Dickory

A Circuitous Climbing Game for Two Cantankerous Card Players

Object

Be the first to empty your hand of cards.

Equipment

A [clock board](#) and [Dickory](#) (the mouse).
A pack of 48 cards with twelve ranks and four copies of each rank. (*If your deck has suits, ignore the suits*).

In general, the cards rank, from low to high:

```
(low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 (high)
```
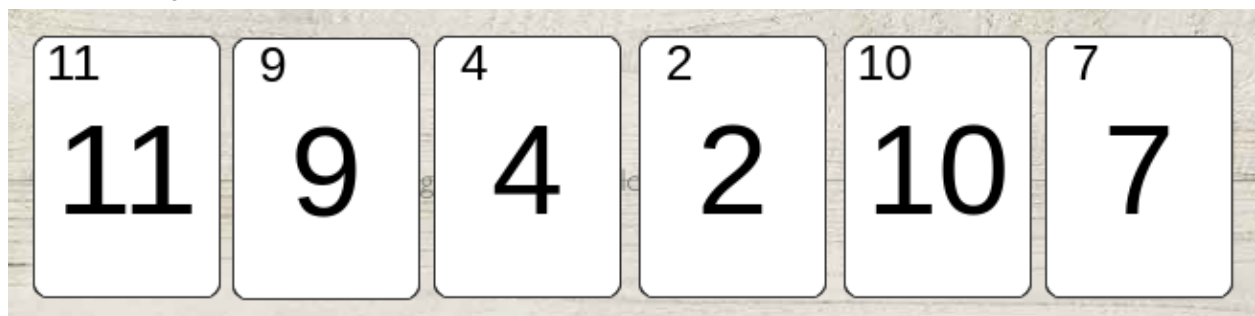
However, during gameplay, both players will reposition Dickory to manipulate this ordering.

Deal

Pick a dealer. Shuffle the cards. Deal **11 cards** to each player; then deal **6 cards** face up in a row to the table (*these cards are called **the queue***). Set the remaining cards aside, face-down, as a **draw pile**.

The Queue

The **rightmost** card in the queue determines the current highest rank for the round. Point *Dickory* at this number on the clock.

EXAMPLE

If the following ranks are in the queue, **11 9 4 2 10 7**, then **7** is the rightmost and its rank becomes the current highest. The current highest card re-orders the ranks. In the case of **7** being the highest, the new ranking follows:

```
(low) 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (high)
```

If the ranks in the queue were **4 10 2 2 12 10**, the new highest card is **10**. The new ranking would be:

```
(low) 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (high)
```


On Your Turn

The non-dealer has the first lead.

If you have the lead, you **must play a meld** (*a combination of cards*) from your hand. You may lead a:

SINGLE: One (1) card.

DOUBLE: Two (2) cards of the same rank.

TRIPLE: Three (3) cards of the same rank.

QUAD: Four (4) cards of the same rank.

RUN: Exactly three (3) cards of consecutive rank. (*Suits do not matter*).

If you do not have the lead, you must do **one** of the following actions:
1. Beat the previous meld.
2. Take cards from the queue & beat the previous meld.
3. Pass & refill the queue.

1. Beat the Previous Meld

Play a meld of the same type as was led to start the round but with cards of higher rank than the last one played.

RANK ORDER
The rank order of the cards depends on the rightmost card in the queue. If the queue contains **4 12 5 7 11 2**, for example, the rank order is:

```
(low) 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 (high)
```

The lowest meld of each type would be:

SINGLE: 3
DOUBLE: 3-3
TRIPLE: 3-3-3
QUAD: 3-3-3-3
RUN: 1-2-3
(The rank of a run is always determined by its last, or rightmost, card)

Play a meld with a rank of **4** or higher to beat these.

The highest meld of each type would be:

SINGLE: 2
DOUBLE: 2-2
TRIPLE: 2-2-2
QUAD: 2-2-2-2
RUN: 12-1-2

So long as the rightmost card in the queue remains unchanged, **you cannot beat this meld**.

But! The queue can change…

2. Take Cards From the Queue & Beat the Previous Meld

You may take the rightmost card from the queue into your hand. And you may continue to take the rightmost card from the queue as many times as you wish (*possibly up to 5 cards*) but you may never take its last (or **leftmost**) card.
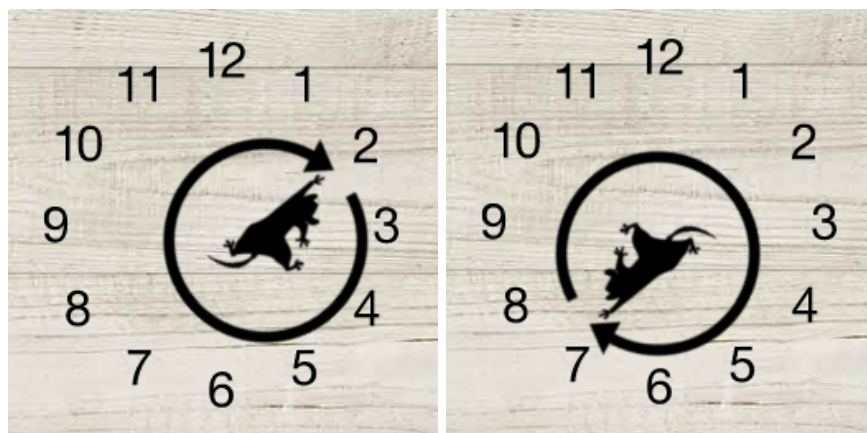
Taking cards from the queue can change the rank order of the cards.

Using the queue from our previous example, **4 12 5 7 11 2**, if you take the **2** & **11** into your hand, the queue becomes **4 12 5 7,** and the rank order switches from:

       (low) 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 (high)

to:

       (low) 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (high)

After taking cards from the queue, you **MUST** beat the previous meld. (***If you cannot beat the previous meld, you CANNOT take this action!***). You are **NOT** required to use the cards that you took from the queue in the new, higher meld.

For example, if the previous meld was **2–2** when the rightmost card was a **2** (*making 2-2 unbeatable*), you take the **2** & **11** from the queue so that the rightmost card is a **7**, and you can now beat the previous meld by playing **3–3**, **4–4**, **5–5**, **6–6**, or **7–7**.

3. Pass & Refill the Queue

If there is no way for you to beat the previous meld--or you choose not to--you can pass by saying "Pass".

If there is only one card in the queue and you cannot beat the previous meld, you MUST pass.

When you pass, if there is more than one card in the queue, discard the rightmost card. If there is only one card in the queue, do not discard it.

Shift any cards remaining in the queue over to the right, and then add cards (from the draw pile) to the left side of the queue until it has 6 cards (or until the draw pile is empty). **Passing is the only way to refill the queue.**

If the queue was **4 12 5 7** and a player passed, the **7** would be discarded, the **5** would be the current highest card, and three cards would be added to the queue behind (to the left of) **4 12 5**, provided that there were at least three cards in the deck. If there were fewer than three cards in the deck, all remaining cards would be added to the queue.

If the queue was just a single **7**, it would not be discarded and five cards (or all remaining cards if fewer than five remained in the deck) would be added to the queue behind the **7**, and it would remain the highest card.

When the deck becomes empty you no longer add cards to the queue. From this point, when you pass, if there is more than one card in the queue, discard the rightmost; if there is only one card in the queue, do NOT discard it.

Discard all cards played to the previous round. Whoever played the last meld now has the lead, and must play a meld to start a new round.

Round End

A round is played with each player taking turns to do one of the actions outlined above. The round ends after one player chooses (or is forced) to Pass. The other player leads to start a new round.

Continue playing until one player empties their hand of cards.

Game End

If you empty your hand of cards, the game ends immediately. You win!
If you want to have a longer session, switch dealers and play a match (*Best of 3*).

Hickory Variant

This variant provides a slightly different experience from the main game.

Additional Melds
Two new meld types are added to the game. You may now also play a:

STEP: Exactly two (2) cards of consecutive rank. (*Suits do not matter*).

BOBTAIL: Exactly four (4) cards of consecutive rank. (*Suits do not matter*).

In the cases outlined below, you may now alter the previous meld by adding one (1) card to it:
1. If the previous meld was a single, double, or triple, you can beat the previous meld by playing a higher ranking meld of the same type OR you may now add one card to the previous meld to form a double, triple, or quad.
2. If the previous meld was a single, step, or run, you can beat the previous meld by playing a higher ranking meld of the same type OR you may now add one card to make it a step, run, or bobtail.

You cannot add a card to a quad or to a bobtail; you would have to beat these melds with a higher-ranking meld of the same type.

Credits

Designers:
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Playtesters:
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Need a Theme?

*You are competitive weird sisters preparing strange brews over a wood-fired cauldron inside your cozy cottage, nestled at the heart of the Old Forest. The potency of ingredients you cast into the bubbling broth depends greatly on their freshness. But who has time to wait for each ingredient to be in season? Pah!! Your shared familiar, Dickory the Mouse, manipulates **The Clock of Seasons** at your command, rolling the entire world backward and forward in time to suit your petty and fleeting needs. And then the ever-faithful — but never appreciated — little mouse does the same again; this time to your sister's benefit.* "Dickory!!!"