

Kinga

Patience meets Deckbuilding - a solo game of chaining and court intrigue by Jacob Peck.

Equipment

- A deck of standard playing cards with 2 jokers.
- Tablespace, but not much.

Object

The object of Kinga is to bribe/influence your way up the ladder of all four royal families, revealing the kings. But beware! If your influence slips for too long, the Kings will figure out what you're trying to do and order your execution!

Setup

Separate the pack into four piles based on suit, plus two jokers. Sort each pile by rank, with king on bottom and ace on top, all face up. To the two jokers, add the top two cards from each pile (ace and 2 of each suit) to form your starting deck. Shuffle this well, and place it face down in front of you. This is your draw pile. Deal yourself a hand of 4 cards from your draw pile, and the game begins.

You'll also need some space for another pile of cards that have been Exiled. Initially there will be no cards Exiled, but there will be cards placed there during the game.

Looking through piles

You are allowed to look through any of the 4 suit piles (though they'll be in order, so no real reason to), your current discard pile, and the Exiled Cards pile at any point during the game. You may *never* change the order of the suit piles, but the order of the Exiled cards and your current discard piles never matters.

You are *not* allowed to look through your current draw deck.

On reshuffling

You reshuffle your discard pile *only* when you need to draw a card and your discard pile is empty, never before.

For example, you need to draw three cards and your draw pile has two left, so you draw those two into hand, then reshuffle your discard pile into a new draw deck from which to draw your third card.

On your turn

On your turn, you must perform one of two actions:

- Influence a card, or
- Exile a card from your hand

If you are unable to do either of these, you must Raise Suspicion instead.

Following this, you must perform Cleanup, and then take your next turn.

Influence a card

To influence a card, you must play cards from your hand to generate Influence in the proper suits.

You generate influence by playing cards from your hand. Your first card determines the base value of your generated influence for the turn. Each successive card played must match either suit or rank of the previously played card and adds one additional Influence to your generated amount.

After you're done playing cards, you figure out how much Influence you've generated, and in which suits. Your generated Influence may be spent to Influence cards of any suit of the cards played to generate it. For example, if you play 4♠, 3♠, and 3♥, you've generated $4+1+1 = 6$ Influence, in the suits ♠♥.

You then select the top card of a suit pile that matches one of the suits of your generated Influence. If you have that card's rank +1 of generated influence (for example, 8♠ Influence to persuade the 7♠ card), you have successfully Influenced the card, and place it on your discard pile. Proceed to Cleanup.

You may only perform a single Influence action on your turn, and you may only Influence the top card of the suit stacks. Your generated Influence may only be used to Influence a single card, and any excess generated Influence is lost.

Jokers

Jokers do not have a rank, but they match any suit. Playing a joker during your turn allows you to chain together cards that do not match suit or rank, allowing you to generate more Influence than you normally may be able to. Additionally, the presence of a Joker in your play allows you to use the generated Influence for any suit.

A single Joker in a play does *not* add to your Influence value, and Jokers *cannot* be the first card you play for your Influence action. Two Jokers in the same play *do* add to your Influence value as normal, being worth 1 Influence each.

For example:

4♠, 3♠, Joker, 5♥ generates $4+1+1 = 6$ Influence, in all suits.

4♠, Joker, Joker, 5♥ generates $4+1+1+1 = 7$ Influence, in all suits.

Three's Company

If you play three cards of a single rank during a play, you may immediately draw another card into your hand.

Harmony

If you play all four suits into a single play, not counting Jokers, you may immediately draw another two cards into your hand. This may stack with the Three's Company rule above, meaning that a play of 4♠, 4♥, 4♦, 5♦, 5♣ would net you a total of 3 new cards drawn into hand (1 for the 3-of-a-kind 4's, and 2 for the four suits), as would a play of four of a kind (for the same reason).

Fives, Eights, Tens

When you successfully Influence a 5, 8, or 10 of any suit, immediately before you place the Influenced card on your discard pile, you may immediately Exile any one card from your hand or discard pile, by placing it face up in the Exiled Cards pile.

Queens

When you successfully Influence a Queen of any suit, if the King underneath that pile is not turned sideways, turn it sideways immediately. This puts pressure on you -- you have fewer chances to Raise Suspicion before the end of the game now.

When you successfully Influence the fourth and final Queen, the game is over, and you win! The Kings are now under your thumb, and you have immense power in the lands. Time to install your puppet government...

Exile a card from your hand

Your second option of play to make is Exiling a card from your hand. To Exile a card, you must have another card of matching suit and higher rank in your hand. Discard all cards aside from the one you wish to Exile, and place the Exiled card face up in the Exiled Cards pile. Then move on to Cleanup.

Jokers may not be Exiled, nor may they be used to Exile another card.

Raise Suspicion

If you were unable to either Influence or Exile a card this turn, you are forced to Raise Suspicion.

To Raise Suspicion, you must turn the King at the bottom of a suit pile 90 degrees, such that it lies sideways, perpendicular to the rest of the pile. You can only turn Kings that are not already turned sideways, though it is your choice of which upright king to turn.

If you need to Raise Suspicion and all four Kings are already turned, then you have made too many mistakes on your way up the chain, and the Kings have ordered your execution! You lose -- game over.

Else, proceed to Cleanup.

Cleanup

If you Exiled a card this turn, simply draw a new hand of four cards, and begin your next turn.

If you Influenced a card or were forced to Raise Suspicion this turn, you may decide to keep one remaining card in your hand (if any), but this is optional. Then discard all other cards in your hand, and all cards played that turn, and draw enough cards to go back up to a hand of 4.

Scoring

Whether you win or lose, you can determine a score. It's simple: how many kings did you expose? A score of 4 is always a win, but a score of 3 should be considered a well played game.

Hardcore Variant

If you want to play an even harder game, make the following tweaks to the rules above:

Single Jokers no longer transform your currency into 4-suited currency and may only be used as connections between disparate cards. Double Jokers still work as before, however.

You may only Exile if you are unable to purchase anything with your current hand, or from the purchase bonus of a 5, 8, or 10.

You no longer have the option of keeping one or more cards in your hand after a purchase, but instead *must* keep all unused cards in your hand, drawing up to a total of 4 at the end of the turn. You may not "overpay" to avoid this -- you must purchase cards using the minimum possible number of cards from your hand.

If you somehow end your turn with more than 4 cards in your hand, discard down to four randomly.

That should make the game sufficiently hard... and all the more rewarding.