





# THE RULES OF THE GAME

## ~ GOAL OF THE GAME ~



You live in Hamelin, a town infested by rats. The easiest way to get the rats out of your house is to send them to your neighbors. Whenever too many rats are jammed into a house, its occupants get desperate and move out! The player who can best keep the rats out of his house wins!


## ~ CONTENTS ~

- 5 **House** minibboards, each with 7 floors  .
- 5 **Rat** trackers  .
- 6 **wooden rat** figurines (each rat has a different tail color, corresponding to the colors of the *Character* cards).
- 1 **Pied Piper** figurine, and its plastic base.
- 21 *Character* cards  .
- 50 *Action* cards  .

## ~ SETUP ~

Look at the diagram inside the box cover for 4-player setup:

1. Place a *House* board and a *Rat* tracker in front of each player. The *Rat* tracker starts off the House.
2. Choose a start player (whoever last saw rats in a bathtub... or, the youngest player).
3. Place a rat figurine **between** each house. Then, to the left of the start player, add a second rat figurine and the Pied Piper figurine. Point the figurines to the right, as shown in the diagram. Remove unused houses and figurines from the game, as well as their corresponding *Character* cards (**the color of a rat's tail corresponds to the color of its *Character* card**).
4. Shuffle the remaining *Character* cards  to form a face-down deck. Flip the first four cards of the deck face-up to form a line in the center of the table.  
If you revealed more than one *Pied Piper* card  , discard all but one, and replace them with new cards from the deck. Continue until you have four cards, with only one *Pied Piper* card. Shuffle any *Pied Piper* cards you discarded back into the deck.

5. Shuffle the *Action* cards  to form a face-down deck. Then deal four *Action* cards to each player.

### *Setup for 2 Players*

This is similar to 4-player setup, with the following differences:

- The two players and their houses sit opposite each other. The other two houses between them (one on each side) are neutral, and belong to nobody.
- Each player receives a *Rat* tracker that goes on his house. The neutral houses between the players do not get a *Rat* tracker.


## ~ PLAYING THE GAME ~

### *Game Concept*

The *Action* cards allow you to move figurines: either rats or the Pied Piper. Whenever a rat figurine passes a house, that house's *Rat* tracker moves up 1. When the Pied Piper passes a house, he lures rats out of the house. That house's *Rat* tracker moves down 1. Whoever has the fewest rats in his house at the end of the game is the winner.

### *Game Turn*

To start the game, the start player places an *Action* card from his hand face-up on a *Character* card. Then draw an *Action* card to refill your hand to four cards.

From then on, everyone plays in counterclockwise order (in the direction of the green arrows on the houses' weather-vanes ).



On your turn, do the following phases in this order:


1. Place an *Action* card face-up on a *Character* card.
2. Place a second *Action* card face-up **on a different *Character* card.**

3. After placing your *Action* cards, check to see if a *Character* card is activated. **If a *Character* card has two *Action* cards, this character activates! Move that character's figurine as the *Action* cards on it direct. Move in the order the cards were played (top card, then bottom card).**

If two *Character* cards activate, you decide which character goes first. Once you resolve the *Action* cards, discard them face-up. Also discard any *Character* cards face-up that activated this turn (to a different discard pile), and replace them with new cards from the *Character* deck. If the *Character* card deck is empty, shuffle the discarded *Character* cards to form a new deck.

*See the end of the rulebook for descriptions of the card effects.*

4. Finally, draw two *Action* cards to refill your hand to four cards. If the *Action* card deck is empty, shuffle the discarded *Action* cards to form a new deck.



Then play passes to the right  
(in the direction of the green arrow ).

## *Rules of Being a Good Neighbor:*

### *Rule #1*

*You cannot place two *Action* cards on the same *Character* card in a single turn. (You can add a second *Action* card to one placed on a previous turn.)*

### *Rule #2*

*Rat and Pied Piper figurines obey the same movement rules. The only difference is what happens when they pass through a house (  or  ):*

- A rat raises the house's Rat tracker 1 floor.*
- The Pied Piper lowers the house's Rat tracker 1 floor.*

## Example of a turn:

It's Maya's turn, and she plays the following cards:

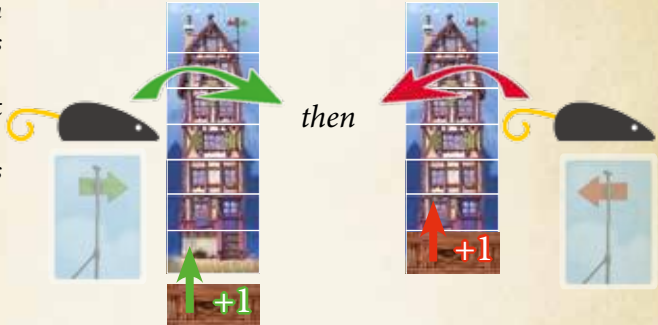


and



Once she has placed the cards, Maya checks to see if she has activated any characters. Two Action cards have been played on the yellow rat, so the yellow rat activates.

The yellow rat walks through the house in front of it, which raises that house's Rat tracker 1 floor. Then it walks back through the same house, again raising the house's Rat tracker 1 floor.



The Character card showing the yellow rat is discarded, then replaced with a new card from the Character deck. The two Action cards that moved the yellow rat are also discarded. Finally, Maya draws two new Action cards to refill her hand. Now it is her right neighbor's turn to play.

## Player Elimination

If your **Rat tracker** reaches the roof of your house after an **Action card** resolves, you immediately flee your rat-infested house, and are out of the game.



Remove your house from the game. The player whose turn it is claims your *Rat* tracker (and any *Rat* trackers you collected from other eliminated players).

In addition, any figurines that were on either side of your removed house now gather together in the gap. Your two next-door neighbors are now neighbors with each other.



If you were eliminated by a character's first action, the second action takes effect right after your elimination finishes. It happens in the new neighborhood, without your house.

#### *Reminder for 2 Players*

The neutral houses that sit between the two players do not have *Rat* trackers. They can never be eliminated from the game. You still count them just like a player's houses when moving figurines, though.

## ~ END OF THE GAME ~

**The game ends as soon as only 2 players are left in the game.** Even if a character's first action reduces the player count to 2, the game ends immediately, with no second action.



The winner is the remaining player with the lower *Rat* tracker.

If there is a tie, whichever player claimed more *Rat* trackers wins. If a tie still remains, play a rematch!

#### *End of the Game for 2 Players*

The game ends as soon as one player's *Rat* tracker reaches the roof of his house. His opponent immediately wins the game.

## ~ LIL TIPS TO REMEMBER ~

- There can never be more than two *Action* cards on the same *Character* card. Two *Action* cards will activate a *Character* card after the card-placing phase.
- You cannot place two *Action* cards on the same *Character* card in a single turn. You can add a second *Action* card to one placed on a previous turn.
- The Rat and Pied Piper figurines obey the same movement rules. The only difference is what happens when they pass through a house (  or  ): **A rat raises the house's *Rat* tracker 1 floor. The Pied Piper lowers the house's *Rat* tracker 1 floor .**

## ~ VARIANTS ~

### *“Rugrats” Variant*

During setup, remove the special *Action* cards **+1** and **Melody**. They are not used in this variant.

During the game, when you place an *Action* card on a character, apply its effect **immediately** (do not wait until two *Action* cards are on it). Leave the first *Action* card on the *Character* card after resolving it.

You discard the *Character* card and the two *Action* cards only after resolving the character's second *Action* card. Then replace the *Character* card as usual.

### *“A Happy Life is a Secret Life” Variant*

On your turn, you can place one of your two *Action* cards face-down (either your first or your second card can be face-down).

Face-down cards are revealed when the *Character* card activates (when two *Action* cards are on it after the card-placing phase).

In the same way, on the first turn, the first player can play his one and only card face-down.



## ~ THE 4 BASIC ACTION CARDS ~



The figurine moves through the house **in front** of it, following the green arrow.

- **If it was a rat, raise the house's *Rat* tracker 1 floor.**
- **If it was the Pied Piper, lower the house's *Rat* tracker 1 floor.**

The figurine ends its movement to the right of the house it passed through.



The figurine moves through the two houses **in front** of it, following the green arrows.

- **If it was a rat, raise each of the two houses' *Rat* trackers 1 floor.**
- **If it was the Pied Piper, lower each of the two houses' *Rat* trackers 1 floor.**

The figurine ends its movement to the right of the second house it passed through.



The figurine moves through the house **behind** it, following the red arrow.

- **If it was a rat, raise the house's *Rat* tracker 1 floor.**
- **If it was the Pied Piper, lower the house's *Rat* tracker 1 floor.**

The figurine ends its movement to the left of the house it passed through.



The figurine slips through the sewer past the house **in front** of it, following the green arrow.



**Regardless of whether it was a rat or the Pied Piper, the house's *Rat* tracker doesn't change.**

The figurine ends its movement to the right of the house it passed through.

## ~ SPECIAL ACTION CARDS ~



The **+1** card adds 1 to a figurine's move. This card has no effect unless it is combined with a basic *Action* card, whether above or below it.

In this example, the red rat activates, and walks through the 3 houses in front of it, following the green arrows (2 houses because of the  *Action* card, **+1** because of the  card).



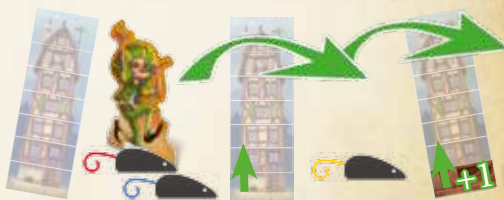
The **Melody** card has no effect unless it is combined with a basic *Action* card, whether above or below it.

This card causes the basic *Action* card on the character to apply to **all figurines in the same location** as the activated character.

Move the whole group of figurines simultaneously.



In this example, the blue rat has activated. Thanks to the **Melody** card, the Pied Piper and the red rat go along with him.



In total, the owner of this house will raise her Rat tracker 1 floor (**+1** for the blue rat, **+1** for the red rat, **-1** for the Pied Piper = **+1** floor). The yellow rat does not join the group when the group goes by it.

*Note: A Character card may receive two special Action cards. When this happens, the figurine does not move. Discard the Character and Action cards as if you had resolved actions.*