

# The Village Crone™

## Rules

Number of players: 1 to 6

Ages: 13 and up

Time: 90 minutes

(Allow longer to learn the Spells your first time playing.)

## Introduction

You and your fellow players are medieval Witches who have stumbled upon Wickersby, a Village without a Crone (a revered Wise Woman with magical powers). Send your Familiars out to Harvest Ingredients you'll use to Cast Spells as you vie to be declared The Village Crone!

## Objective

The Village Crone is a competitive, worker-placement, resource-management game with spell-casting. You want to be the first player to score 13 points by completing Witch's Scheme cards.

## Components

- **6 modular boards** that are assembled in any configuration to form the Village



- **6 Villagers** who are subjects of the Witches' Spells



- **4 decks of Ingredients** that are gathered by Familiars and used in Spells (each deck includes 3 Eye of Newt cards)



- **6 Books of Spells** that contain the Spells and Order of Play and provide privacy



- **3 decks of Witch's Scheme cards** that have 1-, 2-, and 3-point values and are used to achieve the game objective



- **6 types of Familiars** (5 of each type) that are used to gather Ingredients



- **6 Frogs** that Villagers can be Transformed into and out of



- **6 Binding Rings** that show a Location is under the Binding Spell



- **3 Love Tokens** that show when 2 Villagers are under the Love Spell



- **1 Broom** that indicates which Witch is the current first player



- **1 rulebook** that explains how to play the game

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## Overview

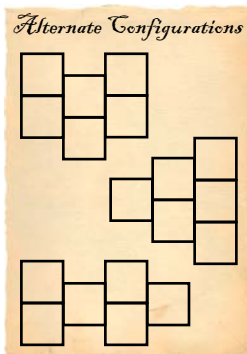
You want to be the first Witch to score 13 points by completing Witch's Scheme cards. To do so, you must Cast Spells. The Spells require Ingredients, which are gathered by Familiars you send out. The order of play includes turn-threading (in which each player acts at each step in the order of play) and is basically as follows.

1. **Tithe:** Every Witch (in any order) discards 1 Ingredient to the Tithe Barn as a condition of living in the Village.
2. **Move and Cast Spells:** In turn order, every Witch moves his/her Familiars and/or Villagers up to a total of 6 spaces, Casts Spells, and completes Witch's Scheme cards. Each Witch chooses new Witch's Scheme cards after moving and Casting Spells.
3. **Harvest:** After all Witches have moved and Cast Spells, every Witch draws 2 Ingredient cards per Familiar in a Location (on a first come, first served basis).
4. **Move Broom:** After all Witches have Harvested Ingredients, the Broom (which indicates first player) is passed clockwise to the next Witch.

## Game Setup

Randomly place the 6 modular boards containing the Village **Locations** next to each other, aligning the boards with the gridlines and forming a 3x2 rectangle.

(Note: To increase difficulty, align the boards by fewer spaces and create novel configurations.)



Put the **Villagers** in their stands and place them in their home Locations.

- Blacksmith: Forge
- Farmer: Farm
- Lord: Lord's Manor
- Miller: Mill
- Peasant: Village Green
- Priest: Tithe Barn

Randomly shuffle each deck of **Ingredients** so that 3 Eye of Newt cards are included in each deck and mixed well. Place the Ingredients facedown in their Locations.

- Fire: Forge
- Flour: Mill
- Silver: Lord's Manor
- Soil: Farm

Deal every Witch 1 of each of the 3 levels of **Witch's Scheme cards**. You score the number of points on the card when you complete it. Remember, the first Witch to score 13 points is the winner.

Every Witch chooses a **Book of Spells** and the corresponding **Familiars**. (*The Spells are the same in each book, even though the covers have unique Witches.*) He/she then stands the book up in front of him/her. The Witch with the birthday closest to Halloween without going past is given the **Broom** and starts the game as the first player. (*You may also vary the way the first player is selected in gaming groups that meet regularly.*)

Starting with the first player and proceeding in turn order clockwise, place 1 Familiar in a Location and draw 2 Ingredients from that Location. As you place your Familiar, keep the following in mind:

- Reviewing your Witch's Scheme cards and thinking about which Spells you want to Cast will help you decide where to place your Familiars to get the Ingredients you need. (*The Spells are fully explained on pp. 4-5 and can be found inside the Book of Spells.*)
- The number of Familiars in a single Location (except the Village Green) is limited to the number of players. If the number of Familiars in a single Location exceeds the number of players, Scattering (p. 3) goes into effect.
- A Familiar placed in the Tithe Barn keeps its Witch from having to Tithe.

Repeat this process to place the second Familiar for each Witch. The third is placed in the Village Green, and the 2 extra are placed in front of each Witch.



# Order of Play

## 1. Tithe

**Every Witch** (in no particular order) discards 1 Ingredient of his/her choice facedown to the Tithe Barn. *Exception: Any Witches with a Familiar in the Tithe Barn do not have to Tithe.*

## 2. Move and Cast Spells

In turn order, **every Witch** may

- move any of his/her Familiars and/or any Villagers up to 6 spaces total. (*Note: That is not 6 spaces for each Familiar and Villager. That is 6 spaces for all movement total.*)
- cast as many Spells as you have Ingredients for.
- score any completed Witch's Schemes.

Movement can be interrupted to Cast a Spell, and Spells can precede any movement. In other words, you don't have to move and then Cast Spells. You can execute your 6 movement and your Spell-casting in any order you prefer.

### Moving

When **moving**, bear these rules in mind:

- Movement is orthogonal only (not diagonal).
- Casting a Spell that causes movement does not count against your 6 movement spaces.
- Villagers and Familiars can take shortcuts through Locations. (1 Location = 1 space)
- Spaces can be shared.
- Frogs cannot be moved on their own, but Familiars can carry a Frog if they are in the same space.



### Scattering

If the number of Familiars in a single Location (except the Village Green) exceeds the number of players, the following happens **immediately**:

- The home Villager is drawn back to that Location (bringing anyone he/she is in Love with).



*Exception: If the home Villager is a Frog, he/she does not return and Scattering does not take place.*

*If a frog becomes a Villager whose home Location has too many Familiars, the Villager returns to his/her home Location and all Familiars there are sent to the Village Green immediately.*

- All but the last Familiar are sent back to the Village Green.



*Exception: If the Village Green is Bound, affected Witches choose a space adjacent to the Village Green to place affected Familiars.*

- Any Villagers in the affected Location remain there.

Scattering goes into effect even if a Familiar is just passing through the Location.

### Spells

When **Casting Spells**, bear these rules in mind:

- There are 8 Spells: Conjuring, Love, Summoning, Switching, Transformation, Fortune, Binding, and Protection.
- Each Spell requires Ingredients and an Incantation. You must have the correct Ingredients and say the Incantation for the Spell to work. (Alternatively, you can make up your own Incantations.)
- You do not need to have a Familiar in the Location or beside the Villager(s) you are casting Spells on. (Think of yourself on a broom riding above the Village as you cast Spells.)
- You may Cast as many Spells as you have Ingredients for.
- You may Cast Spells for strategic reasons even if they do not necessarily meet a Witch's Scheme.
- If you fail to say an Incantation before you take another action and another Witch catches you, your Spell fails and you lose the Ingredients used to attempt the Spell.
- After you Cast Spells, discard the Ingredients into separate piles. Put Eye of Newt cards in the piles for the Ingredients you were using them instead of. When the Ingredients run out in a Location, replenish the Location with the discards for that Ingredient.

**Alt rule:** During the Move and Cast Spells step, Witches may trade Ingredients with each other. The rate of trade is negotiated between the 2 Witches.



**Conjuring** enables you to add a Familiar to the Village Green (unless it is Bound, see p. 5). To do so, combine 1 Fire, 1 Flour, 1 Silver, 1 Soil and say, "For feed and greed, for want and need. Stalk with me, you curs'd breed!" If you have movement left, you can move the Conjured Familiar out of the Village Green in the same turn. Spells may be cast on the Familiar as well (i.e., Summoning and Switching).



**Love** causes the fates of 2 Villagers to be joined and moves 1 Villager to the position (Location or space) of another Villager. To cast the Love Spell, combine 2 Fire and say, "From the belly of desire and the laws of attraction, be chained now without distraction!" You choose which Villager moves and then place the Love token on both Villagers.



- If 1 Villager in Love is affected in any way, the other is also affected. If 1 is moved, both are moved. If 1 is Summoned, they are both Summoned to the target Location. If 1 is Switched, they both trade places with the other Villager or Familiar. If 1 is Transformed into a Frog, both of them are and the Love Spell is broken. (Frogs can't fall in Love with each other or with Villagers.)

- To break the Love Spell, combine 2 Fire and say, "From the belly of desire and the laws of attraction, be unchained now without distraction!" Place 1 of the former lovers in any Location with 1 of your Familiars.
- If you cast the Love Spell on a Villager already under a Love Spell, it breaks the first Spell and 1 of 2 options occurs.
  - o Option 1: The targeted Villager remains in place and his/her new lover moves to the targeted Villager's Location. Then the jilted lover moves to a space occupied by 1 of your Familiars.



- o Option 2: The targeted Villager moves to the Location of his/her new lover and the jilted lover remains in place.



## Spell Overview

**Conjuring:** Bring another familiar into play (1 Fire, 1 Flour, 1 Silver, 1 Soil)

**Love:** Join or break the fates of 2 Villagers (2 Fire)

**Summoning:** Move 1 Villager or 1 Familiar to a Location containing 1 of your Familiars (1 Flour and 1 Ingredient from the target Location)

**Switching:** Exchange the positions of any 2 Familiars and/or Villagers (1 Silver and 1 Soil)

**Transformation:** Turn a Villager into a Frog or a Frog into a Villager (1 Fire and 1 Flour)

**Fortune:** Draw any 3 Ingredients from the Tithe Barn (2 Silver)

**Binding:** Lock a Location so that nothing may enter or leave and no Spells affecting the Location may be Cast (2 Soil) (2 of the same of ANY Ingredient to Unbind)

**Protection:** Block any Spell Cast by another Witch (1 Soil and 1 of any Ingredient)

*Move*



*Summon*



*Switch*



*Transform*



**Summoning** enables you to move any 1 Villager or any 1 Familiar to any Location on the Board containing 1 of your Familiars. Combine 1 Flour and 1 Ingredient from the target Location and say, “By beast that flies and beast that crawls, appear at once within these walls!”

- To Summon to the Tithe Barn, combine 1 Flour and 1 of any Ingredient.
- You can't Summon to the Village Green.
- You can't Summon a Villager or Familiar to a Location he/she/it is already in.



**Switching** enables you to exchange the positions (Locations or spaces) of any 2 Villagers or any 2 Familiars or any 1 Villager and any 1 Familiar. The Familiars can be yours or those of other Witches. Combine 1 Silver and 1 Soil and say, “Distance slight or distance vast, transpose your place! And do it fast!” If a Familiar is carrying a Frog, the Frog travels with the Familiar.



**Transformation** turns a Villager into a Frog or a Frog into a Villager. Combine 1 Fire and 1 Flour and say, “Like wheat from soil is crushed to flour, thy form is now within my power!” When turning a Villager into a Frog, place the Villager to the side of the board and place a Frog token in its position.

- Transformation breaks the Love Spell and turns both Villagers into Frogs. The Frogs remain in place.
- If you are using Transformation to turn a Frog into a Villager and you have more than 1 Villager to choose from (because more than 1 Villager has been turned into a Frog), you may choose which Villager the Frog becomes. You don't have to remember who the Frogs used to be.
- Frogs cannot be acted upon as if they are the Villagers they used to be. A Scheme cannot be met if it mentions a Villager by name and that Villager has been turned into a frog.



**Fortune** allows you to draw any 3 Ingredients from the Tithe Barn and add them to your hand. To do so, combine 2 Silver and say, “What once was rot is wealth unseen. I command thee now: riches be gleaned!” You can look at all of the Ingredients in the Tithe Barn to pick the 3 you want.



**Binding** is used to lock a Location down so that no Villagers, Familiars, or Frogs may enter or leave the Location and no other Spells affecting the Location can be Cast. Combine 2 Soil and say, “Come what may, come what might. Shut the door and lock it tight!” Then, place the Binding Ring over the Location. Ingredients can still be Harvested from Bound Locations. Familiars cannot be Conjured into the Village Green when it is Bound.

To Unbind a Location, combine 2 of the same of ANY Ingredient and say, “Come what may, come what might. Open the door and let in the light.” (Note: Even the Witch who Bound the Location must use Ingredients to Unbind it.)



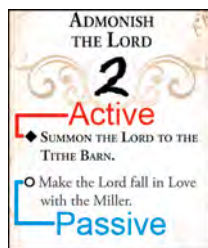
**Protection** blocks any Spell by another Witch. It must be cast before the other Witch takes another action, such as moving, Casting another Spell, or drawing new Witch's Scheme cards. Combine 1 Soil and 1 of any Ingredient and say, “Your evil schemes and bad intent now are simply spells misspent.” You can cancel Protection with Protection. The Witch whose Spell was blocked does not get his/her Ingredients back.

## Witch's Scheme Cards

The Witch's Scheme cards are used to score points and meet the game objective. They are organized by level of difficulty, ranging from 1 to 3. The level of difficulty also equals the number of points Witches score when they complete the Schemes.

Witch's Scheme cards contain both Active and Passive Schemes. You must complete the Active Schemes. The Passive Schemes may be met by the conditions on the board or by you.

- **Active Schemes** may be identified by the diamond-shaped bullet, bold text, and small caps. You must actively meet these Schemes during your Move and Cast Spells phase.
- **Passive Schemes** may be identified by the circle bullet. You don't have to be the Witch to make these happen as long as the conditions on the board meet those Schemes during your Move and Cast Spells phase.



When **completing Witch's Scheme cards**, you

- must fulfill all Schemes on a card during **one** of your Move and Cast Spells phases.

- may complete them in any logical order.
- must use the type of action specified on the card (e.g., Summon, Switch, Bind).
- may use any means (such as moving, Casting Spells, or using an existing condition on the board) to achieve a Scheme that starts with "Get."
- may use a single Spell to meet more than 1 Witch's Scheme at the same time.
- must declare your completion of a Witch's Scheme card when you complete it (or when the conditions on the board meet the Scheme). *(Note: Don't wait until the end of your Move and Cast Spells phase and then tell players that you met a Scheme card because of a condition of the board that is no longer current.)*
- cannot complete Witch's Scheme cards when you draw them, except when discarding with 1 Silver for a new card. (See **Discarding a Witch's Scheme Card** below.)
- must show your completed points.

## Completing a Witch's Scheme Card



### Drawing New Witch's Scheme Cards

After finishing your movement and Spell-casting and completing Witch's Schemes, you will draw 1 new Witch's Scheme card for each 1 completed.

- Draw the top card from each deck of Witch's Scheme cards.
- Look at all 3, choose 1 for every card you completed, and add them to your hand.
- Return the other(s) to the **top** of their decks.

*(Note: New Witch's Scheme cards cannot be completed on the turn they are drawn.)*

### Discarding a Witch's Scheme Card

If for any reason you do not want to attempt a Witch's Scheme card in your hand, you may discard it at any time by spending 1 Silver.

- Place the discarded Scheme card on the **bottom** of its deck.
- Then draw the top card from each deck. Look at all 3 and choose 1 card to put into your hand. Return the others to the **top** of their decks.

### Completing a Scheme Card Out of Turn

During another player's turn (but not right in the middle of a Spell or movement), you may want to take advantage of the conditions on the board to complete one or more of your Witch's Scheme cards. If this happens, you may complete your Scheme(s) out of turn at a cost of 1 Silver per card you are completing. If completing your Scheme(s) requires Spells, they still cost Ingredients as usual. Then follow the procedure for drawing a new Witch's Scheme card.

## 3. Harvest

After **all Witches** have moved and Cast Spells, **every Witch** draws 2 Ingredients for **each** of their Familiars in a Location.

- Harvesting is on a first come, first served basis. (Can be in turn order, if preferred.)
- The Familiar must be in the Location, not just on the board piece with the Location.
- There is no hand limit for Ingredients.
- Each deck of Ingredients includes 3 Eye of Newt cards, which can be used as wild cards to complete Spells.
- If a Witch is unable to Harvest because his/her Familiars are not in Locations with Ingredients, he/she draws 2 from the top of the cards in the Tithe Barn as charity.

## 4. Move Broom

After **all Witches** have Harvested, move the Broom to the next player clockwise and begin the order of play again.

## Ending Conditions

The game ends when a Witch scores 13 points and everyone has had his/her turn on the final Move and Cast Spells phase and has Harvested.



## Scoring

Count up the point values on your completed Witch's Scheme cards.

## Tiebreakers

If 2 or more Witches tie for highest points, the Witch with the lowest number of completed Witch's Scheme cards wins.

If 2 or more Witches tie for highest points and the number of their completed Witch's Scheme cards is the same, the Witch with the highest number of Ingredients in hand at the end of the game wins.

## Sample Turn

Tilly is the first player in a 2-player game with Frank. During setup, she chooses cats as her Familiar and is dealt these Witch's Scheme cards:

*Torment the Priest* (Level 1)

- ◆ SUMMON THE PRIEST TO THE FORGE.

*Chasten the Farmer* (Level 2)

- Get the Farmer to the Mill.

- ◆ TRANSFORM THE FARMER INTO A FROG.

*Daunt the Villagers* (Level 3)

- Get the Farmer, Peasant, and Miller to the Village Green.

- ◆ BIND THE VILLAGE GREEN.

After looking at her Scheme cards and thinking about the Spells she wants to Cast, Tilly chooses to put her Familiars in the Forge, Mill, and Village Green. That means she starts the game with 2 Fire and 2 Flour.



Frank chooses snakes as his Familiar and is dealt these Witch's Scheme cards:

*Accuse the Miller* (Level 1)

- Get the Miller to the Village Green

*Confine the Lord* (Level 2)

- Make the Lord fall in Love with any other Villager.

- ◆ BIND THE LORD'S LOCATION.

*Persecute the Peasant* (Level 3)

- Get the Peasant to the Forge.

- Make the Peasant fall in Love with any other Villager.

- ◆ TRANSFORM THE PEASANT AND THE OTHER VILLAGER INTO FROGS.

Frank decides to put his Familiars in the Lord's Manor, Farm, and Village Green. That means he starts the game with 2 Silver and 2 Soil.

Now that the game is set up, Tilly and Frank begin Step 1 of the Order of Play: Tithe.

## Tithe

Each player must Tithe 1 Ingredient. Tilly is the first player and decides to Tithe 1 Flour by placing it facedown in the Tithe Barn. Then, it is Frank's turn to Tithe. He places 1 Silver facedown in the Tithe Barn.

## Move and Cast Spells

Tilly scores a quick point by completing *Torment the Priest*. She discards 1 Fire and 1 Flour and speaks the Incantation to Summon the Priest to the Forge. She then decides to focus on increasing the number of Ingredients she can Harvest. So she moves her cat in the Village Green 5 spaces into the Farm. She chooses not to use her last movement. Tilly turns *Torment the Priest* facedown and places it so that Frank can see her score. Then she draws the top card from each of the Witch's Scheme decks, chooses 1 to put in her hand, and returns the other 2 to the top of their decks.



Now it is Frank's turn to Move and Cast Spells. He discards 1 Silver and 1 Soil and says the Incantation to Switch the Peasant and the Miller. He declares that he has met the requirements for Accuse the Miller and places that card facedown in front of him. He now has 1 point. Frank moves the Peasant 4 spaces into the Forge and his Snake in the Village Green 2 spaces toward the Forge. Following the same procedure Tilly used, he chooses 1 new Witch's Scheme card.



## Harvest

Tilly and Frank Harvest 2 Ingredients for each Location with a Familiar. They don't worry about taking turns. Each player gathers Ingredients as quickly as possible to move the game along. Tilly gathers 2 Fire, 2 Flour, and 2 Soil. Frank gathers 2 Silver for the snake in the Lord's Manor and 2 Soil for the snake in the Farm. His 3rd snake hasn't made it to the Forge yet, so he doesn't Harvest Fire.



## Move Broom

Tilly hands the Broom to Frank, who is now the first player, and they begin the Order of Play again.

## Game Variations

### Solitaire Play

To play the game solo, use the normal rules with the following changes:

- Your objective now is to score 13 points before you run out of 2 Ingredients.
- Reduce the number of Ingredients at each Location to 10 (none of them should be Eye of Newt).
- When Ingredients run out in a Location, do not replenish them. Discards are out of the game.
- Skip the steps for determining the first player and the Move Broom phase in the Order of Play.
- Disregard the rule for Scattering (p. 3).

### Alternate Rules

For additional ways to have fun with the game, try 1 or more of these alternate rules:

- Stack and discard the Ingredients faceup in their Locations so that public knowledge includes who has drawn Eye of Newt cards.
- Play with Witch's Scheme cards faceup and unhidden so that Witches have full knowledge of each other's Schemes.
- To vary the length of the game, increase or decrease the number of points necessary to meet the objective.
- Decrease the difficulty by allowing Familiars to enter/leave Bound Locations.
- Increase the difficulty by removing some or all of the Eyes of Newt in each Ingredient deck.
- Increase the difficulty by aligning board pieces by fewer adjacent spaces.

## Credits

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**Art:** Alex Fernandez

**Graphic Design and Layout:** Alex Fernandez and Justin De Witt

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