THIEVES OF ELDRIS
RULE BOOK

Welcome to Skulduggery Square, a marketplace alive with shady deals and the constant clink of coins, where nobles, thieves, and adventurers slip through the crowd. Stalls line the edges in a chaotic sprawl, filling the air with the rich scent of spiced meats, exotic perfumes, and incense.

The Square hums with noise—hawkers shout deals on magical trinkets, merchants haggle with hesitant customers, and patrons stumble out of The Gutter's End newly rich—or recently fleeced. But be cautious: a quick cut of the knife can lift your coin purse and mercenaries prowl the fringes, waiting to unmask the brazen. Meanwhile the underworld watches every move for potential prey, and the Thieves' Guild assesses its initiates. Here a careless moment can cost a fortune—or a life.
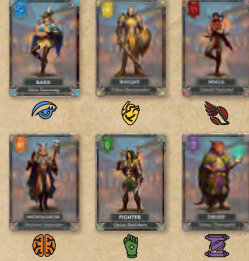
The line between law and lawlessness blurs, and even the city's rulers, the Velkyr, turn a blind eye to the many schemes and crimes that unfold within the Square— a place where fortunes are made, secrets are sold, and trouble is never more than a whisper away.

COMPONENTS

24 Character Cards
(*4 in each of the 6 Traits*)

24 Townsfolk Cards
(*4 in each of the 6 Traits*)

Note: Each Character is represented once in both the Character and Townsfolk decks. This ensures that no two players share the same **Target**, and your **Cutpurse** cannot be anyone else's **Target**.

Trait

Class

Character name

45 Loot

13x **$1 coins**   8x **$3 coins**

18x **$½ coins**   6x **$5 coins**

3 Slip Dice
(*Each identical, with one Token Trait per side*)

3 Target Tokens

6 Sigil Tokens
(**Double-sided**)

Active   *Inactive*

6 Player Aids

Front   *Back*
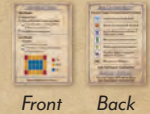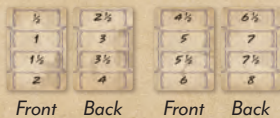

2-GO COMPONENTS

Pick-Pocket-sized!

All "2-Go" rules stay the same—just leave the coins behind and bring the scoring cards instead. All other cards and tokens can be conveniently stored in the travel tuckbox.

1 2-Go Tuckbox

12 Scoring Cards
(*2 needed per player*)

½	2½	4½	6½
1	3	5	7
1½	3½	5½	7½
2	4	6	8

Front *Back*   *Front* *Back*

SOLO COMPONENTS

1 Cutpurse Token

18 Solo Tokens
(**Double-sided**)

Rival   *Threat*

How to Use

Each player has 2 scoring cards (*showing ½ to 8*). Lay one scoring card horizontally over the other to highlight your current coin value.

this player has $1... congrats?

OVERVIEW

You are among the realm's most cunning thieves, eager to prove yourself worthy to the Thieves' Guild. To claim your place, you'll need to outwit your rivals and be the first to pilfer 8 coins from unsuspecting Targets.

Every stolen coin comes with some risk. Strike fast, hide your identity, and take bold risks to prove your skills. In this race for riches, only the most cunning will join the Guild.

SETUP

1 to 6 thieves may test their skills in Skulduggery Square. For all player counts, setup begins as follows:

① Separate the **Character** and **Townsfolk** cards into two piles.

② Shuffle the **Character** cards, then arrange them faceup in a grid of 6 cards wide by 4 cards tall. This is **Skulduggery Square**.

③ Shuffle the **Townsfolk** cards to form a deck, placing it facedown above the Square.

④ Each player takes 1 **Sigil Token** and places it with the active side 🔴 faceup in front of them.

⑤ Set all coins to the side of the Square to form a supply.

≈≈≈ **Continue setup according to your player count:** ≈≈≈

▷ **Solo:** Refer to the Solo Rules on p.8.

▷ **2-4 Players:**

Deal 3 cards from the **Townsfolk** deck facedown to each player.

In secret at the **start of their first turn,** each player selects 1 card as their **Cutpurse** and the other 2 as their personal **Targets**. Once chosen, all three cards are returned facedown in front of the player, with the Targets kept separate from the Cutpurse.

▷ **5-6 Players:**

Draw 3 **Townsfolk** cards and place them faceup above the Square to form a **Display** of public Targets. *To assist new players, place a **Target Token** 🧍 on each matching character in the Square.* Then, deal 2 **Townsfolk** cards from the deck to each player.

In secret at the **start of their first turn**, each player will select 1 card as their lead Cutpurse and slip the other beneath as their Shadow, both facedown.

Townsfolk deck

③

④

②

⑤

Townsfolk deck   *Display*

③

②

④

⑤

HOW TO PLAY

The player who most recently "borrowed" something (*intentionally or not*) goes first. *whether they gave it back or not is another story...*

Players take turns clockwise around the table. Each player's turn consists of two phases: the **Slip Phase** and the **Nick Phase**.

Slip Phase (*Mandatory*)

Each player starts their turn by rolling all 3 Slip Dice. The results indicate which characters they can move during their turn. If a player rolls doubles or triples, they may also activate a special ability. (*see p.5 "Rolling Doubles & Triples"*).

Character Card Movement

To move a character in the Square, the active player selects any faceup or facedown card (*occupied or unoccupied*) with a Trait that matches one of their rolled dice. They then swap that card's position with any orthogonally adjacent card (*above, below, left, or right*).

Once a card has been moved, set the corresponding die aside; it is now considered "spent." If you have remaining **Slip Dice**, you may use their movement on a new card, or one you moved earlier. If you have no **Slip Dice** left, proceed to the **Nick Phase** (*see p.5-6*). _All Slip Dice must be spent during this phase._

If a character card is on the edge of the Square, there are 3 orthogonally adjacent cards they can swap positions with (*fig. 1*); in a corner, there are only 2 (*fig.2*).
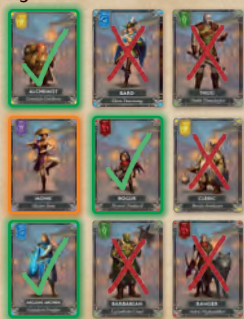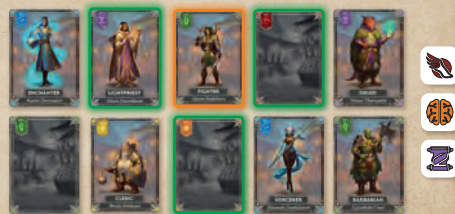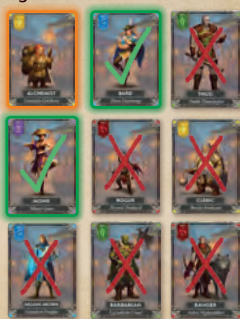
Example

You roll Constitution 🛡, Strength ✊ and Wisdom 📜. If you want to move the Fighter in the centre, you have multiple options.

① You could use Strength ✊ to switch the Fighter ✊ with any of the 4 adjacent characters.

② If you wanted to save the Strength ✊ for use elsewhere, you could instead use:

Ⓐ Constitution 🛡 and switch with either character on the right or left; or

Ⓑ Wisdom 📜 and switch with the Monk above.

If you decide to use Constitution 🛡 to move the Alchemist on the left, switch the characters as seen above and set that die aside.

fig. 1

fig. 2

NOTE: As the game progresses, some characters will be flipped to their unoccupied side, indicating that they have left the Square, and are no longer in play. Cards on the unoccupied side can still be moved around the Square.

Sigil Tokens

If a player is unsatisfied with their roll, they may flip their **Sigil Token** to its inactive side to reroll **any number of dice**, keeping the new results.

Once a **Sigil Token** is used, it stays inactive until reset (**see *"Rolling Doubles/Triples"* on p.5**).

Active Side   *Inactive Side*

Rolling Doubles & Triples

If a player rolls doubles or triples of the same Trait on the Slip Dice, they announce that the matching special ability is available to them. They may choose to use this ability, then **must proceed** to use all Slip Dice for movement as described on p.4 "Character Card Movement."

Doubles: If two dice show the same Trait, you may (A) reset your Sigil Token, **or** (B) activate the matching special ability.

(A) Reset your Sigil Token

If your Sigil Token is on its inactive side, it may be reset by flipping the token to its active side.

(B) Activate an Ability

Inactive Side   *Active Side*

---

*The following special abilities activate **before** character movement:*

Charisma

Peek at the top card of the Townsfolk deck, then return it facedown on top of the deck.

Some special abilities have adjustments based on your player count

Constitution

Swap your active **Cutpurse:**

▷ **2-4 players:** Pick up your three cards (*2 Targets and 1 Cutpurse*). You may choose to keep the same Cutpurse or select a new one. Return the cards facedown, with your Targets separated from your chosen Cutpurse.

▷ **5-6 players:** Pick up both Cutpurse cards, and decide which one will be active. Return your cards facedown in front of you, with the lead Cutpurse on top. If the identity of your Cutpurse has already been revealed once (*see p.6*) this ability has no effect.

Dexterity

Move any 1 card in the Square (*occupied or unoccupied*) up to two times.
It does not need to have a Dexterity Trait.

Wisdom

In the Square, swap the positions of any two cards (*occupied or unoccupied*) sharing the same Trait.
They do not need to have the Wisdom Trait.

Intelligence

Swap 1 Target with 1 from the Townsfolk deck:

▷ **2-4 players:** Draw the top card from the Townsfolk deck, adding it to your 2 other Targets. Then shuffle any one of the 3 Targets in your hand back into the deck.

▷ **5-6 players:** Place the top card from the Townsfolk deck into the Display, then choose **any** Target from the Display to shuffle back into the Townsfolk deck.

---

*Strength is the only special ability used **after** character movement:*

Strength

During your **Nick Phase**, you may steal from or reveal a character *diagonally* adjacent to your Cutpurse. *Do not reveal whether or not you've done so to the other players! Doing so would expose more clues about your Cutpurse's identity.*

Triples: If all three dice show the same Trait, you may (A) reset your Sigil Token **or** (B) activate **any one ability of your choice.**

Nick Phase (*Optional*)

In the Nick Phase, the active player has three options: they may either (A) **Steal** from a Target, attempt to (B) **Reveal** an opponent's Cutpurse, or (C) **Pass** (*taking no action in this phase*).

The Fighter is your Cutpurse. The only characters you may Steal from **or** Reveal are shown in green.

(A) Steal

You may **Steal** from a Target who is **orthogonally adjacent** ↔ to your Cutpurse in the Square. *Only one Target may be stolen from on a player's turn.*

Steal (*Continued*)

① Select your Target

> **2-4 players**: The active player may steal from one of their two Targets, revealing it faceup in front of them.

> **5-6 players**: The active player selects a Target from the Display to steal from, then places the Target card from the Display faceup in front of them.

② Cut their Purse

Flip the matching character in the Square to its unoccupied (*dark*) side. *Without any coins in their pocket, they leave the Square. However, their unoccupied card may still be moved in the future.*

> **5-6 player game**, return their Target Token 🪙 to the supply.

③ Reap the Reward

Collect coins from the supply depending on where the **Target** was in the Square when the theft took place.

> **Corner of the Square:** Take $2
> **Edge of the Square:** Take $1.5
> **Center of the Square:** Take $1
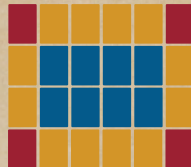
🟥 $2
🟨 $1.5
🟦 $1

④ Scout the Next Target

> **In a 2-4 player game,** the active player draws a new Target from the Townsfolk deck, looks at it in secret, then places it facedown in their play area, with the other Target they have remaining.

> **In a 5-6 player game**, a new Target from the Townsfolk deck is revealed faceup and added to the Display. Move the Target Token to the matching character in the Square.

Once resolved, this marks the end of the player's turn (*see p.7 "End of Turn"*).

Ⓑ Reveal

You may attempt to **Reveal** an opponent's Cutpurse who is **orthogonally adjacent** to your Cutpurse in the Square. *Only one Reveal may be attempted on a player's turn.*

Touch the card of the character in the Square you believe to be the Cutpurse and name the exact player you believe controls them. The accused player must truthfully answer either "correct" or "incorrect."
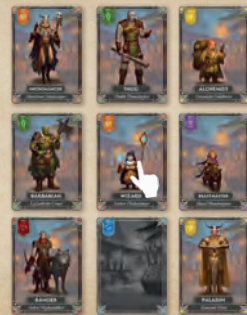
⌁ Example ⌁

Your Cutpurse, the *Thug,* is orthogonally adjacent to the *Wizard*, who you believe to be the Cutpurse of another player.

You touch the *Wizard* card in the Square, and name the player you believe is in control of them.

If correct

① **Claim** the Cutpurse card from the player who was revealed, placing it faceup in front of you. Flip the matching character card in the Square to its unoccupied (*dark*) side.

② That player must give you **$1** from their own haul. If they do not have any money, you earn nothing from them. (*Who steals from the poor?*)   The rich!

③ Additionally, you receive **$2** from the Thieves' Guild, which you take from the supply.

④ The player whose Cutpurse was revealed replaces it as follows:

> **2-4 players:** The player chooses one of their current Targets to become their Cutpurse, then draws a new Target from the Townsfolk deck.

> **5-6 players:** The player must use their Shadow for the rest of the game. **If their Shadow Cutpurse is revealed as well, they are eliminated from the game and can no longer earn or lose money.**

Be careful—if the Townsfolk deck runs out, you will not be able to get new Targets or Cutpurses!

If incorrect

① You **must** reveal your own Cutpurse to all players, then return it to your play area facedown.   *Ouch, that hurts!*

② No money is earned or lost in this situation.

Once resolved, this marks the end of the active player's turn (*see "End of Turn," below*).

Example (*Continued*)

Scenario A - You are correct!

Your opponent gives you their *Wizard*, and you place it faceup in your play area.

Supply   *Your opponent's play area*

Your play area   *The Square*

Scenario B - You are incorrect!

You are forced to reveal your own Cutpurse to your opponents, then return it to your play area facedown.

Reveal   *Return facedown*

© **Pass**

Chicken!

You do not wish to Steal or Reveal, so you end your turn.

END OF TURN

At the end of the active player's turn, they count their haul. If they've stolen **8 or more coins**, they immediately win the game! (*See "End of Game," below*) If not, play continues clockwise.

END OF GAME

The game ends as soon as a thief has pocketed 8+ coins. In this ruthless Square, there are no equal turns, no second chances, and certainly no second place. Only the first to earn the favor of the Thieves' Guild will join its ranks—while the others are left to scramble for the scraps in the shadows.

May your wits be sharp and your hands quicker than the rest!

SOLO PLAY

This is no longer a race, but a cunning dance... watch your toes!

Overview

Prepare to outwit rival thieves over **4 rounds**, vying for the favor of the Thieves' Guild. Your goal is simple: steal at least as much money as all of your Rivals combined. But to truly claim the title as the greatest thief in the realm, you'll need to outsmart and out-earn them all.

Setup

Begin with setup instructions 1-5 from p.3, and continue as follows:

⑥ Draw 3 cards from the Townsfolk deck and place them faceup above the Square to form a **Display**.

⑦ Choose one of those characters as your Cutpurse, placing it in front of you.

⑧ Draw a replacement to add to the Display. *These 3 Characters become the Targets for both you and your Rivals in the game.*

⑨ In the Square, place the Cutpurse Token 👝 on the Character matching your chosen Cutpurse.

⑩ Then, place a Target token 👛 on each of the 3 Characters in the Square that match the 3 Targets in the Display.

⑪ Collect $1 from the supply to start your haul.

⑫ Form a general supply of all Rival/Threat tokens.

*For a greater challenge: confident thieves can opt to play without **any** tokens—relying solely on their wits to outmaneuver and manipulate the characters in Skulduggery Square.*
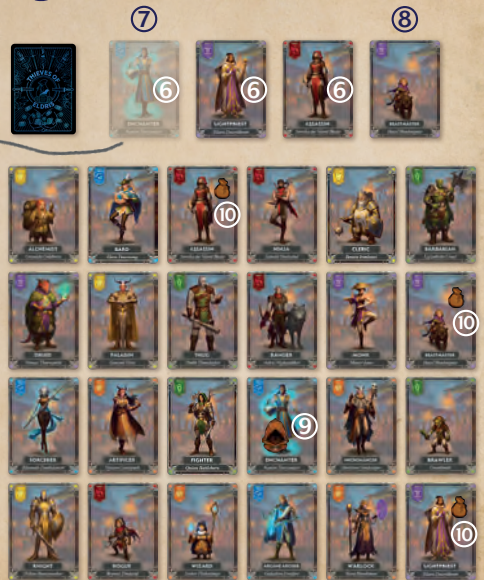
How to Play

Round Start

Begin each round by drawing 3 Rivals from the Townsfolk deck. **Carefully** fan the cards out faceup on the table so that only the topmost character is visible. For the two cards beneath it, only the Traits in the upper left-hand corners should be visible—nothing else.

Keep all details of the two bottommost cards—such as their names and features—hidden until instructed otherwise. Revealing this information could impact gameplay decisions.

*The topmost card, with all features visible, is a known **Rival**. The cards beneath it, showing only their Traits, are **Threats**. From this point forward, this entire fan of cards is collectively referred to as the **Foes' Stack**.*

Identify Threats and Rivals

Place a Rival token on the character in the Square that matches the topmost card of the Foes' Stack.

Rival *Threat*

Place Threat tokens on all **other characters** in the Square matching the Traits of the two concealed Threat cards.

Characters in the Square can hold only one Rival or Threat token, meaning a Rival cannot also be a Threat.

Example

① The Foes' Stack is formed, revealing the Bard as your Rival, and characters with the 📜 and 🏺 Traits as Threats.

② A Rival Token 🔴 is placed on the Bard in the Square.

③ Threat Tokens 🟠 are placed on all characters in the Square from the 📜 and 🏺 Traits that **do not** already have a Rival/Threat, Cutpurse, or Target token.
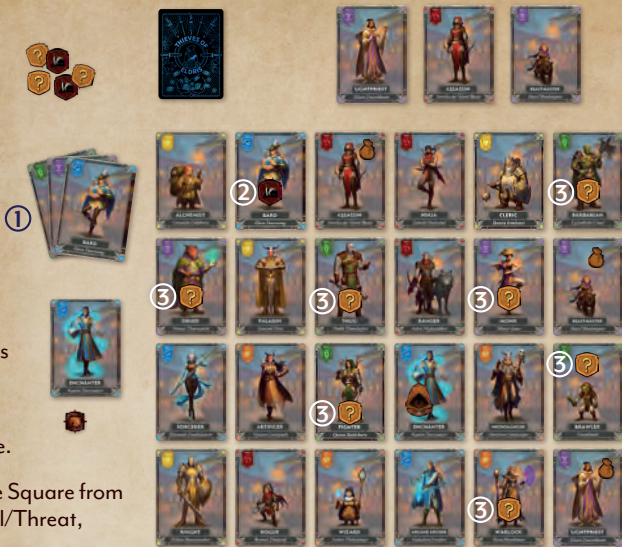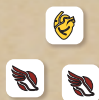
Slip Phase (*Mandatory*)

Begin your turn by rolling all 3 Slip Dice. The standard rules for the Slip Phase, including the effects of rolling doubles or triples, remain the same (*see pp. 4-5*).

Example

Rolling Doubles

After rolling doubles, you use Dexterity 🪶 to move the Assassin twice.

Before   *After*

Movement

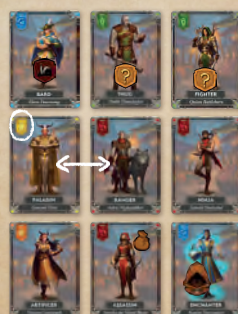You then use your Slip Dice for movement.

First, using 🪶 to move the Ranger.

Then your second 🪶 to move the Ninja.

And finally, the remaining 🟡 to move the Warlock.

Nick Phase (*Mandatory*)

In the solo game, resolving the Nick Phase is mandatory and there is a new **optional** action that may be taken: *Wagering.*

The structure for the Nick Phase is as follows:

(A) Wager: *Optional*

(B) Reveal (*and Resolve Wagers, if any were placed*): **Mandatory**

(C) Steal: **Mandatory**

In Solo, multiple Targets may be robbed on the same turn!

① Wager (*Optional*)

In any round where you choose not to Wager— skip this step and proceed directly to the "Reveal" step below.

When you have coins in your personal supply, you may choose to place a Wager if you suspect you know the identity of one or more Threats.

▷ Place exactly $1 from your haul on any number of characters **orthogonally adjacent** to your Cutpurse, with a Threat token, that you suspect could be a Rival.

Note: You cannot wager on a *known* Rival.

Example

You are orthogonally adjacent to two Threats—the *Ninja* and *Necromancer*. You place a wager of $1 on the *Ninja* as you feel comfortable with your odds. You forgo placing a wager on the *Necromancer* this round.

② Reveal (*and Resolve Wagers, if any were placed*)

Fan out the Foes' Stack to reveal the two hidden Threats. In the Square, flip both Threat tokens on the matching characters to their Rival side.

All other Threat tokens can now be removed from the Square, along with any Wager on them—that money is lost and returned to the supply.

Resolve Wagers

Any character with **both** a faceup Rival Token and a Wager will pay out before leaving the Square.

▷ Reclaim the $1 you Wagered and collect an additional $2 from the supply.   *Well bet!*

▷ Remove the Rival token from that character, returning it to the supply. Flip the card to its unoccupied (*dark*) side.

▷ The matching Rival card in the Foes' Stack is placed in your play area.

Scenario A: Correct Wager

All Threats are Revealed in the Foes' Stack:

As your wager for the Ninja was correct, you reclaim the $1 you wagered and gain an additional $2 from the supply.

Scenario: Incorrect Wager

All Threats are Revealed in the Foes' Stack:

As your wager for the Ninja was incorrect, the $1 you wagered is returned to the supply.

③ Steal (*Mandatory*)

Only the Targets in the Display (*with Target Tokens on the matching cards in the Square*) can be stolen from. To do so, follow these steps in order:

① **Rivals Steal first:** If any number of Rivals are orthogonally adjacent to an active Target (*character with a Target Token*), the Targets is robbed. **Resolve the theft immediately—see below.**

*No matter how many Rivals are adjacent to a Target, the Target is **only robbed once**. So, if a Target is on the edge of the Square, and surround by 1, 2, or 3 Rivals, those Rivals will only get $1.5 total, regardless of how many were there.*

Resolving Thefts

Theft resolution is the same, regardless of whether it was you or a Rival who robbed the Target.

Stealing Coins

The amount of coins stolen is determined by **the Target's position** in the Square:

- **Corner of the Square:** $2
- **Edge of the Square:** $1.5
- **Center of the Square:** $1

▷ Coins stolen by your Rivals should be placed near the Foes' Stack as their shared spoils.

▷ Coins your Cutpurse steals should be stored in your own play area.

Robbed Targets

Immediately after a Target is stolen from, their character card in the Square is flipped to the unoccupied (*dark*) side, their Target Token is returned to the supply, and the corresponding Target card is removed from the Display and discarded for the remainder of the game. The Target has left the Square coinless and can no longer be stolen from.
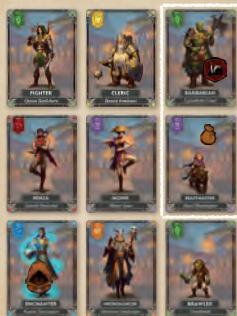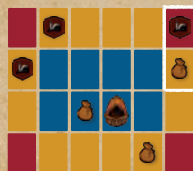
② **You Steal second:** If your Cutpurse is orthogonally adjacent to an active Target (*character with a Target Token*), the Targets is robbed. **Resolve the theft immediately.** *If the Rivals beat you to that Target... better luck next time.*

Lucky Targets: If neither you nor any Rivals are orthogonally adjacent to a Target, no theft occurs, and the Target remains in play for the next round.

⁓ Example ⁓

Rivals Steal First

The only Rival orthogonally adjacent to a Target is the *Barbarian*. They steal $1.5 from the *Beastmaster*, placing the coins near the Foes' Stack.
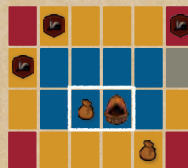

Then, the *Beastmaster's* Target token is returned to the supply, and its card in the Square is flipped over.

You Steal Second

Your Cutpurse is orthogonally adjacent to the *Assassin*, allowing you to steal $1.

Then, the Assassin's Target token is returned to the supply, and its card in the Square is flipped over.

NOTE: While the ☆ Lightpriest Target is nearby, it is not orthogonally adjacent, and you may not steal from them. *Unless you're using the Strength ability!*

③ **Stiff Competition:** If any number of Rivals are orthogonally adjacent to your Cutpurse, they will collect a total of $1.5 from you! *If you don't have $1.5 coins in your haul, they'll take as much as they can.*

After resolving thefts, begin a new round. *remember there are 4 rounds total!*

⟨ Prepare for the Next Round ⟩

If the 4th round has just ended, skip this section and proceed to "End of Game" below. Otherwise, prepare for the upcoming round by drawing cards from the Townsfolk deck to refill the Display, if needed, so that there are 3 Targets faceup.

Rivals from the Foes' Stack remain visible and in play for the following round.

Proceed with creating a new Foes' Stack as described on p.8 "How to Play." *So, after resolving the "Round Start" in round 2, there will be 4 known Rivals and 2 concealed Threats.*

⟨ End of Game ⟩

At the end of round 4, compare the total number of coins in your haul to that of your Rivals'.

If you've collected as much, or more coins than your Rivals, you win, and earn a spot in the Thieves' Guild!

If your Rivals have stolen more coins than you, you lose your spot in the Guild. Get back to the Square—your skills, and your blade, need sharpening.

Solo Scoring

0-3 coins "Petty Pickpocket"	Barely worth the risk.
4-6 coins "Street Scoundrel"	A decent haul, but not good enough for the Guild.
7-9 coins "Skilled Swindler"	Your sharp instincts and quick wits have paid off handsomely.
10+ coins "Legend Among Thieves"	Whispers of your stealth spread throughout the Guild, and they're envious of your haul!

Index

CREDITS