

# CROWN RIVALS

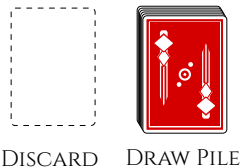
A DECK-BUILDING GAME FOR TWO

by Mike Berg

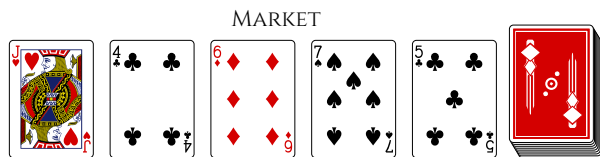
Crown Rivals is a deckbuilding game of palace intrigue, using standard playing cards.

## SETUP

1. Remove the Jokers, King & Queen of Diamonds, and King & Queen of Spades from the game.
2. Separate the Aces, 2s, and 3s from the deck. Shuffle the Aces and deal two to each player. Shuffle the 2s and deal two to each player. Shuffle the 3s and deal two to each player. Each player shuffles their cards and places them face-down in front of them to form their **Draw Pile**.
3. Shuffle the remaining cards and deal five cards in a row, face-up in the middle of the table. This is the **Market**. Place the remaining cards face-down beside them. This is the **Market Deck**.
4. Each player draws five cards from their **Draw Pile** into their hand. Whoever has the Ace of Spades goes first. If no one has it, whoever has the 2 of Spades goes first.



PLAYER 2  
PLAY AREA



PLAYER 1  
PLAY AREA



There is a **Discard Pile** to the right of your **Draw Pile**. Discarded cards are placed face-up.

Each player starts with 50 **Influence**. Use a pencil and paper to keep track of your scores.

## ACES

Aces are worth 1, and count as "odd" cards.

## TURN SEQUENCE

During your turn, you can use your cards in two ways:

### PLAY CARDS

Place any or all of your cards in front of you to use their **Abilities**, as shown on the next page.

### BUY CARDS

**Discard** cards from your hand to use them as **Currency**. Currency can be used to buy one or more cards from the trade row. The amount of Currency gained is equal to the total value of the discarded card(s). The cost of each card in the Market is the value of the card. Put the bought card(s) on your Discard Pile.

When a card is bought, immediately place a card from the Market Deck in the empty space in the Market.

Cards discarded for Currency do not count as "Played" cards, and go directly to your Discard Pile.

### END OF TURN

Unused Currency does not carry over to the next turn.


If you have Clubs cards with leftover damage, but it's not enough to clear a Spade card still in play, that leftover damage does not carry over to the next turn and is lost.


Any cards you can't or don't want to use must be discarded.


When finished, put all played cards (except Spades) in your Discard Pile and draw 5 new cards.


If your Draw Pile is empty and you need to draw another card, shuffle your Discard Pile and turn it over to create your new Draw Pile. If you still don't have enough cards to draw a full hand of 5 cards, you have to work with the cards you have.

## CARD ABILITIES

 **Damage.** *You have revealed some shady truth about your opponent.* Reduce their Influence by the amount on the card.

 **Heal.** *You are gaining popularity with the masses.* Increase your Influence by the amount on the card.

 **Rabble.** *A distraction that must be dealt with!* Place the card sideways in front of you. Your opponent must use Clubs equal to the value of the Spade to remove it **before** Clubs can be used to reduce your Influence. If they play Clubs greater than the value of the Spade, the leftover damage can be applied to your Influence. When removed, Spades go into their owner's Discard Pile. You may have multiple Rabble cards in play.

 **Upgrade.** *New information has made your efforts pay off.* Play **with** a Heart, Club or Spade to upgrade it:

- If the Diamond is **lower**, gain +3 for the card.
- If the number of the two cards **match**, upgrade it by that number (ie, double the value of the card).
- If the Diamond is **higher**, the card is upgraded to the value of the Diamond.

When played with a Spade, the Diamond stays in play until the Spade is removed; place it just under the Spade so that both players can see it.

A Jack of Diamonds would have no effect when played with a 10; play it with a lower card to increase it to 10.

Only **one** Diamond can be played with each card, but you can choose to play a Diamond on its own — upgrading nothing — just to get an Odd/Even Bonus.

## FACE CARDS

**Jacks** count as 10. When played, you may **Trash** any face-up card in the Market (remove it from the game). If a Jack is discarded for Currency **along with an Ace**, the Ace changes its value to 11 (Jack + Ace = 21 Currency).

**Kings and Queens** count as 40.

The Card Abilities above still apply to face cards.





## ODD/EVEN BONUSES

If you play 2 odd-numbered cards of the same suit – or 2 even-numbered cards of the same suit – in one turn, you get the following bonuses:

 Your **opponent must discard** a card from their hand.

 You may **draw a card**.

 You may **remove 1 Spade card** of any value from your opponent's play area.

 **Trash a card** in your hand or discard pile (remove it from the game).

It is possible to get multiple Odd/Even Bonuses in one turn.

Cards can only be used for **one** Odd/Even Bonus. For example: a 3, 5 and 7 provide one bonus, not two.

**NOTE:** Jacks, Queens, Kings, and cards that are discarded for Currency cannot be used for Odd/Even Bonuses.

## CROWDED HOUSE

If there are ever 3 Kings and/or Queens in the Market (2 Ks + 1Q, or 2Qs and 1K), immediately shuffle the Market into the Market Deck and draw 5 cards to create a new Market.

## GAME END

Lower your opponent's Influence to 0, or increase your Influence to 100 to win.

## QUESTIONS?

Post a comment here and I'll get back to you:

<https://weheartgames.itch.io/crown-rivals>

## THANKS

This game is the answer to the question, "Could I make a game like [Star Realms](#), with regular playing cards?"

If you like this game, check it out; the digital version is free.



Card art by [Chris Aguilar](#).

# CROWN RIVALS


## QUICK REFERENCE CARDS

### CARD ABILITIES

 **Lower INF**      **Rabble**  
 **Raise INF**      **Upgrade**

 **Upgrades:**     Lower: +3  
   Equal: x2  
   Higher: value of 



### ODD/EVEN BONUSES

 **Opponent Discards**      **Remove Rabble**  
 **Draw a card**      **Trash a card**





**Jacks** = 10; trash a card in the Market  
**Jack + Ace** = 21 Currency  
**Kings & Queens** = 40

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**Jack + Ace** = 21 Currency  
**Kings & Queens** = 40