



# Acorn Run Rulebook

# In this rulebook

Introduction .....	1
Contents & game elements .....	2-3
Setup .....	4-5
Goal of the game .....	6
Turn .....	7-13
End of the game: the finale .....	14
Example turns .....	15-17
Solo & 2 player rules .....	18-23
Dummy example turns .....	24-25
Commonly overlooked rules .....	26
Dummy actions summary .....	27
All card effects and acorn actions .....	28

## No time to read the rules?

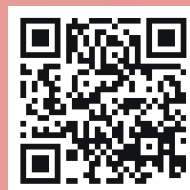
Watch a short video to get started in no time

**Watch setup video**



Scan the QR code or search on  
YouTube for "How to setup a  
game of Acorn Run"

**Watch rules video**



Scan the QR code or search on  
YouTube for "How to play  
Acorn Run"

# Introduction

It's that time of the year again: the famous Acorn Run is about to start. And this year you're competing too.

You have trained all year and couldn't be more ready, but... the competition looks fierce. Nicky is known for her speed and you realise she may be hard to beat. And Sanye was last year's crowd's favourite, showing off his acrobatic combo jumps.

*"Remember", your father reminds you, "that it's the combination that counts. Finishing the race is only half the event. Only when the jury points are announced, and the combo victory points are tallied up, the true winner will be determined."*

In Acorn Run you are all squirrels competing in a race through the treeline.

Finish the race early to earn race victory points (Race VPs). When jumping from tree to tree, do mid-air combo tricks to be awarded combo victory points (Combo Vps).

Who is the fastest and will cross the finish line first? Who will become the crowd's favourite by showcasing the most spectacular combos? And who will eventually win the entire event?

Let's all gather at the Great Oak and find out!



## Great oak



# Contents & game elements

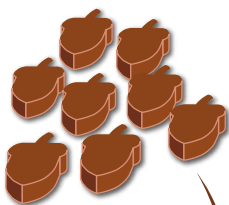
## 6 Squirrel pawns

Each player controls a squirrel pawn to move around the race track.



## 64 Acorns

Collect acorns by moving across the race track and performing combo jumps.



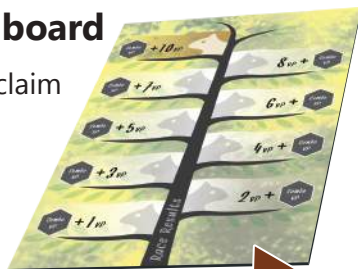
## 6 Player boards

Place collected acorns on your personal player board to activate special actions.



## 1 Race Results board

Finish the race and claim Race VPs by placing your pawn on the highest available space on this board.



## 6 Running-out-of-time tokens

After the first player finishes its race, one of these tokens is placed each round on the Race Results board, blocking off the highest Race VPs.



## 72 Combo VP tokens

Collect Combo VPs by performing spectacular jumps. Keep these tokens face down until the end of the race.



## 6 starter card sets

Each player starts with a personal deck containing the same 10 starter cards. Every turn your 6-card hand allows you to move on the branches and make combo jump from tree to tree.



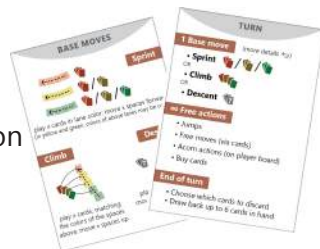
## 84 Market cards

Expand and personalise your deck by acquiring new cards. The market is divided into 2 rows of 3 cards each (3 cheap cards and 3 expensive cards).



## 6 Double sided player aids

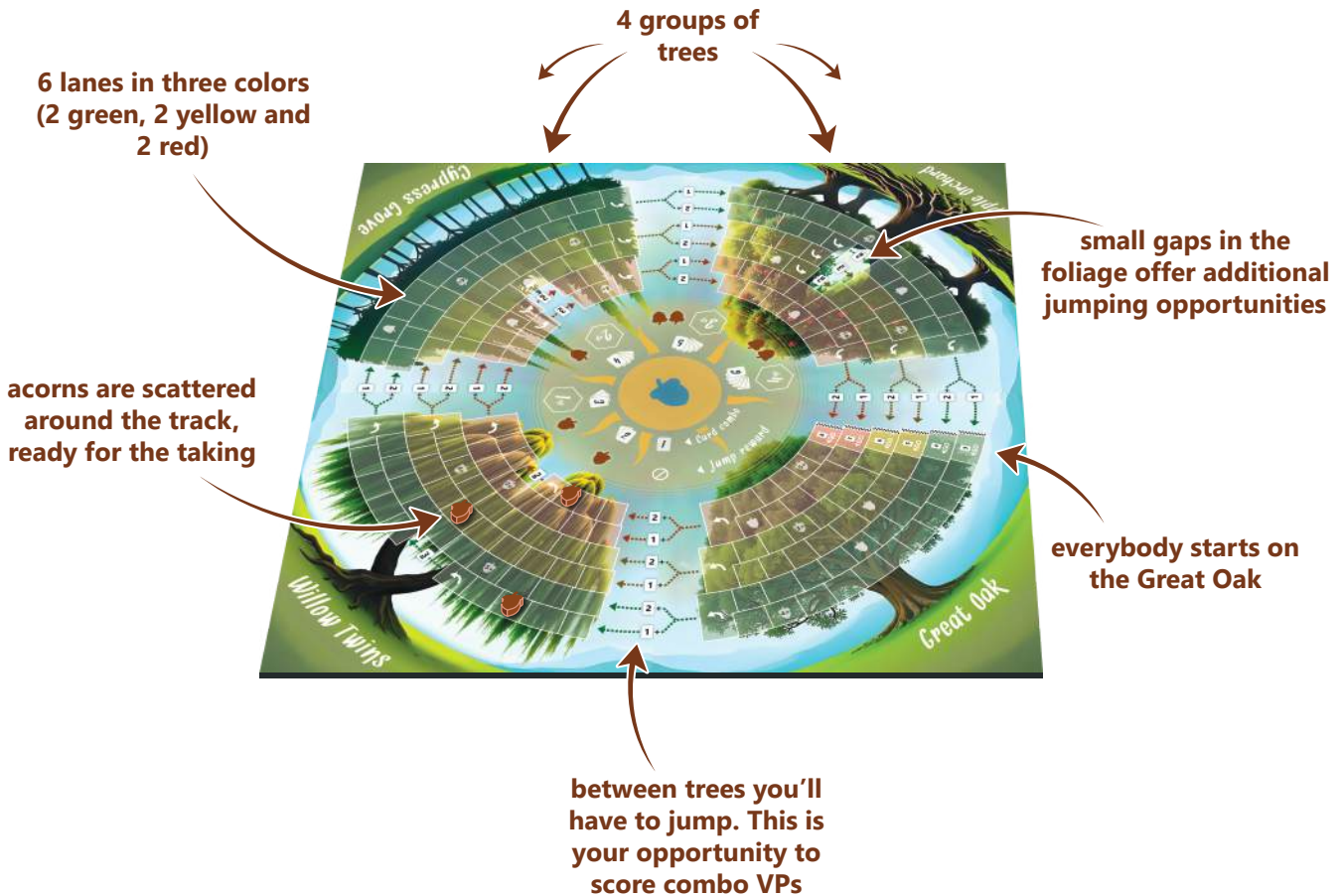
The most important rules are summarized on these handy player aid cards.



## 1 Race track board

The race is held on this circular race track. Each player will start on a different lane, but is able to freely move across the various lanes during the race to find their preferred path.

The lane colors represent the thickness of the local branches: thick branches (green lanes) are easy to traverse, while thin branches (red lanes) require more skill.



## 40 Dummy squirrel cards

In solo and 2-player games you'll play against dummy squirrels. Their game actions are represented by these cards.



# Setup

1

Place the main board in the centre of the table. Place the Race Results board and "Running out of time" tokens nearby.

2

Place an acorn on each track space with an acorn symbol. If a number is depicted, leave the space empty if it's higher than the number of players.

3

Place the remaining acorns and the Combo VP tokens in the marked areas, in the centre of the board.

4

Shuffle the cheap cards (values 1 and 2) and the expensive cards (values 3 and 4) into 2 separate market decks.

Lay out 3 face up cards per market deck.







8

Each a player draws their opening hand of cards from their personal deck, as indicated on their starting space (4, 5 or 6 cards).



**In all future turns, each player will draw (up to) 6 cards. Only the first turn of the game is an exception. This balances out the first player advantage.**

7

The person who last ate a nut is the starting player. They place their pawn on the lowest **Go!** space, on the Great Oak.

Going clockwise around the table, each player places its pawn on the lowest empty **Go!** space.

6

Give each player 1 acorn.

5

**Each player:** choose a color, take the corresponding pawn and place the matching player board in front of you. Also take a starting deck, shuffle it, and place it face down next to your player board (at the "Deck" side).



Prefer video?  
**Watch setup video**



Scan the QR code or search on YouTube for "How to setup a game of Acorn Run"

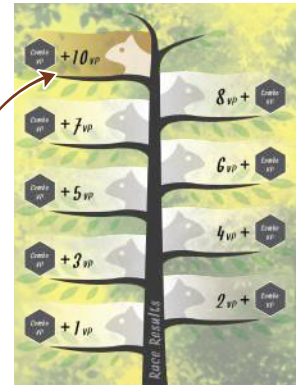
# Goal of the game

In Acorn Run you move on the race track to try and finish the race as fast as possible, by crossing the finish line on the Great Oak. You score race victory points (Race VPs) for your race result.

You can score additional combo victory points (Combo VPs) by creating card combos during your jumps. The more cards you chain in a single combo, the more combo VPs you earn. Keep these VP tokens face down so that their value stays hidden for the other players. You may look at your own combo VPs at any time during the game.

When all players have finished the race, everybody reveals their combo VPs and adds them up to their race VPs. **The player with the most total victory points, wins the game!**

1st place earns you 10 race VPs!



you earned 7 combo VPs so far from your combo jumps



keep these face down to surprise your opponents at the end





# Turn

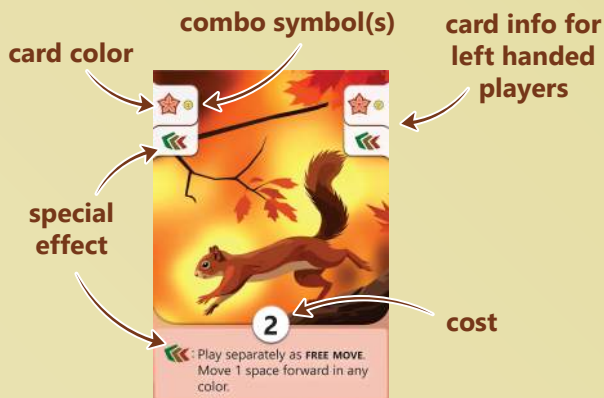
During your turn you can **move your pawn**, **spend acorns** and **buy cards**. All actions are optional, and can be done in any order.

Most actions are activated by playing or discarding cards from your hand, so let's have a look at all card features first.

## Cards

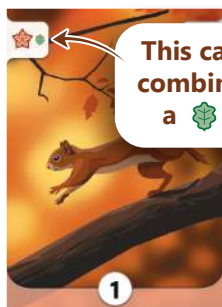
All cards have a color (🌿, 🌾, 🌸) and a cost of 1 to 4. (starter cards have no cost)

Many cards have combo symbols and / or special effects.

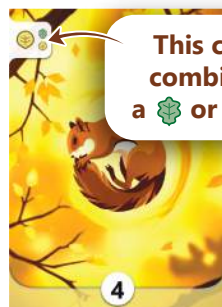


## Combo symbols

Combo symbols are displayed next to the color symbol. These indicate which color(s) the card can combo with during a jump (see further in **Free actions > Jump**).



This card can combine with a 🌿 card

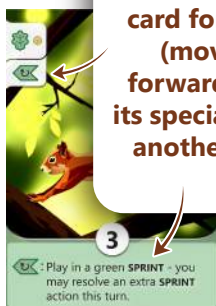


This card can combine with a 🌿 or a 🌾 card

## Special effect

Many cards have a special effect - which is indicated with an icon and explained in detail at the bottom of the card.

Some special effects apply when the card is used for a specific action. In other cases you must play the card separately for its special effect only.



When you play this card in a sprint, it counts as a green card for your sprint (move 1 space forward), as well as its special effect (play another sprint this turn)



Play this card separately to move up as a free action, then discard it. It cannot be used again this turn for another action (for a sprint for example)

Alternatively, you can always choose to ignore the special effect and use a card for its color (in base moves) or combo symbols (in jumps) (see next sections).

## Acorn cards

Cards with an acorn symbol don't have a color. They only have a special effect and can therefore not be used in main moves or combos.

They can however still be discarded to purchase cards.



### Big acorn

Resolve an unused Acorn action from your player board.

- This allows you to activate Acorn actions on your player board without spending an acorn from your supply.
- Only player board actions spaces that are still empty can be chosen to activate. If your player board is completely filled, this card doesn't have any effect.
- You don't receive a column bonuses when choosing the last empty action space of a column.



### Small acorn

Resolve an unused Acorn action from your player board. Then trash this card.

- Works in the same way as the Big acorn
- You must immediately remove the card from the game, after you used it (once)
- If you don't use the effect, but eg. discard it to purchase a card, the effect is not activated and thus the card is not removed from the game.



### Oops - I dropped one!

Move 1 space in any direction. Then, take one acorn off of your player board and place it on the space you just left.

- Moving backwards is not allowed - only forwards, upwards or downwards
- You may not pick up your own acorn again, in the same turn, by eg. moving upwards and then downwards
- If you had a full column of acorns on your player board, and you choose to take 1 off, later you can receive the column bonus again when completing the column once more

# Move your pawn

Each turn you may do **1 main move**.

Additionally, do as many jumps and other free moves as explained further in the section **Free actions**. All your moves can be done in any order, as long as you complete each separate move before starting another.

If you end a move on a space containing an acorn, you may collect it into your supply. Acorns can be spent the turn you collect them or saved up to use in future turns.

You may move onto and through other pawns as long as you end your turn on an empty space. Exception: the big vertical "jump-off" spaces may contain an unlimited number of pawns.

## Main moves

There are 3 different main moves:

- **Sprint**
- **Climb**
- **Descend**

## Sprint

Play cards of the same color, and move that many spaces forward on your current lane. You may play cards of the color lane you sprint in, or colors from one of the lanes above you.

- In green lanes: play 🍀, 🌱, or 🌸 cards
- In yellow lanes: play 🌱 or 🌸 cards
- In red lanes: play 🌸 cards only

Regardless of which lane you're sprinting in, **cards of only 1 color may be played to sprint**.

If you played a card with a "sprint again" special effect during a sprint, you may do another sprint during that same turn. **This exceptionally exceeds the 1 main move per turn rule.**

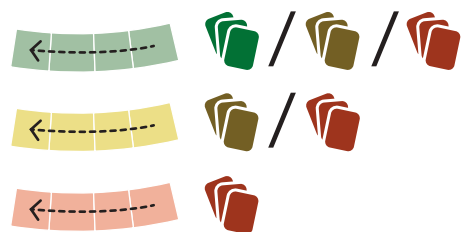
Ember (red) could do a free move downwards, joining Bolt (yellow) temporarily, and then do a Sprint forward of 3 spaces, grabbing the acorn



Bloom (pink) may move into the jump-off space, joining Twinkle and Tail, and end her turn there



**You may only resolve 1 main move during your turn.**



**Only an extra sprint can be performed this way. Not a climb, nor a descend.**



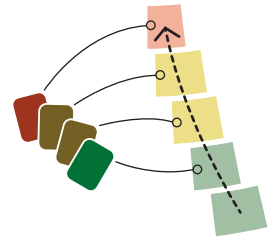
## Example

[TO DO: add example]

## Climb

Move your pawn in an upwards direction by playing cards that match the colors of the spaces you move to. Go as high as you wish, as long as you can play matching colors.

You may advance as far forward as possible during a climb, provided that spaces are connected by a horizontal line.



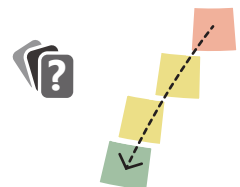
## Example

[TO DO: add example]

## Descend

Play any color of cards to move your pawn in a downwards direction, moving 1 space per card.

You may advance as far forward as possible during a descend, provided that spaces are connected by a horizontal line.



## Free actions

There are 4 types of free actions: **Jump**, **Free moves**, **Acorn actions** and **Buy Cards**. During your turn you may resolve as many free actions as you want.

### Jump

When you reach the edge of a tree, you must jump to move to the next tree. This is your opportunity to make a mid-air combo trick!

#### Create combo

Chain cards into a combo by playing a card containing at least 1 combo symbol, followed by a card type matching one of the combo symbols on the first card. If your second card also has combo symbols, you can chain a third card to it, and so on.

Making a combo rewards you with combo victory points (combo VPs) and acorns, as indicated in the central area of the main board:

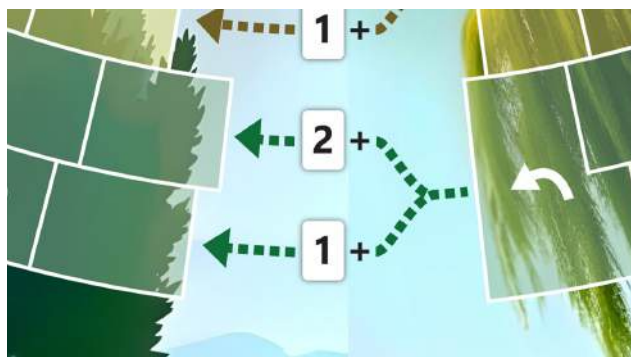
- 2-card combo: 1 acorn
- 3-card combo: 1 combo VP + 1 acorn
- 4-card combo: 2 combo VPs + 1 acorn
- 5-card combo: 3 combo VPs + 2 acorns
- 6-card combo: 4 combo VPs + 2 acorns

It's not allowed to create multiple separate combos within one jump. For example, two combos of 3 cards each, won't earn you twice the 3-card combo reward. Only one combo counts.

#### Choose lane

You must stay within your current color zone, but may freely choose which of the 2 lanes to jump towards: the upper or lower lane. Move you pawn to the first space of the chosen lane.

If you can't make a combo (or don't want to), you may choose to play a single card (any card) to jump without doing a combo trick. If you do, you must choose the lower lane.



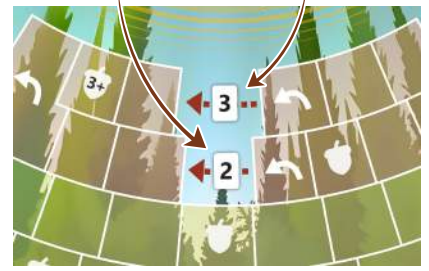
if you jump from a green space, you must choose either of the 2 green lanes to jump towards

## Foliage jumps

In some trees there are gaps in the foliage in which you must also perform a combo jump, or move around it.

Contrary to the regular jumps (from tree to tree), you're not allowed to play more cards (and neither less cards) than indicated during a foliage jump. Instead, **foliage jumps require an exact number of cards to be played: 2-card or 3-card combos.**

foliage jumps, requiring a 2-card combo and a 3-card combo

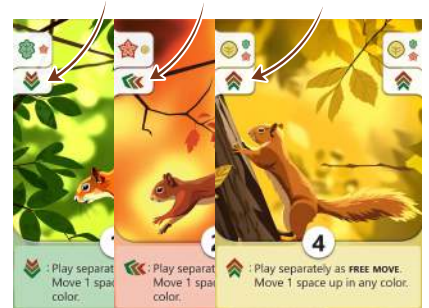


## Free moves

Some cards have a free move special effect.

Play a card from your hand with a free move symbol to move 1 space in the indicated direction (forward, up or down). The color of the card does not need to match the lane you're moving from or towards.

free move special effect (downwards - forwards - upwards)



## Spend acorns

Acorns you have collected can be spent on your player board to generate free moves and other bonuses.

- Place an acorn on any of the unused grid spaces to claim its bonus
- Once an acorn is spent it cannot be spent again later. The space it occupies on your player board is permanently blocked for the rest of the game
- You only get the bonus once, when you place the acorn
- If you complete a column, you also receive the column bonus depicted below

**free move up**

**free move forward**

**free move down**

**+1 sprint, climb or descend action this turn**

**draw 2 cards, then discard 2 cards**

**choose one:**

- gain +2 buying power this turn (and optionally refresh 1 market row\*), or
- choose 1 card from your hand or discard pile and remove it from the game

**draw 1 card**

**gain 1 card from the market for free**

(\* If you choose to refresh a market row, remove all 3 cards of a row of your choice, placing them back into the box. Then, lay out 3 fresh cards from the the top of the respective market deck. You may do this before, after or in between purchases)



## Buy cards

- Each turn you may buy as many cards as you like from the markets.
- To pay for a card that costs X, discard X cards from your hand.
- You can spend an acorn on your player board to increase your buying power by +2 this turn (see section: **Spend acorns**). Remaining unspent buying power is lost when your turn ends.
- When you buy a card, immediately replace the purchased card with a fresh card from the respective market deck. You may immediately buy newly placed market cards as long as you can afford them.
- Place all purchased cards in your discard pile.

## End of turn

- At the end of your turn, place all your played cards in a personal face up discard pile next to your player board at the discard space of your player board.
- If you still have unused cards in hand, you may choose to keep them for your next turn or discard them to your discard pile.
- Then draw back up to 6 cards from your personal deck.

**If you ever need to draw a card, but your deck is empty, shuffle your discard pile and place it face down in your deck space, forming a fresh deck to draw from.**



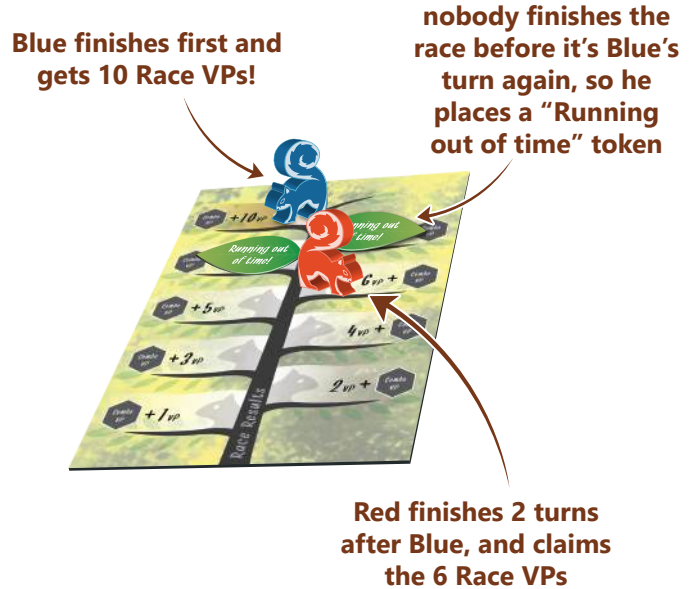
# End of the game: the finale

The first player who finishes the race places their pawn on the 1st space of the Race Results board, earning 10 race VPs. The finale has now started.

Whenever the first finisher would take a turn, instead they place a "Running out of time!" token on the highest empty space on the Race Results board, blocking it off for other players. As a result, players that require more turns to finish the race will earn fewer race VPs.

When another player crosses the finish line, they place their pawn in the highest empty space on the Race Results board. They skip their future turns during the finale.

If there are no available spaces left on the Race Results board, any player that hasn't finished yet is out of time and gets disqualified (they score 0 VPs in total).



## You are now ready to play

Beginning with the starting player, players take turns, one after the other in a clockwise direction around the table.

Keep taking turns until all players have finished the race. Then each player reveals their combo VPs and adds them up to their race VPs.

**The player with the highest total victory points wins!**

In case of a tie, the player that is ranked higher on the Race Results board wins.

# Example turns

[TO DO: add examples]



**[TO DO: add examples]**

**[TO DO: add examples]**

# Solo & 2 player Rules

## Challenge yourself in a solo game!

Acorn Run is best played with 3-6 players. But, if you're up for it, you can also play solo and compete with a select group of dummy squirrel racers.

In a 2-player game, it is recommended to also play with dummies, as it will increase the tension and fun.

You can add up to 4 dummies to compete against. Dummies automatically activate via cards (the dummy deck). They will do similar actions as human players: move on the board, collect acorns, earn combo VPs and buy cards. They will finish the race and press you to finish soon as well. And yes, they may even win the game!



[TO DO: add better visual needed]

## Setup

Setup a normal game with the following changes.

### Choose a number of dummies to play against

- In a solo game, play with 3 or 4 dummies.
- In a 2-player game, add 2-3 dummies
- At 3-6 players, it is not recommended to add any dummies.

The dummies always use the same colors: Twinkle (green), Bloom (pink), Bolt (yellow) and Tail (brown). Therefore, as a human player you must choose red or blue (or both in a 2-player game).

Place acorns on the main board as if you're playing with human players: each dummy counts as one player.

[TO DO: add visual of dummy pawns]

[TO DO: add visual of acorn placement on board]

## Choose a start position

- In a solo game, choose to start either from the 1st position or the last position
- In a 2-player game, choose to take the first two positions, the last two positions, or one player first and the other last (place the dummies in between the two players).

### First position(s)

- place your pawn(s) on the bottom Go! space(s)
- place the chosen number of dummy pawns on the next upwards Go! spaces, starting with Green

**[TO DO: add visual of start positions]**

### Last position(s)

- place the chosen number of dummy pawns on the bottom Go! spaces, starting with Green
- place your pawn(s) on the next available Go! space(s)

**[TO DO: add visual of start positions]**

## Player boards for dummies

For each dummy in the race, take their corresponding player board, and place it nearby. They will not use acorn actions like human players. Use the boards simply to track their collected acorns and combo VPs.

**[TO DO: add visual of dummy player boards]**

- When a dummy collects an acorn or combo VP, place it on their board (place combo VPs face down).
- When a dummy card instructs you to spend an acorn, remove one from their board (if they don't have acorns to spend, don't resolve that action)

**[TO DO: add visual of dummy action with acorn]**

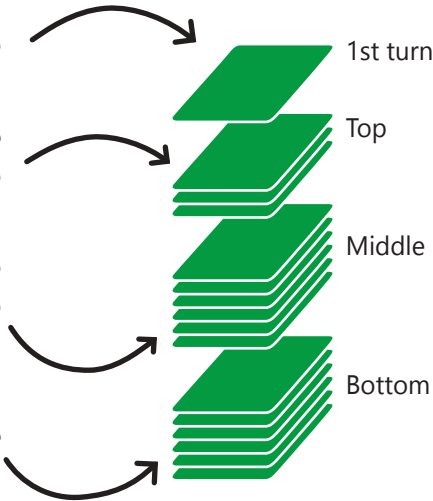


# Prepare the dummy deck

The dummies’ actions will be defined by a deck of cards: the dummy deck. Regardless of how many dummies you chose to compete against (1 to 4), the deck is always created the same way. When choosing a different difficulty setting, the level and amount of cards will vary (see difficulty table below). To setup a game of Normal difficulty:



- Split the dummy cards into first turn cards, level I, level II and level III cards.
- Take 1 first turn card, and place it face down on the table (this is the **start** of the dummy deck)
- Take 3 level I cards, shuffle them and place them face down below the dummy deck (this is the **top** of the dummy deck)
- Take 6 level II cards, shuffle them and place them face down below the dummy deck (this is the **middle** of the dummy deck)
- Take 3 level II cards and 3 level III cards, shuffle them and place them face down below the dummy deck (this is the **bottom** of the dummy deck)



## Difficulty table

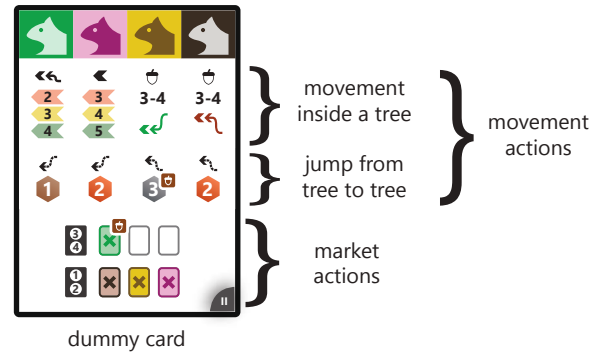
You can change the difficulty setting to suit your experience level: change the middle and bottom cards accordingly when constructing the dummy deck.

	Easy	Normal	Hard	Expert
First turn	1x	1x	1x	1x
Top cards	3x	3x	3x	3x
Middle cards	6x	3x  + 3x	6x	3x  + 3x
Bottom cards	9x	3x  + 3x	6x	6x

# Dummy Turn

When a dummy gets a turn, all dummies play their turn: draw the top card of the dummy deck and resolve all actions for the dummies on the board.

- First resolve their **movement actions**, one after the other, starting with green
- Then resolve their **market actions** all at the same time



## Movement actions

- Usually, a dummy resolves its movement inside a tree first, and then - if it reaches a jump-off space - it jumps
- If it starts its turn on a jump-off space, it jumps first, and then moves inside the tree
- Though dummies mimic the same main moves that human player do, they are not limited to only Sprint, Climb or Descend. Think of them as playing free moves via cards or acorn actions in combination with a main move.

## Sprint

	Sprint x spaces		Move up 1 lane, then		Move down 1 lane, then
	sprint x spaces		sprint x spaces		sprint x spaces
	forward, in their		forward, in their new		forward, in their new
	current lane		lane		lane




- If an up / down movement is not possible, simply skip that
- If total movement would end on an occupied space, end the movement the space before
- If movement ends on a space containing an acorn, that dummy collects it (place it on its player board)

## Fetch acorn

 Move (min) 3 or (max) 4 spaces in any direction, to collect an acorn

- 3-4**
- If end of tree jump zone can be reached with max moves, instead move there (and jump if possible)
  - If 2 acorns can be reached, choose the farthest one
  - If both are equally far, choose the one in the same direction as the alternative action (arrow)
  - If none can be reached, do alternative action instead
  - Dummies never move backwards - they always choose the most forward path when moving up or down - even when trying to collect an acorn

## Alternative actions: climb or descend

-  Move to the nearest red lane, and move forward on that lane until in total max spaces are moved
-  Move to the nearest green lane, and move forward on that lane until in total max spaces are moved
-  Move to the nearest yellow lane, and move forward on that lane until in total max spaces are moved
- If dummy is already on a space in given color, simply move it forward max spaces (don't switch lanes).

## Jump



If a dummy reaches any jump-off space, it immediately ends its movement and jumps.

 Dummy jumps to first space of the upper lane

 Dummy jumps to first space of the lower lane

- If the destination space is occupied, the dummy jumps to the other lane
- If both lanes are occupied, the dummy doesn't jump this turn, and instead jumps next turn, before doing it's regular movement

 Dummy gains 1 combo VP (place it face down on its player board)

  Dummy spends 1 acorn (remove 1 acorn from its player board) and gains 3 combo VP (place it face down on its player board). If dummy has no acorns, it gains no combo VP

## Foliage jump

If a dummy reaches any jump-off space in the foliage, it also immediately jumps.

- Ignore the jump direction and reward depicted on the dummy card (it only applies to tree-to-tree jumps)
- If it jumps across a foliage gap of 2, it gains an acorn from the supply
- If it jumps across a foliage gap of 3 it gains 1 combo VP

**[TO DO: add  
visual of foliage  
gaps]**

## Market actions

Dummies purchase cards, but don't play them. Move all cards they purchase immediately to the markets' respective discard piles.

Since all dummies play in one go, their market actions can be done all together.

- Discard from the markets each card marked in the color of a participating dummy
- If the mark contains an acorn, spend an acorn from that dummy's player board. If the dummy doesn't have an acorn, then don't discard the card
- Replace all discarded cards with fresh cards from their respective market decks



## End of the game: the Finale

Dummies finish the race the same as human players:

- Place their pawn on the highest available Race Results space - they earn the Race VPs associated with it
- If a dummy is the first finisher, place an Out of time tokens, each time that dummy would otherwise play
- If a dummy has finished the race, it won't buy cards anymore - ignore its color markers during Market actions for the remainder of the game
- Keep playing until all players and dummies have finished the race - then reveal all Combo VPs and add them to each Race VPs
- Highest total VPs determines the winner. Ties are still settled via standing on the Race Results board.



# *Dummy example turns*

[TO DO: add examples]

**[TO DO: add examples]**

# Commonly overlooked rules

- You may only do 1 base move each turn: either 1 Sprint, or 1 Climb, or 1 Descend
- During your turn, you may resolve your actions in any order. This includes base move, free moves, acorn actions, buying cards, and extra moves
- Combos are only relevant to jump actions. You can't make a combo if you're not jumping
- When making a combo to jump, card colors don't have to match the color zone you're currently in
- You don't have to jump immediately, when reaching a jump-off space, even if you have the cards for a combo. Sometimes it's worthwhile to wait until next turn - to find a greater combo for example

## Credits

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**Developer:** Jasper Behaegel

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# Dummy actions summary



## Movement

-  Sprint x spaces forward, in their current lane
-  Move up 1 lane, then sprint x spaces forward, in their new lane
-  Move down 1 lane, then sprint x spaces forward, in their new lane
-  Move (min) 3 or (max) 4 spaces in any direction (never backwards), to collect an acorn
-  Move to the nearest red lane, and move forward on that lane until in total max spaces are moved
-  Move to the nearest green lane, and move forward on that lane until in total max spaces are moved
-  Move to the nearest yellow lane, and move forward on that lane until in total max spaces are moved

## Jumps

-  Dummy jumps to first space of the upper lane
-  Dummy jumps to first space of the lower lane
-  Dummy gains 1 combo VP
-  Dummy spends 1 acorn and gains 3 combo VP. If dummy has no acorns, it gains no combo VP




## Market

-  Discard the card from the market
-  Dummy spends 1 acorn, then discard the card from the market. If dummy has no acorns, don't discard the card





# Card effects




## Free moves

-  Move 1 space up on the board
-  Move 1 space forward on the board
-  Move 1 space down on the board

## Sprint effects




-  Play this card as part of a sprint action: Move +X spaces (instead of +1)
-  Play this card as part of a sprint action: This turn you may play an extra Sprint action


## Acorn

-  Choose an Acorn action from your player board and resolve the effect without spending an acorn token
-  Choose an Acorn action from your player board and resolve the effect without spending an acorn token. Then remove this card from the game
-  Move 1 space in any direction. Then, take one acorn off of your player board and place it on the space you just left.



# Acorn actions

## Moves





-  Move 1 space up on the board
-  Move 1 space forward on the board
-  Move 1 space down on the board

 This turn, you may resolve an extra Sprint, Climb or Descend

## Card filtering

-  Draw 2 cards, then discard 2 cards
-  Draw 1 card

## Deck improvements

-  Gain +2 buying power this turn.
-  Optionally, refresh 1 market (discard one row of 3 cards, and place 3 fresh cards from the respective market deck)
-  Choose 1 card from your hand or discard pile and remove it from the game
-  Gain 1 market card for free