

# ThreeBeTween

2-6 Players 15 Minutes

**Preparation:** A deck of Alpha Playing Cards, and a pen and paper for scoring.

**Summary:** ThreeBeTween is a push your luck game played in rounds with players taking turns (usually several) during each round. Your goal is to make as many points in a round as you can without going Bust (losing all your points for that round). You are dealt two Limit Cards at the round set-up and you try to get up to three cards in between them. The cards are worth points and every card you can add in between your Limit Cards increases your scoring possibility, but if you are unsuccessful in adding a card you will Bust losing all your points for that round.

**Start the Game:** Select someone to be the first dealer. Players take turns being the dealer, at the end of each round the deal passes to the left.

**Rounds:** A round has three phases. The Set-Up Phase where players get dealt their two limit cards, the Turn Phase where players take turns and the Tally Phase where players scores are tallied up.

**The Set-up Phase:** The current dealer deals out two cards face up to each player (including himself). These two cards are called your limit cards and mark two points in the alphabet. The object is to try and get three letter cards alphabetically between your limit cards, so the more letters that are in between the two Limit Card letters the better chance you have of a success. You place the two cards so that the letter card that is closest to A is on your left and the letter card that is closest to Z is on your right. You should leave enough room between the two cards so there is room for three more cards to fit in between them. You can play a vowel card as any of the two vowels that best works for you by rotating the card so that the vowel you want it to be is on the top right of that card.

You may if you wish discard one of the two cards before placing them and get dealt a replacement cards, but you must discard before getting the replacement card and you can only do this once during the Set-up Phase. If you don't like the new card you get or it causes you to bust...oh well. It is possible to bust when getting dealt your limit cards, but you can still use the replacement option if you haven't yet.

In the Set-up Phase the dealer deals out everyone's two Limit Cards first, and then goes around again to see if anyone wishes to use the discard option. Once everyone has their two Limit Cards set, the Turn Phase begins.

**Turn Phase:** The current dealer starts with the player on his left and gives each player a turn one at a time. Once a player is done with his turn the dealer moves to the next player. It is normal for some players to have more turns than others during a round. When you Pass or Bust you are done playing for the round and must wait until the next round to continue to play.

You have three options on your turn; you can either Draw Cards, Bank (if you made a ThreeBeTween) or Pass.

- **Draw Cards:** You draw cards to try and fill the three spaces in between your Limit Cards. The number of cards you get dealt depends on the number of spaces you still need to fill. Cards are always dealt face up. *Example: On your first turn in a round you will have 3 empty spaces and get 3 cards. However, if you already have 1 card in between from a previous turn in that round then you would only get dealt 2 cards.* Once you get dealt the cards you must use at least one of the cards or you will Bust. To use a card it must fall alphabetically in between your Limit Cards and cannot already be represented between the Limit Cards. *Example: If your start card is E and your end card is N, and you have been dealt an L card it can be played on an empty space, but if there is already an L card present then you can't play the second L card.* The alphabetical order of the cards in between your Limit Cards does not matter, but if you really feel like it you can shift the cards around so that they do. If a card does fit you do not have to play the card if you don't want to. You can play a vowel card as any of the two vowels that best works for you by rotating the card so that the vowel you want it to be is on the top right of that card, but once played it cannot be changed to the other vowel. If you are successful in playing cards to all three of your empty spaces that is called a ThreeBeTween (oddly enough) and on your next turn you can either Bank or Pass. Any cards that cannot be played or you choose not to play are discarded to the discard pile. If the dealer runs out of cards then the discard pile is reshuffled. The next player still in the round now gets his turn.

- **Bank (Made a ThreeBeTween):** If on your previous turn you were able to make a ThreeBeTween you can (if you want) Bank the points, get two new Limit Cards and try for even more points on your next turn(s). To Bank add up the points from the upper left of the cards on all five cards. Write the total from the cards on your score sheet under your current score, but do not add it to your current score yet (it is still possible to lose these points). Discard the five cards and the dealer then deals you two new Limit Cards face up. Place the two new Limit cards like you did in the Set-up Phase, however you do not have the option to discard one of the Limit Cards and draw a new one. You must use the cards you get and if both cards are exactly the same card you Bust. The next player still in the round now gets his turn.
- **Pass:** The only way to add points to your current score is to pass. If you Pass total the points from your cards (add up the numbers on the upper left corner from each card) and mark it on the score sheet under your current score. The next player still in the round now gets his turn.
- **Bust:** There are two ways to bust. The first way is to draw cards on your turn and not play at least one card when trying to play cards between your Limit Cards. The second is if the Limit Cards you draw are exactly the same. *Example: You draw two L cards or you draw two A/E\* cards (even though you can play a vowel card as either vowel, when drawing Limit Cards if the two vowel cards are the exact same that is considered a bust).* *Note: that a A/E card is not exactly the same as a A/I card.* When you bust you score zero for that round and lose all banked points (if you had any), place a line through the banked points to cancel them out. Discard any cards you have into the discard pile.

**Tally Phase:** Once everyone has dropped out of the round because they either Passed or Busted the Tally Phase begins. Players that have busted score zero points for the round, so add zero to their current score (that was easy). Players that Passed add all the Banked points and card points that you earned to your current score, total and then place a box around your new score to show that is your new current score. Check the score to see if the Game Over condition has happened, if not the next player to deal collects all the cards, shuffles and starts the Set-up Phase.

**Game Over:** After the scores have been tallied in the Tally Phase, if one or more players has at least 100 points the game ends. The player with the most point wins.

**The Wild Card:** The wild card (the one with a ? on it) is a little different then the other cards, it is never an actual letter in the game and so has slightly different rules then the other cards with letters on them. How you use it depends on when in the game you get dealt a wild card (which is one of two ways).

- If you get dealt a wild card when you are being dealt your Limit Cards the rule is: a wild comes before A alphabetical and after Z alphabetical. It all depends on where you place it when placing the Limit Cards. If you place it on the right it is after Z and to the left it then magically comes before A. If you are lucky enough to get dealt both, then any card from A-Z will fit between them.
- If you get dealt a wild when trying to get letter cards between your two Limit cards, then it just takes one of the three spaces in between. The wild card is the only card that can already be represented between your Limit cards and still be placed there.

\*Since there are two vowels on the vowel cards, when referencing a vowel card there is a / between the two letters that would be on that card. *Example a A/E would mean the card has the letter A and the letter E on it.*