

COUPELL

*co-operating to make longer words
whilst being perfectly balanced at the end*

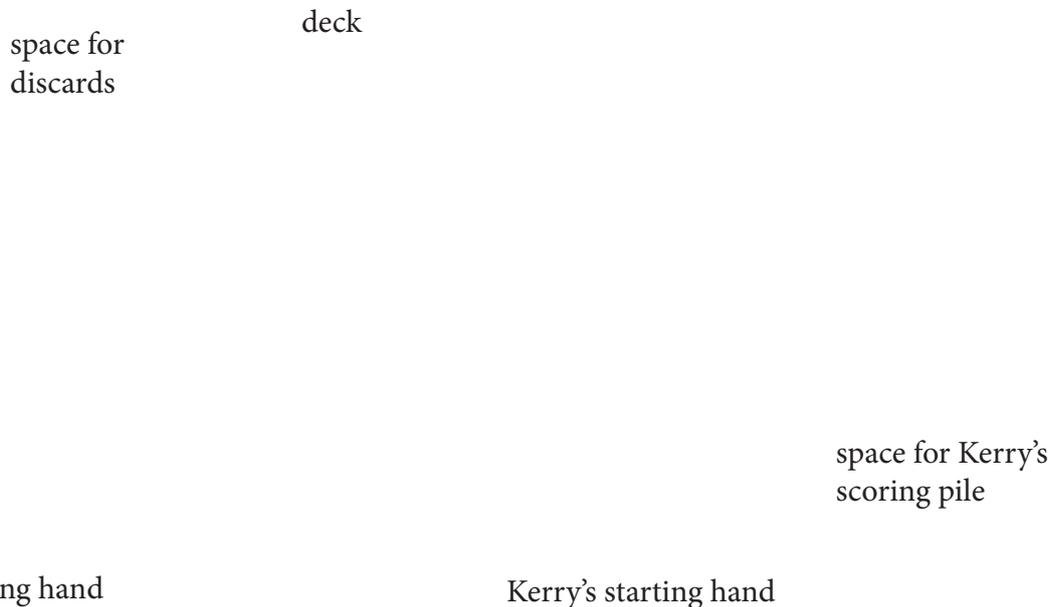
25-40 minutes 2 players

In this game you are a team, trying to get the best score you can! Work together, re-arrange cards and make words to score points. The goal is to score the most, whilst ensuring your score piles are perfectly balanced at the end!

Setup:

Deal each player 3 cards face-up – your ‘hand’. You can either hold them in your hand or place them on a table. You should be able to see each other’s cards.

You may never change their order unless using an action.



Each turn:

- 1 - Draw 3 cards**
- 2 - Perform up to 2 actions**
- 3 - Count your cards/check for failure**
(details of these 3 steps are below)

Draw 3 cards

These should be drawn and added to the end of your hand one at a time. You may not change the order of your cards.

Perform up to 2 actions

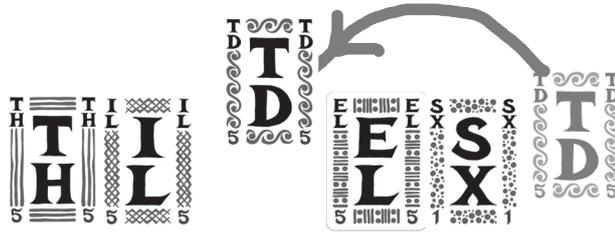
Choose any of the following actions. You may perform the same action twice.

You may perform one, or even no, actions if you wish.

Move a card in your partner's hand

Take one of the cards in your partner's hand and place it elsewhere in their hand.

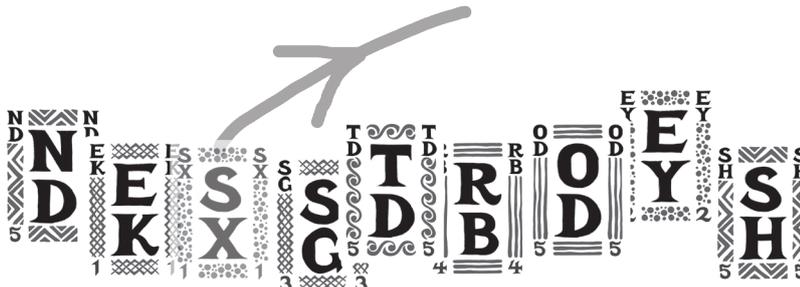
Example: Joost moves Kerry's card to set her up. (She can now spell 'TIDES'.)



Give your partner a card

Take one of the cards from your hand. Place it anywhere in your partner's hand.

Example: Joost sets himself up. (By removing the blocking card he can spell 'DESTROYS'.)



Claim a word

4 or more adjacent cards may be discarded from your own hand IF they spell a word of at least 4 letters, using exactly one letter from each card, from left to right.

You may not check a dictionary until you use this action – if you are unsure of the spelling, check the dictionary afterwards. If the word was wrongly spelled, or not a real word, your cards are kept and the action is wasted.

When you claim a word, place the first 3 cards into a communal discard pile. The remainder go into a face-down personal score pile (scoring 1 pt per card).

Examples: A 4-letter word scores 1 pt whilst a 6-letter word scores 3 pts.

Example: On her turn, Kerry scores 'TIDES', to get 2 pts.



Example: On his next turn, Joost scores 'DESTROYS' and scores 5pts.



Count your cards/Check for failure

You are allowed to have 8 or fewer cards at the end of the turn. If the active player has 9 or more cards in their hand at the end of the turn, the game is lost and immediately ends.

Note: you may have more cards at any other time – you just need to ensure you can make a word or give away cards so as to have fewer than 9 at the end of your own turn.

Example: At the end of Joost's turn, he had 7 cards. He was then given a card and drew 3, putting him at 11 cards at the start of his turn. He now claims a word, bringing him below 9 cards by the end of the turn. This is perfectly fine.

End of game:

Take 2 final turns after the deck ends

If you draw the last card of the deck, the game is almost over. Each player has one final turn where they don't draw a card but can use actions to rearrange cards, or score a word.

Check your scores are in balance

Check your personal score piles. If they are not identical in number of cards, you both lose!

Otherwise, you both win! Try to beat your personal best, or gauge yourselves below.

4-6: OK.

I'm sure you can do better if you try again!

7-8: Good!

Try to make some even longer words next time.

9-10: Very good!

Maybe you can increase the difficulty? (see below)

11-12: Great!

You are working well together and your planning is superb!

13+: Awesome!

You are a seriously skilled couple at playing Coupell!

19+: Incredible.

Literally incredible. I think you must be playing wrongly.

Example: Bez and Elena finish with 12 cards in Elena's score pile and 11 cards in Bez's. They lose as they did not maintain balance.

Example: Aiden and Laura finish with 7 cards in Laura's score pile and 7 cards in Aiden's. They win, achieving a rank of 'Good'.

Communication/increasing the difficulty:

Full communication anytime:

For your first game, feel free to say anything you want. This allows you to focus on the rules of the game and learning together how to best plan the longer words. Remind each other of the hand limit and keep track of your score piles together to help you achieve balance at the end.

If you start getting 'Very Good' scores, I recommend limiting your communication further.

Limited communication outside your turn:

On your turn, you may say anything you want. To make the game easier, talk about words you are setting up and remind each other of valuable letters.

When it is not your turn, you may not point or speak EXCEPT to say yes/no if asked a question.

For the full experience, I recommend no communication outside of your turn.

No communication outside your turn:

When it is not your turn, you may not communicate at all – you may not point, make gestures, make signals, or speak at all. On your turn, you may freely communicate.

To make it easier, you should be fully communicating all your plans and intentions on your own turn.

Silence:

If you both feel ready for the ultimate challenge, try playing the game in absolute silence.

Notes/strategy:

You can check the score piles at anytime

The challenge is intended to be in the calculations and word-building; not the memory.

Stretch yourself

It's important to score as many points as you can with finite cards. Don't aim for a tiny hand.

Consider the future

Each letter appears finite times. The 'S' is very versatile. 'ING' and 'ED' can be wonderful suffixes.

Credits/history: Concept, design and development by Behrooz 'Bez' Shahriari. The name came first, and I tried to make a 2-player co-op to 'round out' the Wibbell++ library. Thanks to everyone who helped bring the Wibbell++ deck to life; Bohnanza for inspiring the 'fixed' card order; Playtest UK for providing a place for reciprocal testing; Liam of Black Lion Games for inspiring multiple score piles; Paul Mansfield for continuing to attend the Friday daytime tests and giving a more considered opinion; Laura Wood for several games and mutual ponderings; Daniel Barker for emotional support and getting me to HATE Con, where a fair bit of early testing happened; Andy Yiangou for hosting the Enfield playtests at his office; Brett G, Rob H, Ev and Karen R for honing in on the problems with a previous rulebook; and so many playtesters over the past 2 years. 'Silence' variant encouraged by Chris/Suzanne of Cardboard Edison. Proof-read by Chris Z and Rachael Mortimer.