lucktails on the VP pond (in the middle of the table) whenever a card gets revealed (turned face up) during the round. This way, everybody can see at a glance which cards are still in the round and which have already been eliminated.

Look at Your Right Neighbor's Card

Next, **everybody takes a peek at the VP card dealt to their respective right neighbor**.

⚡ Do not reveal your neighbor's VP card. (While you must not physically flip over your neighbor's card, feel free to talk about it. Whether or not you tell the truth is up to you!) Also, you may still not look at your own face down VP card. (If you do anyway, see step ① above.)

Baiting

Then the round proper starts. Whenever it is your turn, pick one of the following options, depending on whether or not baiting is already going on.

⚡ Baiting (see next page for details) is a purely verbal process! You do not need any physical objects to bait. You can think of it as an unusual kind of "bidding" that neither requires you to bid with something nor to bid on something. Instead you keep making (increasingly higher) offers to the other players. If a player accepts such an offer, i.e. as soon as a player takes the bait, that player drops out of the round. On the one hand, this player is guaranteed to get the baiting VPs. On the other, this player forgoes their VP card's VPs, which might (or might not) be higher than the baiting VPs. More importantly to you though this player also reveals their card. This is one of the few sources of information that you have in this game. Every card that is revealed makes your choice between the card that was dealt to you and either of the two face down cards in the middle of the table just a little easier.

No Ongoing Baiting Yet

If there is no ongoing baiting yet (e.g. because it is the first turn of the round), you have two options.

(A) You can announce a first bait of either one or two (but not zero).

! Baiting does not correspond one-to-one with VPs. Instead, have a look at your baiting reminder to see which baiting range "translates" to how many VPs.

For example: A bait of either one or two is worth 1 VP. Meanwhile, a bait of either three, four, or five will be worth 2 VPs. (See option **(B)** for details, i.e. the very next paragraph.)

(B) You can opt out of baiting. First you may (but do not have to) switch out the VP card you got dealt (in front of you) with either of the two face down VP cards in the middle of the table. Then you reveal the VP card that is now in front of you. Take your VP card's VPs from the general supply. You drop out of this round and everybody who has not yet dropped out of this round will finish the round without you. This resets the baiting (back to zero) for the next player.

Special case: If you switched out VP cards, you get any bonus VPs that were (physically) on top of the card that you took from the middle of the table (if any) as a bonus. Reveal the VP card that is now in front of you only after you have taken the bonus VPs. (How bonus VPs can get on cards will be explained in a moment, in option **(C).)**

Special case: If you reveal the lucktails card, take enough VPs from the general supply that your total VPs match the total VPs of the current VP leader. (This allows you to catch up to the current VP leader. If you already have the most VPs, you do not get any VPs for revealing the lucktails card.)

! If you opt out of baiting, you get your revealed VP card's VPs but not the baiting VPs. It is either/or!

*** Monty Hall was the original host of a US TV show called Let's Make a Deal. In the show, the candidate had to pick one of three doors. Only one of these three doors had a prize behind it. After the candidate's first pick, the game master would open one door that he knew did not have the prize behind it. The resulting question of whether the candidate should then either stick to their first pick or switch to the other unopened door is known as the "Monty Hall Problem." Somewhat unintuitively, the candidate should re-pick for a statistically better chance to win the prize. (Does this maybe also apply to you when you decide which card you would like to reveal?)**

LOOSEY
GOOSEY



Baiting Is Already Going on

If baiting is already going on, you have three options.

(C) You can raise the current bait by either one or two (but not by more or less).

For example: If the starting player has announced a bait of two, you can raise the bait to either three or four.

Special case: If you raise the bait to more than nine (i.e. from either eight or nine to either ten or eleven), choose one of the face down VP cards in the middle of the table and put 1 bonus VP from the general supply on it. (Once the bait already is at ten or more, raising the bait further does not mean that you put additional bonus VPs on cards.)

(D) You can take the bait. Take the corresponding VPs (see your baiting reminder) from the general supply. **Reveal the VP card in front of you. You drop out of this round** and everybody who has not yet dropped out of this round will finish the round without you. This resets the baiting (back to zero) for the next player.

! If you take the bait, you get the baiting VPs but not your revealed VP card's VPs. It is either/or!

(E) You can opt out of baiting. You drop out of this round. See option **(B)** for details. This resets the baiting (back to zero) for the next player.

If you are the very last player left in a round, you can not bait any longer. You may switch out the VP card in front of you with either of the two face down VP cards in the middle of the table, if you want to. Then you (get any bonus VPs on top of it and) reveal the VP card that is now in front of you. Take your VP card's VPs from the general supply. **You drop out of this round.** (Once you are the only remaining player, you can only opt out of baiting.)

As soon as everybody has dropped out of a round, that round ends.

The left neighbor of the current starting player becomes the new starting player of the next round. The new starting player takes the lucktails and deals new VP cards. Everybody takes a peek at the VP card dealt to their respective right neighbor. Then, baiting begins again.

The End

The game usually ends **as soon as at least one player has collected at least 15 VPs total at the end of a round.** If you are the only player who has collected 15 or more VPs total at the end of a round, you win. If you are not the only player, whoever has the most VPs total wins.

If there is a tie for first place, keep on playing additional rounds until you have a single clear winner.

! Everybody participates in this additional round (or even rounds), not just the tied players. Everybody is still in the race until there actually is a winner.