

# MICKELL

Work on 3 words simultaneously

10-20ish minutes 1 player

## Overview

You will take cards one at a time, adding each card to one of 3 rows. Each row is a potential word that is growing from left to right.

Try to form longer words to score more points. Strive for the highest possible score!

## Setup

Find a playing surface. Shuffle the deck.

## Each turn...

### Take a new card

Take the top card of the deck.

### Then, in any order:

- **claim a word** (optional)
- **discard previously-placed cards** (optional)
- **place the new card (or discard it)**

### Claim a word (optional)

This is how you score points.

You won't be able to do this on your first few turns.

If you are able, you may use one entire row to make a word. The word **MUST** use each card from left to right, using one letter from each card. *Each letter in the word must be represented by a card.*

If your word has 5 or fewer letters, discard 2 of the cards and keep the others in a **scoring pile**. If your word has 6 or 7 letters, discard 1 card and keep the others (5 or 6) in the **scoring pile**. If your word used 8 or more cards, all of them go to your **scoring pile**.

E.g. the row below could be claimed as "HOPE" for 2pts.



E.g. the row below could be claimed as "REALITY" for 6pts.



When you have claimed a word, that row is free for you to make another word on.



## Discard previously-placed cards (optional)

You may, if you wish, discard any previously-placed cards, starting from the right end of a row.

This is helpful if you previously placed cards that you now regret. On your first turn, this isn't possible.

You can do this before claiming a word.

## Place the new card (or discard it)

Place the card on the right end of any row (or in the first space of a new row if you have fewer than 3 rows).

You will always work left to right. In the first turn, there is no choice - just place the card to start your first row. On your 2nd turn, you may either continue that row or start a 2nd row.

Note: you do not have to decide what letter each card represents until you make a word. E.g. the cards below could either be used to make 'BET' (discarding the last card first) or - if an H is placed later - as 'RETCH'.



## Repeat this process.

Work through the entire deck of 48 cards, one card at a time. At the end of the game, you may discard cards from any number of rows - still doing so right-to-left - and claim a final word from each row if you can.

## Scoring

At the end, the number of cards in your **scoring pile** is your score. You may, if you wish, use the guide below to appraise your performance.

16+ : success

20+ : very good

24+ : great!

28+ : brilliant!

32+ : truly outstanding!

## WHAT IS A VALID WORD?

As usual, you may not use proper nouns. *No names of places, people, or companies. You are allowed to repeat words.*

If unsure, choose a dictionary when starting. Any word mentioned within that dictionary is allowed.

## LOOKING UP WORDS

You are allowed to look up words as frequently as you wish. If you're ever unsure of the spelling of a word, you are free to check it.

For those playing in British-English, I recommend Collins dictionary as an online resource. Those using American-English might be better served by Merriam-Webster's website.

*Looking up multiple words every turn will probably result in a worse experience for yourself. However, looking up things that you think 'might' be a word is something I personally enjoy. I enjoy learning new words and taking a moment to reflect upon the definition and relish the fact that a word I was unsure about does, in fact, exist. Of course, as this is a 1-player game, you are free to house-rule such things to your heart's content.*

## NOTES/REMINDERS/TIPS

**Feel free to ignore the tips below.** *Some people prefer to learn such things themselves and you may fall into that camp. Conversely, feel free to read the tips. There is still plenty to ponder and the tips are only meant to help you start your journey.*

You are allowed to look at which cards have already been used. *Considering which letters are still plentiful is part of the strategy. If a word needs an uncommon letter early on, you can bail if needed. But if a word requires a rare letter at the end - after everything else - you are taking a serious risk.*

Words that can be extended are super-useful. *Nouns can be pluralised. Verbs can be changed into a different form - e.g. "DRAW" could become "DRAWING". These words are helpful, as you can either score them earlier if need be, or extend them.*

It's all about maintaining flexibility and playing the odds. *Of course, sometimes you ARE just unlucky...*

## TRY MUCKELL!

If multiple people have their own deck, you can all play together and then compare your scores at the end! Use the same cards in the same order. I recommend having one "caller". They shuffle their deck, control the speed of the game and call out each card drawn. Everyone else searches their (previously organised) decks to find the correct cards.

*If you wish to run a Muckell tournament, please contact me at [stuffbybez@gmail.com](mailto:stuffbybez@gmail.com) for possible prize support.*

## CREDITS/THANKS/HISTORY

Invented/designed by Bez.

Inspired by the phrase "Many a mickle makes a muckle."

I wanted to create a solitaire game called **Mickell** that - if many people play simultaneously, using the same order of cards and then comparing their scores - could be called **Muckell**.

**Take it Easy**, **Karuba**, and **NMBR9** were strong inspirations - I wanted to create a true 'multiplayer solitaire' game so that **Muckell** could be played with even hundreds of folk!

Most of the pondering for **Mickell/Muckell** was done on the train between Finsbury Park and Letchworth Garden City. Originally, I pondered some sort of chain-building akin to a turn-based version of Grabbell. A solitaire dominoes game. Perhaps I wanted to stray away from wordgames as a way of showing that other things are possible.

I wanted the cards to be drawn one at a time. Having a hand - even a tiny one - made things more confusing.

The first version I showed publicly involved removing a few cards, drawing the remainder one at a time, trying to match one attribute on each pile, and discarding as few cards as possible. Too many rules had to be added to make optimal play non-obvious and it started to feel clunky. *I may yet revisit that idea one day. Or you can interpret that idea and develop it further if you wish.*

One day, I struck upon the idea of multiple words being created simultaneously. 3 seemed the obvious number and I never tried a different number. 2 would be too restrictive and 4 too freeform.

Now I just had to work out the scoring. Discarding X cards meant that longer words are innately better. Getting 3 of 5 cards is far better than 2 of 4! However, at a higher length, it doesn't make enough difference. Discarding fewer cards for different lengths of words fixed that issue.

A bit of testing to check the best 'breakpoints' and the game was done. Just the scoring guide and this document remained. Thankfully, many blindtesters helped including: Drew Richards, Peter Buchan-Symons, Matt Evans, Michal Lee, Joost Dantuma, Andy Yiangou, Eli Mamane, Mike Bollen.

These rules were proofread by Dave Douds.

Additional thanks to those who helped test and supported me along the way, including David Brain, Paul Mansfield, Michael May, Sarah May.