

Special situations...

...for a player who only has **one card** remaining:

- **Card placement phase:** if he is the first player or it reaches his turn, he **MUST** issue a challenge.
- **Revelation phase:** if his revealed card is a Skull, that player is eliminated from the game.

If a player **accidentally reveals** one card on their mat, that card remains visible until the end of the round.

Skull & Roses is a game by Hervé Marly, illustrated par Rose Kipik. Collection edited by Philippe des Pallières.

A big thanks for all the MANY brave playtesters (15 years of perseverance...) and to the real bikers, heroes of the surprise film to be discovered on our web site!

© 2011 - éditions « lui-même », Hervé Marly.
Translation: Eric Harlaux.
Revision: Eric Franklin

Advice

- We do not advise **beginning players** to take part in 3-player games, as it's a game configuration which requires a lot of tactics and which is particularly unforgiving when it comes to mistakes.
- It's very **advantageous** to be the first player. It's worth the trouble of taking risks to get that position, even if it means losing a card.
- Don't hesitate to **bluff** by issuing a challenge or increasing the bet while having just played a Skull. It's the **best way** to reassure the future challenger and have him or her choose your cards only to fail.
- Foster a **mood of anxiety** by commenting on the choices of the challenger.
- As with other confrontation-based games, by the **end** of the game, when there are only a few remaining players with about as many cards, there are winning strategies!
- You can combine **2 Skull & Roses boxes** to play with more than 6 players.

TRADITIONAL VOCABULARY IN SKULL & ROSES:

- *A bet consisting of revealing all cards at the table is called attempting a "burn out".*
- *The second player to speak when a challenge is issued is said to be "under the gun".*
- *The last one to speak before the highest bidder is "the cop".*
- *A player with only one remaining card is "stoned".*



The legend of



Skull & Roses

Traditionally, biker gangs chose their leaders through a merciless contest called "Back on the Pavement", which consisted of seeing who could last the longest while being dragged behind a heavy cylinder... without spilling his beer.

The sorry state of their leather after such trials caused some of them to look for a cheaper alternative, however.

It's during their regular meetings at their favorite bar, the "Skull & Roses", that the more Machiavellian bikers created a fearsome game of bluff which is still used to this day to choose their supreme leader.

Multiple explanatory and crazy videos await you on: skull-and-roses.com

You're sure you can dominate your opponents? Then prove it!





This is an intense **bluff** game which requires nerves of steel, audacity and a nose for subtle strategy.

Each player begins the game with exactly 4 cards:

3 Roses cards and 1 Skull card.



To win the game

a player must manage to do the following twice:

- Make the **most daring bet**,
- Then flip over the corresponding number of cards without **revealing a Skull!**

How much risk are you willing to take?

Too safe and another player will outbid your bet to try and steal victory away from you.

Too risky and you'll run the chance of being defeated by revealing one of those damned Skulls.

Good luck...

Contents

- 6 packs of 4 cards each with identical backs, consisting of 3 Roses cards and 1 Skull card.



- 6 double-sided game mats.
- One rulebook.

Goal of the game

- Win **2 bets**.

Game Set-up

- Each player takes a game mat which is placed in front of them, Skull-side up, and chooses a pack of 4 cards with the same back, which are held in that player's hand, keeping the card faces hidden from the other players.
- A first player is chosen.



1. Start of the hand

Each player secretly **looks** at the hidden face of the cards kept in their hand, then **chooses a single one** to be placed face down on their mat.

2. Placement of cards

Place a card or challenge someone?

The first player can play a second card face-down on top of the first one played.

The player to their left can do the same, **and so on**.

Continue in this way, clockwise, until a player either can **no longer play** or **no longer wants** to continue. When their turn comes to play a card, a player can decide not to play an extra card and can challenge someone instead.

EXAMPLE

The 6 players have placed a card.

Panthers (who is first player) and the next two players have added a second card.

Snakes, the fourth player, would rather issue a challenge.

There are therefore 9 cards currently placed on the mat.

Clarifications:

- **The first player** verifies that the players have all placed their cards before playing.
- Be careful to never reveal the hidden face of your cards.
- Don't hesitate to comment on your opponents, for example by saying "I'm warning you, I'm playing a Skull right now!"
To win, you'll have to gain a psychological edge over your opponents.
- **The first player** can challenge someone as soon as this phase begins, instead of playing a second card.
- Only one card is played at a time.
- The cards are placed on the game mat on top of each other in a way that makes the number of cards present obvious at a glance.
- A player who no longer has any cards in hand **MUST** issue a challenge.

Clarifications:

- **No player can place cards on their mats anymore.**
- A challenge can be issued by offering to flip over just a single card.
- The value of the following bids is open, and doesn't have to increase by only 1 at a time.
- A player who passes cannot bid again.



3. Challenge - Pass or Bid More?

The player who issues the challenge **announces the number of cards** he or she intends to flip over from among all those placed on the play mats of all the players.

Going clockwise, **each player must then:**

- Either **raise** the stakes by increasing the previous bid.
- Or **pass** their turn and push their game mat to the middle of the table.

We continue until all the players have passed except one, **the highest bidder**, called the "challenger".

Werewolves announces: "I bet 2 cards".

Snakes says: "3 cards",

Himself passes and pushes his game mat to the middle of the table.

It's Panthers' turn, who says: "Ice-cold guys, 5 cards".

The other players pass one after the other. Panthers is the challenger.

If he wants to win his bet, Panthers will have to flip 5 cards from the 9 placed on the various game mats... But only Roses!



4. Revelation

The challenger **must reveal** the number of cards from his or her bet while following these rules:

- **The challenger starts by revealing the cards from his or her own mat.**
- On the mats, the cards are revealed in order, **starting from the top.**
- The challenger is **never forced** to reveal **all the cards** placed on the mats of other players.
- The cards are revealed **one at a time.**



Clarification:

- The challenger can, after having revealed his or her own cards, freely choose from which player's cards he or she will flip the remainder of his or her bet, one card at a time.

Panthers will attempt to make his bet.

- 1 He starts by flipping over his own cards: 2 Roses, he hasn't bluffed.
- 2 Then he flips Werewolves' card: it's a Rose. Good show!
- 3 Now Himself's card: it's also a Rose. Good guess!

There's only **one Rose** card missing to win his bet. The suspense is terrible...

- 4 Panthers chooses to flip Eagles' first card (Eagles had placed 2) and falls into a trap! It was a Skull! How sad... the bet is lost!



Panthers has **lost** his bet:

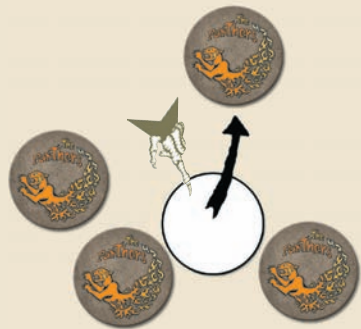
He revealed a **Skull** from **Eagles**.

So it's **Eagles** who'll choose the card to be discarded.

Panthers shuffles his cards and places them face-down on the table.

Eagles chooses one of them.

Panthers secretly checks which card it is and places it face-down in the middle of the table.



Lost Bet

If the challenger reveals a Skull, they have failed and stops flipping cards for their bet **immediately**.

- The players each **take their cards back** into their hands.

- **The challenger loses** one of his cards **for good**. He will be the only one to know if it was a Skull or Roses. If the challenger loses **his last card**, he is **eliminated** from the game and turns in his mat.

Clarifications:

- If the eliminated challenger has revealed his own Skull, he will decide who the first player for the next turn will be.
- Otherwise, the first player for the next turn will be the owner of the revealed Skull.

Clarification:

- The challenger must never reveal the remaining cards, as the strategy of the other players must remain secret. A player can, however, reveal his own cards himself in order to see the possible disconcerted reaction of the challenger...

- **The Skull has been revealed among the cards of an opponent:** the challenger shuffles his cards and places them face down. The opponent randomly selects, without touching it, one card to be discarded. That card is placed in the middle of the table and remains hidden.

- **If the challenger has revealed his own Skull**, the challenger chooses the card to be discarded **himself**, by looking at them, without showing anything to the other players.

In all cases, the challenger will remain the only one to know if the discarded card is a Skull or a Rose.

New turn

Whether the bet has been won or lost, **the challenger is the first player** for the next round, which starts again at phase 1.

Winning bet

If the challenger flips the number of cards called and reveals **only Roses**, the **bet is won** and the challenger **flips** his or her game mat so that the Roses side is visible.



As soon as a player **wins a second bet**, that player **WINS THE GAME**.

Panthers was the challenger, so he'll be the first player for the next turn. It's an advantageous position, so it's up to him to make the most of it!