



MUDWATER

SWAMP • ORIGINS



♦ ♦ RULES OF PLAY ♦ ♦ 2 PLAYERS • ABOUT 10 MINUTES

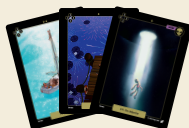
♦ WELCOME TO MUDWATER ♦

Out past the docks, where the yacht club lights give way to fog and lily pads, the Apes play for keeps.

Mudwater is a head-to-head card game for two players. Play your Apes into the swamp, outnumber your rival on the edges that touch, and take their squares out from under them.

Objective: control **more of the nine squares** than your opponent when the board fills up. Win, and you take one of their cards home.

♦ WHAT YOU NEED ♦



14 Mudwater cards per player, from your own collection.

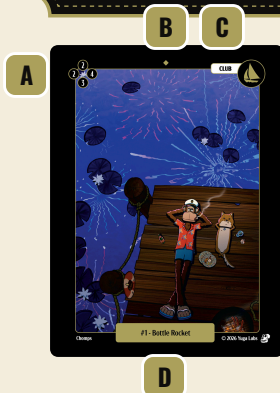


The playmat — or any 3x3 grid that fits cards lying sideways.



Color markers, about 9 per player. Black and white work great.

♦ PARTS OF A CARD ♦



A EDGE NUMBERS
One for each side, set out like a compass. Each guards the side it points toward. **Higher is stronger.**

B LEVEL
One to five diamonds.

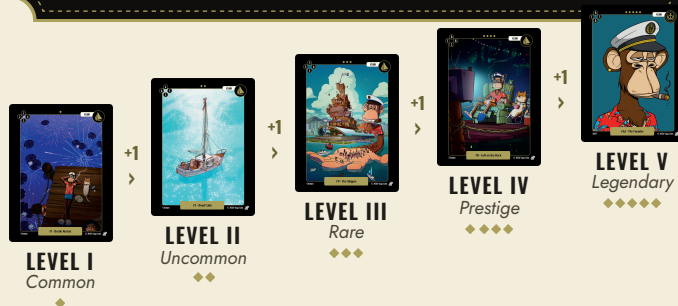
C FAMILY
Club, Mutant, Cosmic or Arcana. Only matters in Advanced Mode.

D NUMBER & NAME
Every card has its own number, 1 to 120. No two cards in a hand may share one.

THE GAME IN 30 SECONDS

- ♦ On your turn, play **one card**.
- ♦ **Level I** cards go face up into empty squares. Higher Levels go on **top** of squares you control, one Level at a time. Any card can go face down as a **rock** — but only **one rock at a time**.
- ♦ A card played face up captures every enemy card next to it with a **lower touching number**.
- ♦ When all nine squares are filled, whoever holds the most wins.

♦ THE FIVE LEVELS ♦



CLIMBING THE LADDER

- ♦ Only **Level I** cards can be played face up into an **empty square**.
- ♦ Every other card goes face up **on top of a square you control**, exactly **one Level higher**: II on I, III on II, IV on III, V on IV.
- ♦ Any card can also be played **face down** as a rock (see back).

♦ BUILDING YOUR HAND ♦

- ♦ There's no starter deck. Before each game, secretly choose **14 different cards** from the cards you've pulled from packs. Keep them hidden.
- ♦ You'll play with 13. One is set aside at random as the **ante**.

A GOOD FIRST HAND — just a suggestion for beginners

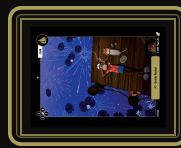
LEVEL I x5	LEVEL II x3	LEVEL III x2	LEVEL IV x2	LEVEL V x1	ANY CARD x1	= 14 CARDS
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Tip: any card in your hand could be drawn as the ante, so only bring cards you're willing to play for.

♦ SETTING UP ♦

- 1 Lay out the **playmat** and sit on the long sides, each facing a MUDWATER logo.
- 2 Choose **colors**. One player takes black color markers, the other white.
- 3 **Ante up**. Shuffle your 14 cards face down and let your opponent draw one. Set it face down beside the mat, unseen. Your other 13 cards are your hand.
- 4 Flip a **coin** to see who goes first. In a rematch, whoever went second goes first.

◀ TOP



◀ TOP



CARDS PLAY SIDWAYS

Every card faces the same way, no matter who played it — its top points the same way as the skull in the mat's center square.

◆ YOUR TURN ◆

Players take turns. On your turn, do **exactly one** of these four things — then it's your opponent's turn.



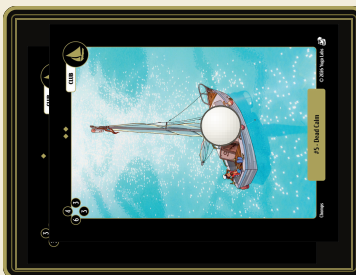
1 PLACE

Play a **Level 1** card **face up** into an empty square and put your color marker on it. Then check for captures.



2 ROCK

Play **any card face down** into an empty square, with your marker. A rock captures nothing, can **never** be captured, and counts as **Level 1** for your upgrades. **Only one rock at a time** — once it's covered, you can play another.



3 UPGRADE

Play a card **exactly one Level higher** on top of a square **you control** — even one you captured, or your own rock. Move your marker to the top, then check for captures.



4 PASS

Only if you have **no legal move** — you must pass then. If both players pass in a row, the game ends.

WHERE CAN I PLAY? (YOU ARE BLACK)



EMPTY SQUARE

Place a Level 1 face up, or **Rock** any card face down.



YOUR SQUARE

Upgrade with a card exactly one Level higher.



THEIR SQUARE

Never. Capture it instead.

◆ CAPTURING ◆

Whenever you play a card **face up** — by placing it or upgrading — it looks for captures. For each enemy card right next to it (above, below, left or right — not diagonal), compare the **two numbers that touch**. Numbers are shown large below; the **gold** pair is the one being compared.

HIGHER WINS



TIES HOLD



Black plays The Deckhand. Its **4** beats a **3**, so Black swaps White's marker for a black one. Its **2** against a **2** is a tie — nothing changes.

- ◆ **Higher wins.** The captured card stays put — only the color marker changes.
- ◆ **No chain reactions.** A captured card doesn't go on to capture its neighbors.
- ◆ **Rocks are safe.** A face-down card can never be captured.
- ◆ **Look once.** A card only looks for captures on the turn it's played.

◆ WINNING THE GAME ◆

The game ends the moment the **ninth square is filled** — or when **both players pass** in a row. You don't need to empty your hand.

- ◆ **Count your squares.** Each square with your color marker on it counts as one.
- ◆ **Most squares wins!** On a full board someone always holds at least five.

CLAIM THE ANTE

Both players turn over their ante. The **winner takes the loser's ante card** — for keeps — and takes back their own.

◆ ADVANCED MODE OPTIONAL ◆

Ready for more? In Advanced Mode, **families break ties**. Both players must agree before the first turn.



- ◆ If the touching numbers are **equal**, your card captures when its family **beats** theirs.
- ◆ Each family beats the next one around the circle.
- ◆ Opposite families are neutral: ties hold.
- ◆ A lower number **never** beats a higher one, and rocks still can't be captured.