

Word Nerds

A Rod Currie
Prototype

OBJECT OF THE GAME

In *Word Nerds*, players compete to add letter cards to their hands. They can then use those letter cards to spell high-scoring words, or hold on to them to trump other players' words. Players can also acquire and use action cards to strategically alter the current game situation to their advantage. The first player to score 75 points wins!

GAME COMPONENTS

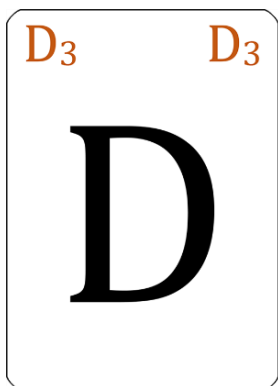
CARDS

Word Nerds features a variety of card types.

Letter Cards: Most letter cards feature a letter in the English alphabet. These cards display the letter's point value as a subscript to the letter in the upper left and right corners. Some letters have cards with different point values. For example, the letter A has cards with point values of 1, 2, and 3. See "LETTER DISTRIBUTION" on page 12.

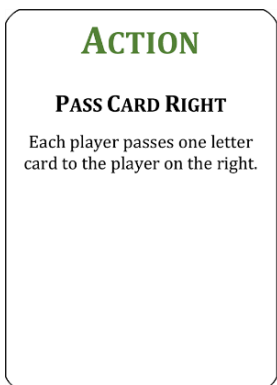
Some letter cards feature the text "+ ACTION CARD." When one of those cards is selected from the selection pool, the selecting player also draws an action card.

Finally, there are two WILD cards. A player can use a WILD card as any letter when spelling a word. WILD cards have a point value of 0.



Action Cards: These cards specify actions to be taken by one or more players. Such actions affect various aspects of the game such as hand contents, community card availability, word values, and more.

Some action cards specifically state when the card can or cannot be played. If an action card lacks such a statement, that card can be played at any time.



First Player Card: This card identifies the current First Player.



Information Cards: These cards (one for each player) provide an overview of the game for quick reference. One side features a description of gameplay while the reverse provides an overview of scoring.

GAMEPLAY

CARD SELECTION PHASE

- Turn up [# of players + 1] letter cards for selection pool.
- Starting with the FIRST PLAYER, each player selects a card from the selection pool.

WORD DECLARATION PHASE

- Declare "Word Nerd" (optional)

If no one declares "Word Nerd", move on to Exchange Phase. Otherwise:

- Trump word (optional).
- Challenge word (optional).
- Update scores.
- All players who played a word and now have less than two letters draw letter cards to bring them back up to two.

EXCHANGE PHASE

- Each player may discard a letter card and draw the top card of either the letter card or action deck.
- Pass FIRST PLAYER card left.

SCORING

WORD VALUE

- Total hand and community cards used.
- Apply action card modifiers.
- Add bonus for word length:

LETTERS	BONUS
4	+0
5	+2
6	+5
7	+9
8	+14
9 or more	+20

OTHER SCORING

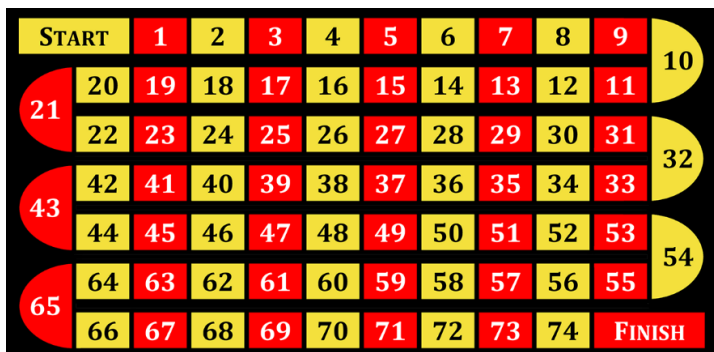
EVENT	SCORE
Challenge fails	-10 points
Challenge succeeds	+10 points
Word is trumped	½ word value

WINNING THE GAME

- First player to reach 75 points wins. When multiple players reach 75 in same turn, highest score wins.

SCORE TRACKER

Each player's score is tracked on the Score Tracker using a colored wooden disc of their choice.



GAME CONCEPTS

HAND

The two letter cards and one action card drawn during setup form the start of each player's hand. A player's hand cards are private and generally not revealed to other players. When a player draws a card from the letter card or action deck, or receives a card from another player, that card is added unrevealed to the player's hand.

A player's hand cannot exceed 10 letter cards. If, at any time, adding a card or cards causes a player's hand to have more than 10 letter cards, that player must immediately discard letter cards to bring the total down to 10.

COMMUNITY CARD POOL

The community card pool is a collection of face-up letter cards that all players can use when spelling words. A player can use as many community cards as needed to spell a word. This can include community cards being used by another player in the same Word Declaration Phase.

RUNNING OUT OF CARDS

When either the action deck or the letter deck runs out of cards, shuffle the corresponding discard pile to reform the deck.

OFFICIAL DICTIONARY

Players should agree on an official dictionary. Any word not found in this dictionary is considered to be invalid. Players may agree on additional valid and invalid words.

SETUP

Shuffle the letter and action decks and place them face down, leaving room for a discard pile for each deck.

Each player picks a scoring cylinder and places it on the START box of the Score Tracker.

Choose a player to be First Player and place the FIRST PLAYER card in front of that player.

Starting with the First Player, each player draws two letter cards and one action card.

GAMEPLAY

Each *Word Nerds* turn consists of the following phases:

- Card Selection Phase
- Word Declaration Phase
- Exchange Phase

CARD SELECTION PHASE

At the start of each Card Selection Phase, the First Player turns up a number of letter cards equal to the number of players plus one. This is the selection pool.

Beginning with the First Player and proceeding clockwise, each player, in turn, selects a letter card from the selection pool and adds it to their hand.

When a player selects a card with “+ ACTION CARD” on it, that player also draws the top card from the action deck.

Once all players have selected their cards, add the remaining card to the community card pool.

WORD DECLARATION PHASE

The Word Declaration Phase consists of a number of optional actions. If no one declares “Word Nerd,” play can continue with the Purchase Phase.

If a player declares “Word Nerd” and plays a word, the other players can attempt to trump or challenge that word. At the end of the phase, which can include multiple attempted trumps and challenges, either a

single scoring word remains or there is no scoring word at all.

DECLARING “WORD NERD”

Beginning with the First Player and proceeding clockwise, each player has a chance to declare “Word Nerd” and play a word.

Playable words have a minimum of four letters and must be spelt using one or more letter cards from the player’s hand in combination with zero or more community cards.

The declarer lays down the letter cards that spell the word, indicating any community cards needed to complete it. The value of the word is then determined. This word becomes the current scoring word.

DETERMINING WORD VALUE

Determine the value of a word as follows:

- Total the point values of the individual letters (including community letters) used to spell the word.
- Add or subtract modifiers from action cards played on the word.
- Add a bonus based on the number of letters in the word:

Letters	Bonus
4	+0
5	+2
6	+5
7	+9
8	+14
9 or more	+20

TRUMPING A WORD

Once a player has declared “Word Nerd”, the opportunity to play a word continues clockwise. However, any word played must have a higher value than the current scoring word. If a player can spell a higher scoring word, that player can say “Trump” and lay down the letter cards that make up the word, indicating any community cards needed to complete it. This can include community cards used to spell the declarer’s word.

If the trumping word is not successfully challenged (see “CHALLENGING A WORD” on page 9) and does indeed have a higher value than the current scoring word, the trumping word becomes the new scoring word.

Any player can play action cards during this time to change the value of either of the original or the trumping word.

The loser of a trump battle – either because the original word was trumped or action cards reduced the value of the attempted trump word below that of the original word – scores one half the value of his or her word (rounded down).

Andy declares “Word Nerd” and plays PATHS, which has a value of nine (seven for the letters plus two for being a five letter word). He also plays a +2 WORD VALUE action card which makes the word worth a total value of 11. Beth looks at her cards and realizes that she can spell WRECK, which has a value of 12 (10 for the letters plus two for being a five letter word). She says “Trump” and plays her word.

Carl does not want Beth to score her word because she currently has 64 points and those 12 points would give her over 75 points in total, allowing her to win the game. So he plays a -3 WORD VALUE action card on her word, reducing the value of WRECK to 9 points. No other action cards are played. Andy wins the trump battle 11-9 and scores 11 points for PATHS. Beth loses the battle and scores only 4 points for WRECK.

Once a trumping word becomes the scoring word, that word itself can be trumped.

Any time a word is played, all players who have not spelt a word that turn have a chance to trump it.

CHALLENGING A WORD

If one or more players doubt that the current scoring word is valid, they can challenge the word.

To challenge a word, say “Challenge.” There can be multiple challengers. You cannot challenge your own word.

Consult the official dictionary. If the word appears there, each challenger loses 10 points (scores cannot go below 0) and the challenged word remains the scoring word.

If the word does not appear in the dictionary, each challenger scores 10 points. The player of the challenged word scores no points.

If a trumping word is successfully challenged, the word that it trumped once again becomes the current scoring word.

If a word is successfully challenged and there was no other declared word, there is considered to be no scoring word.

Donna plays CACOON. Both Ed and Faith think she misspelled “cocoon” and declare “Challenge.” Greg isn’t sure, so he does not challenge. Consulting the official dictionary shows that “cacoon” is not a word. Ed and Faith both score 10 points for the successful challenge. Since no other words were played, there is no scoring word and, thus, no additional scoring at this time.

Later in the game, Greg plays ABASIA. Donna does not believe it is a word and challenges. The dictionary shows that it is indeed a word, so Donna loses 10 points for her failed challenge. ABASIA remains the scoring word.

UPDATING THE SCORE TRACKER

Scores are updated on the Score Tracker. The player of the current scoring word scores the value of that word. Any losers of trump battles score half the value of their words (rounded down). Additionally, any points lost or gained from challenges are recorded. If a player has reached 75 points, the game is over. See “WINNING THE GAME” on page 11.

DISCARDING AND REPLACING LETTER CARDS

All letter cards played during the Word Declaration Phase are discarded. This includes any community cards used to spell a word.

Each player who played a word in this Word Declaration Phase and has less than two remaining

letter cards draws from the letter deck until they have two letter cards.

EXCHANGE PHASE

At the end of the turn, each player, starting with the First Player and proceeding clockwise, may discard one letter card from their hand and draw the top card of either the letter or action deck. A player can only exchange one letter card in this manner each turn.

Once all players have had an opportunity to exchange a letter card, pass the FIRST PLAYER card to the left and begin a new turn.

WINNING THE GAME

The first player to score 75 or more points wins the game. If more than one player reaches 75 points in the same turn, the player with the highest score wins. If there is a tie for highest score, all tied players share the win.

COMPONENT LIST

- 101 Letter Cards
- 54 Action Cards
- 6 Information Cards
- 1 First Player Card
- 6 Wooden Scoring Cylinders
- 1 Score Tracker

LETTER DISTRIBUTION

The table below shows the number of cards for each letter in the letter deck, their point values, and the number of cards that have “+ ACTION CARD” on them. For example, it shows that there are seven cards for the letter A and that four have a point value of 1, two have a point value of 2 and one has a point value of 3. It also shows that three A cards have “+ ACTION CARD.”

Letter	Quantity	Point Values	+ Action
A	7	4 x 1, 2 x 2, 1 x 3	3
B	2	2 x 5	0
C	3	2 x 3, 1 x 4	0
D	4	3 x 2, 1 x 3	0
E	9	5 x 1, 3 x 2, 1 x 3	4
F	3	2 x 4, 1 x 5	0
G	3	2 x 4, 1 x 5	0
H	5	3 x 1, 2 x 2	2
I	6	3 x 1, 2 x 2, 1 x 3	2
J	1	1 x 7	0
K	1	1 x 6	0
L	4	3 x 2, 1 x 4	0
M	3	2 x 3, 1 x 4	0
N	6	3 x 1, 2 x 2, 1 x 3	2
O	6	3 x 1, 2 x 2, 1 x 3	2
P	2	2 x 5	0
Q	1	1 x 8	0
R	5	3 x 1, 2 x 2	2
S	5	3 x 1, 2 x 2	2
T	8	4 x 1, 3 x 2, 1 x 3	3
U	5	3 x 3, 2 x 4	0
V	2	2 x 6	0
W	3	2 x 4, 1 x 5	0
X	1	1 x 7	0
Y	3	2 x 5, 1 x 6	0
Z	1	1 x 8	0
WILD	2	2 x 0	0