

Linq

a game by Erik Nielson.
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Linq is a party of game of bluffing and collusion for 4-8 players, ages 10 and up.

In Linq, two players assume the role of *spies* who are attempting to identify one another via secret code words. All other players take on the role of *double agents*, whose goal is to identify and confuse the spies by deciphering their secret code.

Package Contents

- A bag of 50 scoring tokens in two colors worth 1 and 5 points each.
- Two identical packages of 55 cards.

Do not shuffle the cards. The two decks must always remain in the same order.

There are two types of cards in Linq:

- **Spy** cards contain a list of code words.
- **Double-agent** cards have a question mark, but no words.

Setup

Place the colored scoring tokens in the middle of the table to form the *bank* and give each player 3 points to start the game.

Place the two identical decks of *spy* cards side-by-side and face down on the table along with a number of *double agent* cards (the ones with the question mark) equal to the number of players, less 2.

Choose a player to go first. Before drawing any cards, this player picks a number

between 1 and 10. This will be the number that the spies will use (*and the double agents will pretend to use*) on each card this game. All other words on each card, that do not correspond to this number, will be ignored.

The words numbered 1 through 5 are simpler and therefore more suitable for younger players and beginners.

Playing the game

Briefing phase

Take a matching card from each deck and set the two cards aside. They should be identical: verify by comparing the numbers on the top-left corner of each card.

Take a number of *double agent* cards (the ones with the question marks) equal to the number of players in the game, less two, and shuffle them together with the *spy* cards that were just set aside.

You should have one card for each player in the game: Two identical *spy* cards, and a *double agent* card for each remaining player. Distribute one card to each player.

Action phase

The action phase consists of two rounds. In every round, each player, beginning with the start player, will say **a word**. It is this word that the *spies* will try to recognize, and the *double agents* will try to bluff. You can say any word (regardless of how silly) including proper nouns or conjugated verbs, but you may not say the code word itself, or any word that contains it.

In the second round, each player must repeat the word he said in the first round, and then say a **second word**.

Anyone can, at any time, request that a player repeat his or her words. In larger games with many players, you may opt to have a summary round, in which every

player repeats both of their words.

Once the two rounds are completed, the start player counts to three, and all players simultaneously point to the two people they believe to be the spies (including yourself, if you are the *spy*).

Debriefing phase

Players now collect scoring tokens based on their success.

- **If both spies** have identified each other, each of them receives 3 points from the bank.
- **If either spy** failed to identify his partner:
Each double agent receives a point from the bank.
Each spy who incorrectly chose a *double agent* must give one of *his own* points to that agent.
- **Each spy** gives one of his own points to any *double agents* who correctly identified both spies.
- **Each double agent** that correctly identified *both spies* may attempt to guess the exact code word and earn one additional point from the bank. They may choose to write down, or whisper their guess if they wish to keep it secret from the other players.

If a player is required to give his own points to another player, but has run out of point tokens, he may use points from the bank to pay his debt.

If the bank does not have enough points, each player must deposit 3 points into the bank. Players who have less than 3 points must deposit all of their remaining points to the bank.

End of the game

Play one round for each player in the game, with the start playing passing each round.

Whoever has the most points at the end of the game, wins.

In the case of a tie, the player who was the spy wins. If there is still a tie, the spies share their victory.

Variants

Sleeper agent

At the start of each round, draw two sets of spy cards and then (without looking) discard one randomly. The game continues as usual, with the exception of one player becomes the sleeper agent. This person holds a spy card, and believes himself to be a spy, but has no partner in the game and is thus a double-agent.

In this variation, spies only score two points if they identify each other.

Spy vs Spy

Use two independent teams of spies, instead of one. This variant allows twice the likelihood of being a spy, and makes it even more difficult for spies to exchange their codewords discretely.

Scoring the Spy vs Spy variant:

- Score each team of spies independently.
- If a spy accidentally chooses the spy from the opposing team, he loses a point as usual, but the point goes to the bank instead of to the other spy.

Silent Night

Instead of speaking during the two rounds, each player conducts a 5-second charades-style performance that somehow relates to their codeword.

Scoring works as in the standard game. This variant can be combined with the variants listed above.

Visit the Linq on the web at
<http://linq.inludoveritas.fr/regles.html>