Race to space from your own backyard!

ROCKET
SQUAD ™

A game by
John Shulters
&
Sarah Graybill

FRAGILE

Rulebook
v 1.4.7

Black Straw Games ™

20 min
7+   2-6

OVERVIEW

You and your friends have gathered in the backyard to build cardboard rockets and race them to space! Watch out for your family, pets, and toys in the yard that will mess with your rockets and ruin your plans. The first one of you to build and launch a rocket of each color will trigger the end of the game, but the player who launches the highest scoring rockets will gain all the glory!

Player 1's Booster area

Player 1's building area

draw pile ①

Player 4's building area

Player 4's Booster area

COMPONENTS

100 cards, comprised of:

16 blue Boosters (value 2-5)
**16 green Boosters** (value 3-6)
16 yellow Boosters (value 6-9)
16 red Boosters (value 7-10)

6 wild Boosters (value 4-6)
30 Character & Item cards

Player 2's Booster area

Player 2's building area

② **discard area**

Player 3's building area

A typical 4-player setup

Player 3's Booster area

① **Shuffle** all the cards to form a face-down draw pile within reach of all players.

② **Leave room** for a discard pile next to this stack. (If you ever deplete the draw pile during the game, reshuffle the discards to form a new deck)

③ **Deal 4 cards** to each player

Note: In the rare instance you are unable to legally play cards on your first turn (for example, you have only Character cards) you may discard all cards, redraw a new hand, and immediately play your turn.

ORDER OF PLAY

The player who most recently opened a cardboard box is the starting player. Play progresses clockwise around the table. **On your turn**, you may play as many cards from your hand as you like to build rockets, mess with others, or save for later. **End your turn** by drawing back up to 4 cards in hand.

STARTING ROCKETS WITH BOOSTERS

You may only build one rocket of each color - **Red**, **Yellow**, **Green**, & **Blue**. To start construction on a rocket, you must first place a Booster face-up in front of you. You may place **multiple** Boosters on your turn, but each must be a unique color. White Boosters are "wild" and can be used in place of any color, and you don't need to declare which color it's representing when you place it.
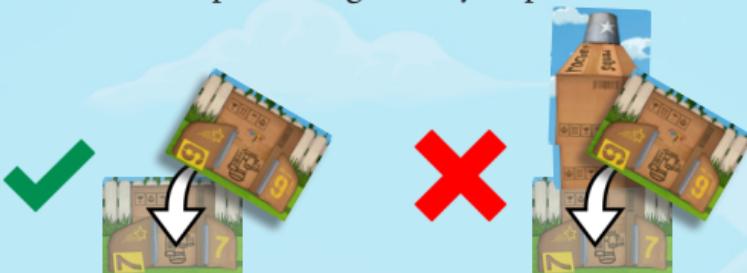
You may replace a Booster with another of the same color (or a "wild" white Booster), but only if there are no boxes on top of it. Discard the old Booster.

BUILDING ROCKETS WITH BOXES

The back of every card in the deck is a cardboard box. These are the components you'll use to build rockets on top of your Boosters. Any card can be used in this way; Character cards, Item cards, and Boosters of any color can be played face-down above any Booster. You may build on as many rockets as you like during your turn.

Every single card in the deck can be used as a box instead of played as its face

This number tells how many boxes must be built on top, and how many points you'll score when launched

The number on the Booster fin indicates how many boxes you'll need to build on top of the Booster to prepare it for launch, as well as how many points you'll score when you launch the rocket. You may never exceed the indicated number of boxes on top of a Booster.

LAUNCHING ROCKETS

Rockets launch as soon as these three criteria are met:
① **Have the required number of boxes on top of a Booster**
② **Have each of the four locations in your Booster area filled with a Booster of unique color (or a wild)**
③ **Make a super-awesome rocket launching noise!**

Launching is immediate and can even happen on another player's turn. Discard the boxes from the top of the Booster face-up in the discard pile and flip the Booster (and any bonus cards) face-down in your Booster area. The points scored by this rocket are now safe (and hidden) for the rest of the game. That color rocket is now complete and you can focus on launching your remaining rockets.

AN EXAMPLE

Here's what your building area may look like in the middle of a game.
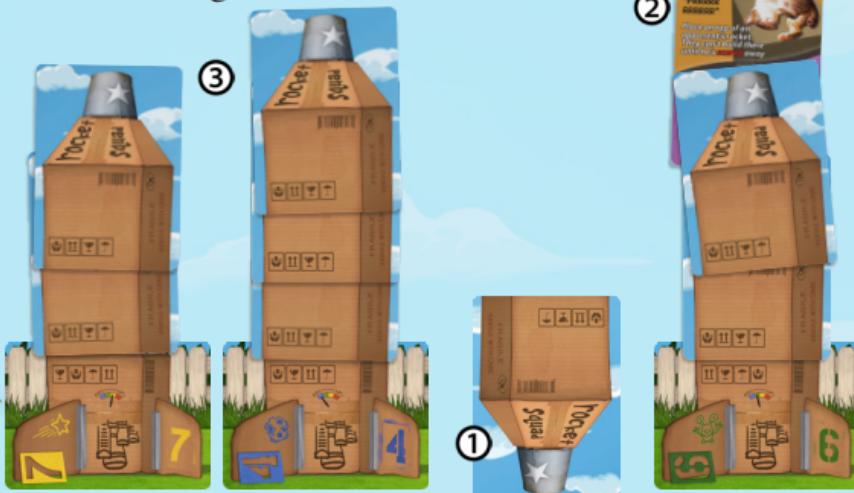
① You were able to launch a **Red** rocket (because you were under construction on one rocket of each color and met the box requirement on the fin). These points are safe and you only have to launch the three remaining rockets to trigger the end of the game.

② However, your **Green** rocket has been stopped by a **Joker** card, so you will have to scare it away with a **Character** or **Item** before you can build on it again!

③ The **Yellow** rocket needs 5 more boxes and the **Blue** rocket only needs 1 more box to launch. These two are the only rockets you can build on for now.

MESSING WITH OTHERS

Building rockets with boxes seems like an easy enough task, but not when other players are sending other people and things in the yard to stop you!

In addition to **Boosters**, you'll find **Character** and **Item** cards in your hand throughout the game. When played on your turn, most of these cards present you with a choice of one of two actions. Orange cards allow you to make an aggressive move (to slow down other players), while Purple and Grey cards are more passive (giving you a direct advantage). Unless stated otherwise, discard these cards when you play them.

A few cards have the ability to block cards played against you (or others players); these cards are played as a reaction during another player's turn. When you play a block card as a reaction, it stops the action from taking effect. After you play (and discard) a block card, you do not redraw a new card to replenish your hand. Only very rare cards can block another block card.

CREW
"GO FOR LAUNCH!"

DUCT TAPE
"STRONG STUFF"

WATER BALLOONS
"HEADS UP!"

JACK
"THAT'S MINE! GIVE IT BACK!"

DAD
"CAREFUL... THAT LOOKS UNSTABLE!"

MOM
"YOU KIDS PLAY NICE!"
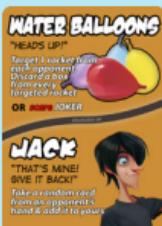
CHARACTER CARDS

DAD

He thinks that rocket is about to fall over!
Target an opponent's rocket. Take one box off the top and immediately build it on top of one of your available rockets.

JACK

He's jealous and is just gonna take your stuff.
Target an opponent with 3 or more cards in their hand. Take one card at random and add it to your hand. You may play the new card immediately on this turn.
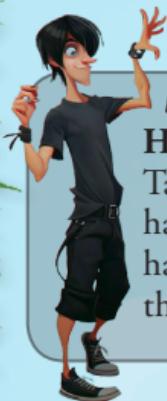
UNCLE

He thinks he can build better than you kids.
Move any number of boxes from one of your rockets to another one of your rockets, making sure not to exceed the limit indicated on the Booster.

JACKIE

She can't seem to mind her own business.
Look at the top 3 cards of the draw pile in secret.
Add 1 of the cards to your hand. Place the other
2 cards face-down underneath the draw pile. You
may play the new card immediately on this turn.

MOM

She just wants you kids to behave.
As a reaction, you may block any Orange card
from taking effect against you. Do not redraw
after playing this card as a reaction.

GRANDMA

She's not a fan of all this hullabaloo.
As a reaction, you may block any Orange or
Purple card from taking effect. Do not redraw
after playing this card as a reaction.

JOKER

Will someone please get that dang cat out of here!?
Target an opponent's rocket. Place **Joker** on top. **Joker** stays there and that player cannot build on top of this rocket until **Joker** is **scared** away (discarded). As a last resort, a player may knock over this rocket to **scare** away **Joker**, discarding all boxes that were on top of that Booster. Once **Joker** is gone, they can resume building this rocket.

Note: **Joker** may be placed on a completed but unlaunched rocket, but not an empty Booster. Also, **Joker** is scared away by any action that would remove boxes from that rocket.

ACE

The dog is knocking over everything!
Target an opponent's rocket. Take all boxes on top of the Booster and starting with the active player, pass those cards around the table, right or left. Each player (including the targeted player) takes 1 box and builds it on an available location until all cards have been built (skip players with no available locations). **OR** **scare** away **Joker** on your turn.

IMAGINARY FRIEND

What do you think you're looking at?
Place this card beside one of your rockets to protect it from being targeted by **Orange** cards for one turn. Discard this card on your next turn.

DUCT TAPE

Gimme more!
Take 2 boxes from the top of the draw pile and build them immediately on top of **one** of your available rockets (you must have room for both boxes).

CREW

We'll need a skilled crew for this mission!
Play when you launch a rocket to add a 2-point bonus to the base value of that rocket. Maximum 1 **Crew** card per launched rocket. Keep the card face-down along with the launched Booster for end game scoring.

WATER BALLOONS

Aack! The rockets are getting soaked!
Target a single rocket belonging to each opponent. Discard a box from every targeted rocket. Boosters and launched rockets cannot be targeted.
OR scare away **Joker** on your turn.

GAME END

The end of the game is triggered as soon as one player has successfully launched 4 rockets (one of each color). Each other player gets one more turn to launch as many of their rockets as they can. Whether you launch all 4 rockets or not, discard all remaining cards in your hand at the end of your turn and do not draw new ones.

Once all final turns have been taken, discard all of your incomplete rockets (these are not scored), flip over your launched Boosters and any bonus cards, and add up your points. The player with the highest total has launched the most impressive rockets and wins the game!

In the case of a tie, the player who launched the tallest rocket wins. If there's still a tie, it's time for a rematch!

Credits

Game Design & Development
John Shulters & Sarah Graybill

Graphic Design
John Shulters

find us online:
blackstrawgames.com
@blackstrawgames

Editor
Sarah Graybill

Black Straw Games

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