

Love Letter

· Deduction · 2–6 · 20 min

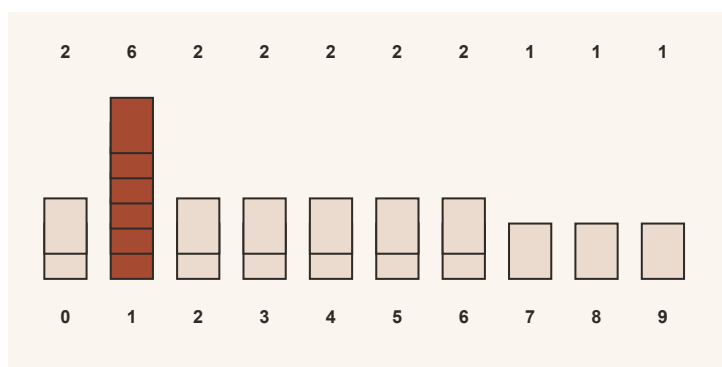
GOAL

Win enough rounds to collect the required number of favour tokens.

YOUR TURN

You always hold **exactly one card**. On your turn **draw** one, then **play** one of your two face up in front of you and fully resolve it.

Leave played cards visible so everyone can see what has gone. You cannot choose a player protected by the **Handmaid**; if everyone else is protected, Guard, Priest, Baron and King have no effect. The Prince must target yourself.



Official 21-card edition: 0×2 · 1×6 · 2–6 have 2 each · 7–9 have 1 each. Each column is one value.

All 21 cards

- **0 Spy** ×2. No effect. If at the end of the round you are the only player still in who played or discarded a Spy, gain an extra token.
- **1 Guard** ×6. Choose a player and name a card that is *not* a Guard. If you are right, they are out.
- **2 Priest** ×2. Privately look at a chosen player's hand.
- **3 Baron** ×2. Privately compare hands. The lower value is out, and a tie eliminates nobody.
- **4 Handmaid** ×2. Until your next turn, other players cannot choose you.
- **5 Prince** ×2. A chosen player, possibly you, discards their hand and draws a new card. If the deck is empty, they take the card set aside at setup.
- **6 Chancellor** ×2. Draw 2 cards, keep 1 of the 3, put the other 2 face down at the bottom of the deck.
- **7 King** ×1. Trade hands with a chosen player.
- **8 Countess** ×1. No effect, but you **must** play her if your other card is the King or a Prince.
- **9 Princess** ×1. If you play or discard her for any reason, you are **immediately out**.

The Countess is the only card that can force your move. Holding the Countess with a King or Prince leaves you no choice.

Round end and setup

A round ends when **one player** is left, or when the deck runs out; then everyone left reveals their hand and the **highest** value wins. On a tie, every tied player gains a token.

Tokens needed to win: 2 players $\rightarrow 6 \cdot 3 \rightarrow 5 \cdot 4 \rightarrow 4 \cdot 5 \rightarrow 3 \cdot 6 \rightarrow 3$.

Shuffle all 21 cards and set one **aside face down**, then deal 1 card each. With **2 players**, also set 3 cards aside **face up**, so you both know what is out.

Classic 16-card edition: 5 Guards, no Spies or Chancellors. King, Countess and Princess rank 6, 7 and 8, so removing cards from the new deck is not a complete conversion. Classic therefore has 5 Guards but no Spies; 5 Guards + 2 Spies is not a standard deck.

Source: [Z-Man Games official rulebook](#). Diagram is original.

Details that matter

If only one card remains when playing the Chancellor, draw it and return one to the bottom. With an empty deck, the Chancellor has no effect. The Countess rule does not apply to cards temporarily drawn for the Chancellor.

Further sources: [Z-Man 21-card edition](#)
