

Grackles™

A how-to-play video may be found at www.firesidegames.com/grackles.



30 min



2-4



10+

Overview

Grackles are noisy, iridescent birds that love to gather on telephone wires at sunset throughout the southwestern United States. In this lightly themed abstract strategy game, you'll line up as many of your birds on the telephone wire to score as many points as possible. Each turn, players choose between drawing and placing a tile, connecting 2 spots on the telephone wire with their birds, extending a line of birds, or rotating an empty tile. After the board has been built to 5 tiles by 5 tiles and all available pairs of spots on the telephone wire have birds on them, the player with the most birds on the telephone wire is the winner.

Components



180 Birds
45 of each color



25 Tiles



4 player aids



20 Rotate
Tokens

Game Setup

1. Choose a color, and take the birds of that color.
2. Place the 2 starting tiles in the center of the table (joining the black triangles to form a diamond).
3. Shuffle the remaining tiles to create a facedown stack near the playing area.
4. Select the first player by taking 1 bird from each player, mixing them up in your hands and randomly drawing 1 out. The color drawn indicates the starting player.



Order of Play

On each turn, players may choose to do one of the following:

1. Draw and place a tile.
2. Place birds to connect 2 unoccupied spots on the telephone wire that match their bird's color (creating a line of birds).
3. Extend one of their existing lines.
4. Rotate an empty tile. (limited to 5 times per game)

The first player is not able to form a line (by connecting 2 unoccupied spots of their own color), and the starting tiles may not be rotated. So, the first player must place a tile on their first turn.

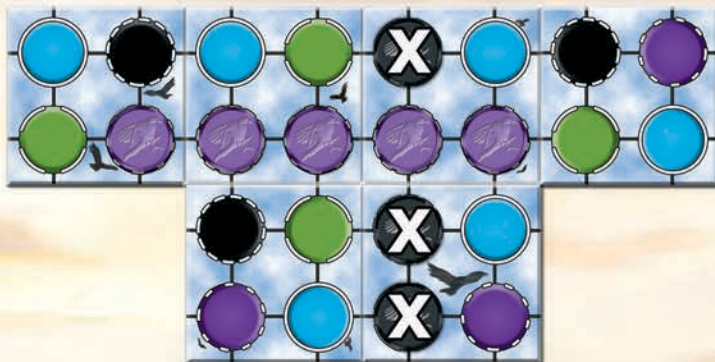
Drawing and Placing Tiles

A newly drawn tile must be placed adjacent (not diagonally) to a tile already on the board. It may be placed in any orientation, typically to line up a spot of your color with one already on the board to set up the building of a line on a subsequent turn. Once a tile is drawn, it cannot be replaced and must be played. All 25 tiles must end up forming a square of 5 tiles by 5 tiles. If the board already has 5 tiles across or down, the player may not place a tile in that direction.



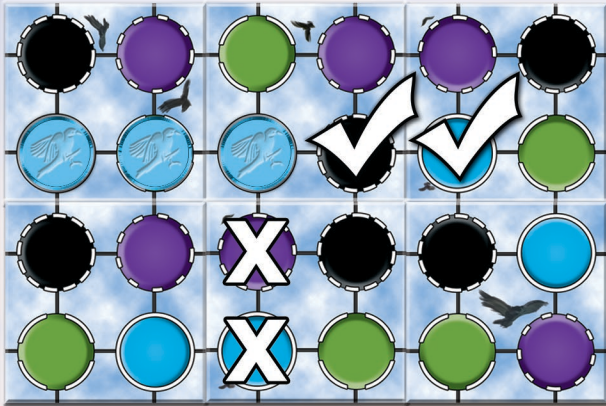
Placing Birds

Birds are placed on the tiles by connecting the spots of your own color to form a straight line. The lines may be only up and down or across, not diagonal. Place birds starting on one empty spot of your color and ending on any other empty spot of your color, as well as every empty spot in between. You may not cross another line along the way, including one of your own color.



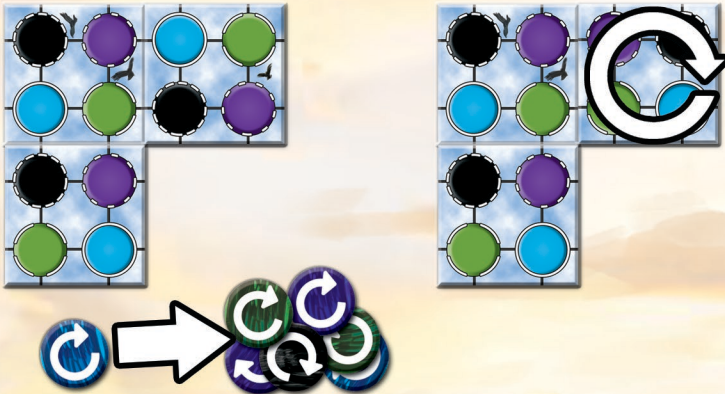
Extending a Line

On a subsequent turn, you may extend a line to another empty spot of your color, but only in the direction the line is already going and only from one end of the line at a time. A new line must always start and stop on empty spots. In other words, you cannot build 90° off an existing line. [Note that you do not HAVE to place birds to form or extend lines if possible. You always have the option to take other available actions.]



Rotating a Tile

Up to 5 times per game, you may choose to rotate an empty tile, keeping it in the same space. (An empty tile is a tile that doesn't have any birds on it.) You may want to rotate a tile to prevent another player from forming a long line or to put yourself in a better position to form a line. After you rotate a tile, place one of your Rotate Tokens near the play area. The number of tokens in that area indicates the number of times players have rotated tiles. If you already have 5 of your tokens in that area, you cannot rotate a tile. (Note that the starting tiles may not be rotated.)



End of the Game

After all 25 tiles have been placed in a 5-by-5 grid, players continue in turn order placing birds, extending lines, or rotating tiles until no valid plays remain.

Then, all players remove their birds from the board and count them. The player with the highest number of birds placed on telephone wires wins. Ties are shared wins.

Credits

Game Design and Development
John Shulters and Sarah Graybill

Graphic Design
Sam Simons

Editing
Sarah Graybill and Anne-Marie De Witt

Art
Mateusz Wilma

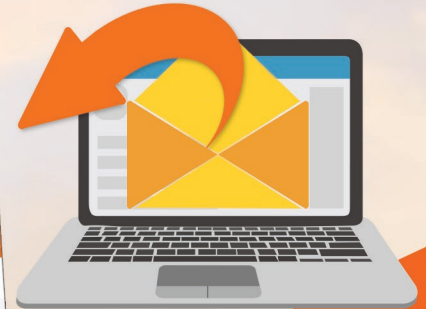
From John and Sarah: Thanks so much to all our family, friends, supporters, and playtesters. We could not have made this game without you!

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