

THE TRICK TO SURVIVAL

A semi-cooperative trick-taking game about survival for 2 to 5 players

Setting & Theme

Flora and Fauna have declared war on humanity. Pets all over the world started attacking and killing their owners. Whales turned on their hunters and started coordinated attacks against whaling boats, passenger ships, etc. Deadly mold outbreaks all over the world lead to millions of deaths. Algae found their way into the world largest drinking water reservoirs. Diseases that had been forgotten resurfaced over night. It seems that Nature has had enough of the abuse inflicted on it by humans and decided to get rid of what it considers to be nothing more than a virus attacking it.

In “The Trick To Survival” players take on the role of regular person who has managed to survive nature’s relentless attacks. Whether it is was fate, the will of a greater power or just coincidence, the players all ended up together and have to make their way down river to a safe location. However, humans are flawed and when it comes to survival, people tend to show their worst characteristics.

The main mechanic of the game is “trick-taking”. Players take turns playing cards from their hand into the “trick” in the hopes of gaining resources necessary to survive or become the leader of the group.

Goal of the Game

The general goal of the game is to reach the safe location which is several weeks of travel away (represented by several rounds of play). However each player has a character trait that is kept secret from other players which may modify this general win condition. If things go badly and a player dies, they are not eliminated, instead they become “one with nature” and now actively try to prevent the other players from succeeding.

Components

- A resource deck consisting of 78 resources cards, in 6 suits (Food, Water, Ammo, Medicine, Shelter and Sanity), each suit numbered 1 to 13.
- 25 character trait cards
- An event deck consisting of 30 different encounter cards
- 6 player role cards
- 5 Shelter tokens
- 20 wound tokens
- Leader token
- 150 resource tokens (30 of each resource type: food, water, ammo, medicine, shelter and sanity)

Player roles

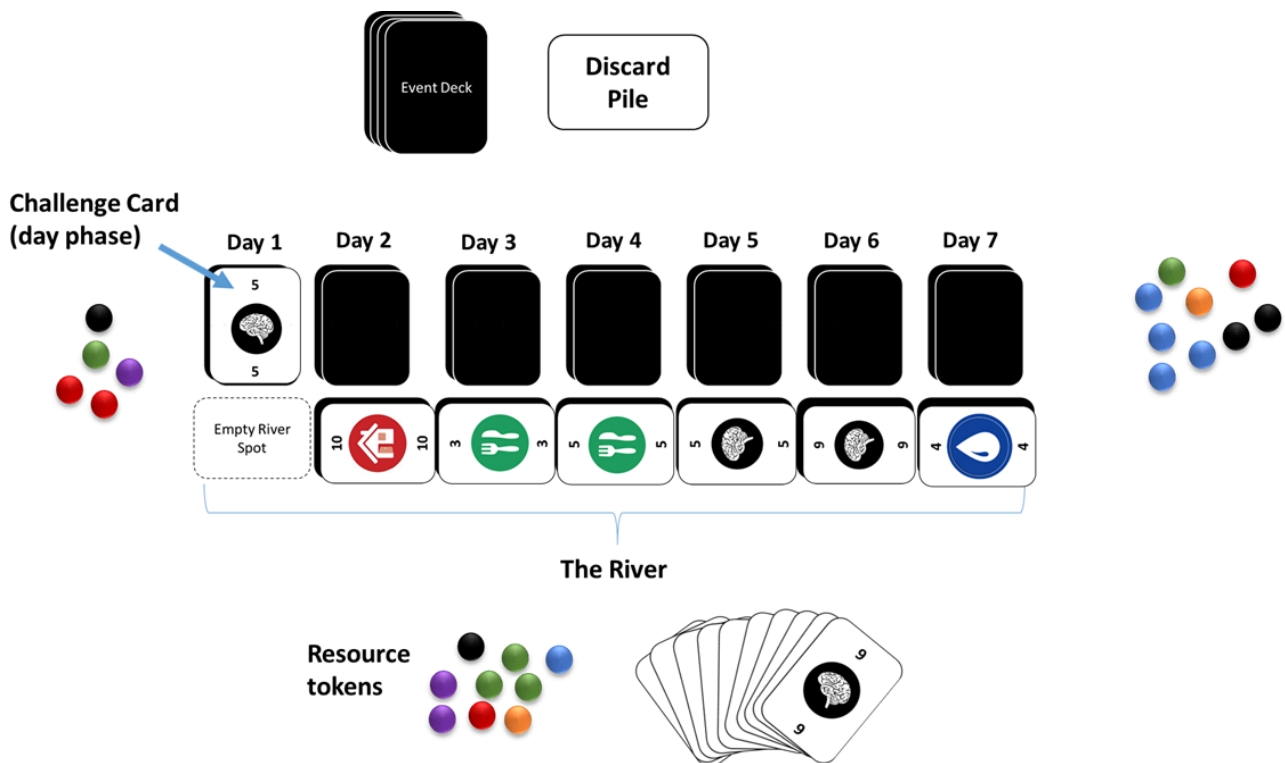
Player roles represent the profession the character had before Nature turned against humanity.. Each role is able to craft one resource type by using two of another resource. For example, the Chemist is able to make 1 medicine resource by expending 2 ammunition resources.

In addition each role specializes in one resource type meaning that whenever they play that type of card into a trick, the value of that card is increased by 1. For example, the dietitian really understands food. So if she for example played a 5 of Food into a trick it would count as a 6 of Food.

Setup

- For 2 or 3 players remove all cards with a value higher than 10 (leaving you with a total of 60 resource cards). They will not be used for the rest of the game.
- The person that would survive the longest in an apocalyptic scenario becomes the first leader. Give that player the "Leader Token". The leader is the player who plays first each round.
- Shuffle the Resource Deck. The Leader deals 10 cards from to each player.
- From the remaining cards, without looking at them, make 7 piles of two cards each, placing the cards face down in a row. The area below each of these piles is called "the river".
- Then distribute the last remaining resource cards into the river (the area below the row of two-card-piles you just made) placing them face down but turned sideways. Distribute the cards one at a time moving from one river spot to the next (always skipping the first one) as equally as possible. The top card of each of these piles is placed face up.
- Give each player one of each resource token.
- Shuffle the Event Cards and place them face down on the table.
- Randomly give each player a Personality Trait Card. Only look at your own.
- Put all the wound tokens in a pile where everyone can reach them.

3 Player Setup Example:



Gameplay

A game of The Trick to Survival takes place over 3 gameplay rounds. Each round consists of 7 turns (each turn representing one day) and turns are divided into several phases.

Turn order: Whenever players need to do something in order, always start with the current leader and then move clockwise around the table.

The Phases:

- Morning Phase
 - **Step 1: Reveal the top card of the “challenge pile” for the current day.**
 - **Step 2: Leader decides if the challenge difficulty should be increased (see “Increasing Challenge Difficulty” further below)**
 - **Step 3: In turn order, each player plays one card from their hand considering the following:**
 - Each alive player must follow the suit played by the leader, unless they play a “trump” (a card that matches the suit of the revealed challenge card).
 - If an alive player does not have a card matching the suit of the card played by the leader, they can play any card they want.

- If no player followed the leader's suit, immediately reveal an event card from the top of the event deck and resolve it before continuing.
 - Once each player has played one card, move on to the next step.
 - Step 4: Modify cards: In turn order each player can spend some of their resource tokens to modify the cards played into the trick as follows:
 - Spend two of the same resource tokens to change a card in the trick to the suit of the resources spent. Only one card in total can be modified this way.
 - Spend any number of resource tokens (of any type) to increase the value of a single card in the trick by that same amount.
 - Step 5: Determine the outcome of the challenge as follows:
 - In order for a challenge to be completed successfully the following requirements need to be met:
 - A number of trump cards were played into the trick (a card that had their suit changed is counted with the changed suit in mind) equal to half the number of alive players (rounded down, minimum 1).
 - The sum of all the cards values played into the trick is equal to or greater the value of the challenge card multiplied by the number of players (alive and dead).
 - If successful:
 - The alive player who played the highest ranked card becomes the new leader.
 - Each player takes one resource token of the type matching the card they played.
 - The leader can distribute one bonus token for each card played corresponding to the suits of cards played. The leader can distribute these bonus resources anyway they want (meaning they could take them all if they wanted to).
 - If failed:
 - Each player still takes one resource token of the type they played.
 - No bonus resource tokens are collected.
 - Each alive player takes one wound token. The leader MAY choose one alive player (including themselves) to not take a wound this challenge.
 - Step 6: Discard all cards played during this challenge as well as the challenge card that had been revealed for this challenge.
- Noon Phase
 - In turn order, each player MAY do ONE of the following:
 - Take the top card from the river section under the current day OR
 - Place a card from your hand into the river section for the next day's challenges and immediately use the "suit action" associated with the suit of the card discarded (see "Suit Actions" below). The card should be

placed face up on top of any other cards that may already be in that river section.

- **Night Phase**
 - Step 1: Reveal the second card of the challenge pile for the current day.
 - Step 2: Leader decides if the challenge difficulty should be increased (see “Increasing Challenge Difficulty” further below).
 - Step 3: Players play cards into the trick just as during the morning phase, with the difference that all players play their cards face down in secret.
 - Step 4: Determine whether or not the challenge was successful or not and assign resources and wound tokens accordingly in the same way you would do during the morning phase. Note that the leader can only change during the morning phase.
 - Step 5: Discard all cards played into the trick as well as the challenge card.
- **End Phase**
 - Each player must discard one of each of their resource tokens (skip this step on the first day). Each time they would have to discard a resource token but can't, they take 1 wound token. If a player ever has 7 or more wound tokens they are dead and are now “one with nature”, actively seeking to eliminate the other players (see the “Player Death” section for more info).

Suit Actions

Depending on whether or not the player using a suit action is alive or dead the effect is different. Only one suit action for each suit can be activated each day. So if one player (alive or dead) uses the Food suit action, no other player can use a food suit action that day.

Note that suit actions cannot make a player discard a resource token of a resource they have 0 of.

SUIT	ALIVE PLAYER	DEAD PLAYER
Food	You gain two food and another player has to discard one food token (leader decides who).	The player with the most food takes one wound.
Water	You can switch a card in your hand with the top card of any of the river sections.	The player with the least water takes one wound.
Ammunition	Take one resource token from another alive player	Target player with 3 or more ammunition tokens gains a wound token
Shelter	Take a “Shelter Token”. If you would receive a wound token you may discard the shelter token instead of taking the wound. Players can only have one shelter token at a time.	Target player with less than 4 shelter tokens takes one wound.

Sanity	Choose a card in your hand and give it to another player. Then take a card at random from that player's hand.	Look at a card at random in target player's hand. If that card is of the Sanity Suit, that player takes two wounds.
Medicine	Remove one wound token from target player.	Target player that has at least one wound, takes another wound token.

Increase Challenge Difficulty

Before any cards are played during a challenge the leader may choose to increase the difficulty of the challenge by increasing the multiplier. The maximum multiplier is double the number of players. So for example, in a 3 player game the normal difficulty for a challenge is to multiply the number value on the challenge card by 3 (the number of players). However the leader can choose to increase this multiplier and set it to 4, 5 or 6 (the maximum). They can consult with the other players but the decision lies solely with the leader. For each increase in multiplier the leader can distribute one additional resource of any type matching one of the suits played during this challenge.

Maximum Resources

Players cannot have more than 6 of any one resource token type. This means that a player that has reached its maximum for a resource type cannot be assigned that resource or gain additional one in any way.

Not enough resources

Any time a player has to discard one of their resource tokens but cannot do so, they take one wound for each resource cost they could not pay.

Player death

If a player at any point has 7 or more wounds they die. Once eliminated they can choose to reveal their "Character Trait" card to the other players.

A player that dies becomes "one with nature". This means that they now are actively trying to prevent the players from reaching the safe house.

Dead players can take all the actions alive player can with two differences:

- Dead players can only trade with other dead players and alive players can only trade with other alive players.
- Dead players can no longer craft and they do not benefit from the suit specialization granted by the player role card.

When a dead player wins a trick, the alive players do not receive any resources. Instead all cards played into the trick are placed face-up in the “river-slot” for the next day (if it is the last day/turn of the week. discard the cards instead).

What information can be shared?

- Players are able to tell other players about cards they have in their hand, however, they cannot show their cards to other players.
- The **character trait cannot be revealed** until game ends or when a player dies.
- Note that all information that is shared needs to be done so that all players can hear, including any dead players. So it becomes open information.

Winning the game

Any alive character that reaches the safe house and fulfills the requirements of their character trait wins the game.

Any dead players win if none of the players reach the safe house.

There can be multiple winners and multiple losers.