

CANTANKEROUS CATS

GAME MANUAL

You are a Cat. You live in a House. You share this House with your pet Hoomin. Your goal is to smother this Hoomin with Affection, then cause Mischief around your House.

The first Cat to score 9 Mischief Points wins the game!

NOTE: It is a good idea to set aside an extra 10-15 minutes to learn your first game with new players.

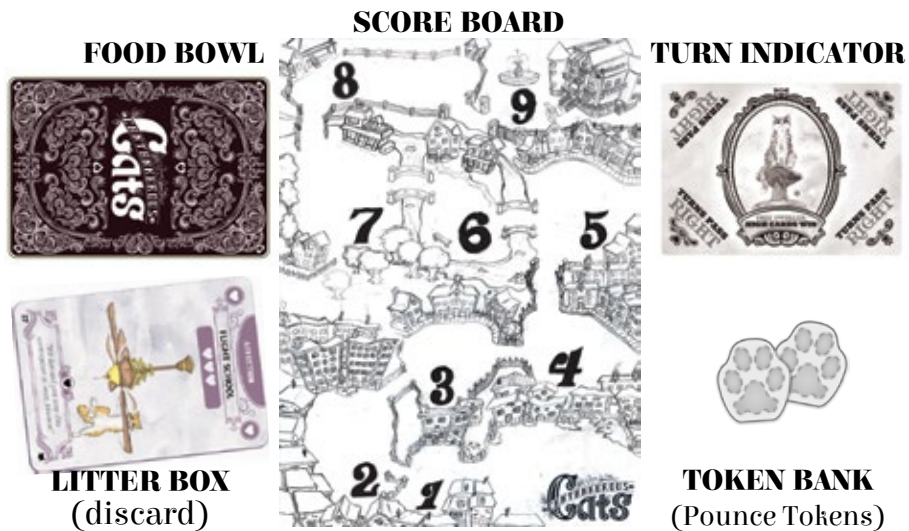
SETTING UP

Set up the table according to “fig 1” on the following page, then distribute these items to each player:

- *ONE Cat Card (Domestic side up)
- *ONE matching Cat Token on the Start Here space.
- *ONE Pounce Token from the Token Bank.
(If this is your first game, you will not use these until you learn the STANDARD GAME on page 8.)
- *SIX cards from the Food Bowl.

NOTE: For added fun and chaos, allow each player to take their OWN six cards from the Food Bowl at the same time!

fig 1 - The Neighborhood

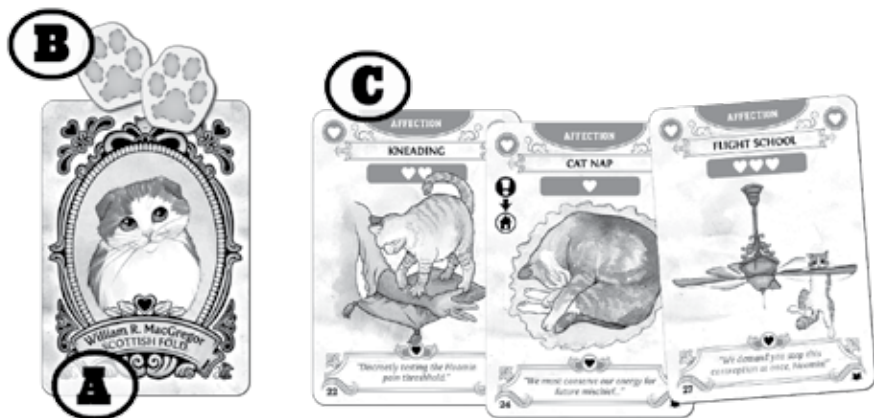


Your House/Territory

The space in front of each Cat is their House. You share this House with your pet Hoomin. Your goal is to bank Affection with this Hoomin in order to score Mischief.

If you try to score Mischief without building enough Affection, you will be banished from your House as a Feral Cat!

fig 2 - Your House



A: Cat Card - **B:** Pounce Tokens - **C:** Play Area

NOTE: A DOMESTIC CAT'S play area is called their House. A FERAL CAT'S play area is called their Territory.

Card Types

There are THREE types of cards you will encounter in a game of Cantankerous Cats:

fig 3 - Card Types



AFFECTION CARDS:

The lavender cards are Affection Cards. The amount of Affection is represented by the number of hearts at the top of the card. These cards are banked in your house until they are spent.

NOTE: Affection Cards do NOT make change. You must spend the entire card at once.

MISCHIEF CARDS:

If you have Affection banked in your House, you may play a burgundy Mischief Card to score Mischief Points. The paws on the top represent the SCORE and the slashed hearts near the bottom are the COST. In order to score, you must pay the cost by discarding banked Affection Cards.

NOTE: If you are ever unable to pay for a Mischief Card, you will lose ALL of your banked Affection and become FERAL.

INCIDENT CARDS:

Green "Event" and Yellow "Frenzy" cards are rule-breaking cards that do not cost any Affection to play. Follow the instructions written on the card, then place the card into the Litter Box.

The First Bite

To determine the starting player, every Cat must bet one card from their hand to get the First Bite of the Food Bowl. Check the Turn Indicator to see whether HIGH RANK or LOW RANK cards win.

NOTE: To add some variety, you may flip the Turn Indicator like a coin to determine the direction of play at the start of the game.

To see a card's RANK, check the number in the bottom left corner. When you have made your decision, place your bet FACE DOWN in your House. When everyone has placed a bet, reveal the cards. The Cat with the winning card takes the First Bite and the Cat Toy. Discard all the bets in the Litter Box.

The game can now proceed.

All players start as a Domestic Cat. The first Cat to score NINE Mischief Points while holding the Cat Toy wins the game!

NOTE: The best way to learn the game is to use the Basic Game rules, then introduce the Standard Game after all players are comfortable.

THE BASIC GAME

The Domestic Turn

1. Meal Time: Take the Cat Toy, then draw THREE cards from the top of the Food Bowl. (Om, nom, and nom!) Declare that you are taking cards to your fellow Cats.

2. Play Time: After you have drawn three cards, you MUST take TWO ACTIONS from the following list:

NOTE: Every Action you take in this game MUST be declared. You may not take your Actions in secret. You may NOT play Actions simultaneously.

a. Bank ONE Affection Card: Play ONE Affection Card into your House or Territory. Affection Cards remain there until they are spent or discarded.

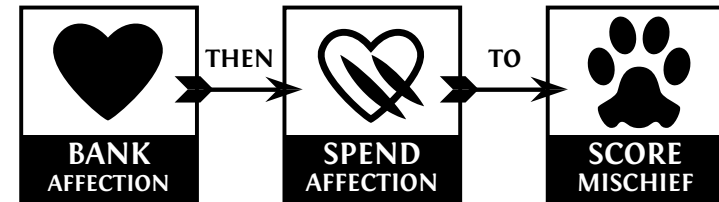
b. Score ONE Mischief Card: Play ONE Mischief Card into your House. You must pay the COST at the bottom of the card by moving banked Affection Cards into the Litter Box. Move your Cat Token the appropriate number of spaces on the Score Board, then place the Mischief Card in the Litter Box.

c. Play ONE Incident Card: Follow the directions on the card. Place the card into the Litter Box after it has been resolved.

d. Picky Eater: Place your hand of cards into the Litter Box, then take an equal number from the top of the Food Bowl.

f. Buy ONE Pounce Token: If you are playing the Standard Game, you may buy Pounce Tokens from the Token Bank. To do this, place TWO cards from your hand into the Litter Box.

fig 4 - Core Concept



NOTE: You MAY choose to take the same Action TWICE.

3. Grooming Time: When you have completed TWO Actions, discard down or draw up to the hand limit of FIVE cards.

NOTE: If the Food Bowl is empty, reshuffle all of the cards in the Litter Box to make a new Food Bowl. You must wait until a new card needs to be drawn from an empty Food Bowl before reshuffling.

4. Nap Time: Wake the next Cat in the neighborhood with a hearty "Meow!" before taking a well deserved nap.

Pass the Cat Toy to the next player.

NOTE: For a simple game, you may keep playing with the Basic Game and ignore all card text that refers to Feral Cats or Pounce Tokens. Remove the following cards from the deck: *Enemy of My Enemy* (36), *Scavenger* (76), *Animal Control* (83), *Escape* (4), and *Adoption Day* (5, 84). Skip to page 8.

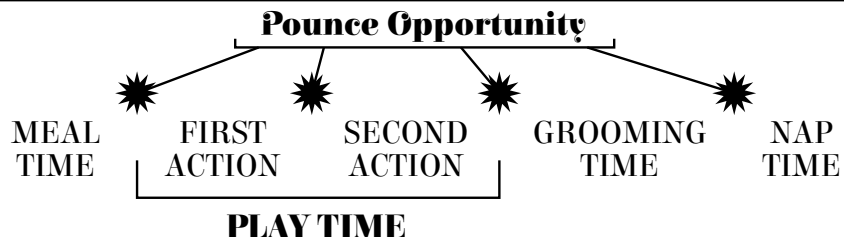
If everybody feels comfortable with the Basic Game; it's time to learn about Pounce Tokens and Feral Cats!

THE STANDARD GAME

The Pounce

You may Pounce on the Cat Toy by saying “Pounce,” then placing your Pounce Token on the Cat Toy. There are two ways you can Pounce:

Fig 5 - When to Pounce



1. ATTACK with a Mischief Card: You may attack the Cat holding the Cat Toy with a Mischief Card. The target Cat must pay the cost of this card using the Affection banked in their House. If they are unable to pay for the card, the target Cat loses ALL of their Affection and becomes a Feral Cat. (See pg. 7) The attacker does not score any Mischief Points. **IF** the target successfully pays the cost of the Mischief Card, they score HALF of the card’s value rounded DOWN.

2. PLAY ONE Incident Card: You may play any Event or Frenzy Card. Follow the instructions on the bottom of the card.

The Counter

If you are the target of a Pounce, you may spend your Token to Counter. You have two options to Counter:

1. BANK Affection Cards: You may bank any amount of Affection Cards from your hand to meet the cost of a Mischief Card played against you.

2. PLAY ONE Incident Card: You may choose to play an Event or Frenzy Card from your hand. Follow the instructions on the bottom of the card.

NOTE: You are never REQUIRED to Counter. You may choose to save your Pounce Token and accept the consequences of a Pounce.

POUNCE TOKEN GENERAL RULES:

1. You may hold multiple Pounce Tokens. As long as there is a Token in the Bank, you may purchase one as an Action.
2. You may NOT replenish your hand after performing a Pounce or Counter.

NOTE: It IS possible to have ZERO cards in your hand during your turn. If this ever happens and you must take an action, the only Action you can take is “Picky Eater” for ZERO cards.

POUNCE RULES:

1. You may only Pounce on the Cat who is holding the Cat Toy unless you are FERAL. (see “Feral Cats”)
2. Pounces cannot cancel a card that has already been placed on the table unless an Incident Card allows it.

COUNTER RULES:

1. Cats cannot win a game with a Counter. If you would have scored enough points to win, you score ZERO Mischief Points.

Feral Cats

If you cannot pay for a Mischief Card placed in your House, you will be forced to wander the streets as a Feral Cat! Discard ALL of your banked Affection and continue the game with these modifications:

1. HOMELESS: Since you do not have a Hoomin to interact with, the following conditions apply:

***Limited Food:** Place TWO of the three cards you draw during Meal Time into the Litter Box.

***Pounce Tokens:** Pounce Tokens cost THREE cards.

***Blameless:** You cannot be attacked with Mischief Cards. You are not able to score Mischief Points.

***Troublemaker:** You may attack any Domestic Cat as an Action. You do not need a Pounce Token for this.

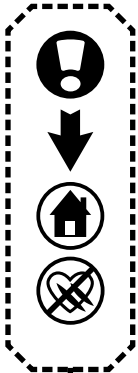
2. ADOPTION CHECK: If you have FOUR Affection Points in your Territory at the start of your turn, you IMMEDIATELY continue playing as a Domestic Cat.

NOTE: When you are Adopted, KEEP ALL of your banked Affection.

Instant Actions

Instant Actions are BLACK and WHITE icons at the top left of some cards. They represent opportunities to sneak in an extra card or two during the course of the game.

Fig 6 - Instant Actions



If ANY Player uses this Card Type:



AFFECTION



MISCHIEF



EVENT



FRENZY



DOG

You may INSTANTLY do this:



BANK or SCORE
in your HOUSE



PLAY



AT
NO COST

FOR EXAMPLE:

When an EVENT card is played, you may BANK or SCORE this card for NO AFFECTION COST

NOTE: Instant Actions can trigger each other! Use this to your advantage for big plays during your turn.

Winning the Game

When a Cat is about to score their NINTH point, they must announce their intention to the neighborhood. There will be one final chance for any Cats with Pounce Tokens to perform a Pounce AFTER the winning card is played. If no one can prevent the victory, the game ends.

The winning point MUST be scored by playing a Mischief Card in your House while holding the Cat Toy.

FERAL VICTORY: In the STANDARD GAME a Feral Cat may claim victory if they manage to Bank NINE Affection Points while holding the Cat Toy. If a Feral Cat is about to claim victory, they must also give every player with a Pounce Token the opportunity to prevent the victory.