



KEEP



In **KEEP**, two to five players each try to collect enough coins to buy their way into a new life within the castle's keep. **KEEP** is a drafting game, played over a series of rounds. Each round, players play a single card from their hands, including Items and Characters, and pass the remaining cards. Each card kept is potentially worth coins at the end of the game. The player with the most coins wins!

THE CARDS

KEEP is a card game. Throughout the game, players will play cards to their **Cloister** (play area). The two main card types are **Item cards** and **Character cards**. *It is important to note that both sides of these cards are used, and the way the cards are oriented when facedown is important to gameplay.*



Item Card



Gold (Facedown Item) Card



Character Card



Secret (Facedown) Character Card

ITEM CARDS (35 Cards)

Item cards represent items crafted by the castle's artisans and workers.

Item cards can either be **Basic** or **Prized**, and are of four different types: **Ironworks**, **Delicacies**, **Produce**, or **Potions**. Prized Items have special properties.

Item cards are played in the player's Cloister.

Each Item card is worth a set number of coins. It is also possible to **Sell** Item cards through the course of the game. When an Item is sold, it is flipped facedown and becomes a Gold card.

Gold cards are always worth 3 coins.

SET UP

Separate the Character cards from the Item cards. Shuffle the Character cards and deal 3 to each player, facedown. Each player selects 1 of those Character cards and places it facedown in their play area, as a Secret Character, forming their **Cloister** (play area). Each player then returns the other 2 Character cards to the middle of the play area, facedown.

Then, shuffle together the remaining Character and Item cards. Deal out a number of cards to each player. The number of cards dealt depends on the number of players:

FOR 2 PLAYERS
Deal 7 cards to each player

FOR 3 PLAYERS
Deal 9 cards to each player

FOR 4 PLAYERS
Deal 8 cards to each player

FOR 5 PLAYERS
Deal 6 cards to each player

Players pick up their hands and may look at the cards they were dealt, but keep them secret from the other players. Place the remaining cards facedown in the middle of the play area, forming the deck.

A player is chosen at random. The chosen player takes the **Royal Decree card** and places it in their hand, and the game begins! **SBG recommends choosing the player with the most change in their pocket.**

CHARACTER CARDS (20 Cards)

Character cards represent influential people within the castle's walls.

Each Character card has an ability and is worth a number of coins. Character cards can be played two different ways:

Played Secretly (facedown) in the player's Cloister to boost their coins at the end of the game (based on the other cards they drafted).

-or-

Character cards can be discarded from the player's hand to utilize their abilities (which either helps the player, hurts other players, or sometimes both!).



PLAYING KEEP

KEEP is played over a series of rounds. The player with the **Royal Decree** card is in charge of the round. **KEEP** is a drafting game, and each round, each player, in clockwise order, will play 1 card from their hand. After each player has played a card, they will pass their hand to the player to their left, and a new round begins.

The Royal Decree card is a special card. This card can never be played like an Item or Character card. It serves as a placeholder for the game. The Royal Decree card passes with the hand it is in at the end of each round, so a new player will have the Royal Decree card at the beginning of each round.

Hand Check

The player with the Royal Decree performs a **Hand Check**: At the beginning of the round, if any player has 0 cards in their hand, the game ends immediately. If no player has 0 cards in their hand, the round continues. If any other player(s) have more cards in their hands than the Royal Decree player does, those player(s) discard 1 card from their hands. The player with the Royal Decree shuffles the discard pile and the deck together, and the round continues to the players' turns.

Player Turns

The player with the Royal Decree card chooses if they will go first or last each round. If they choose to go first, they take the first turn. If they choose to go last, the player to their left will take a turn. Players take turns in clockwise order. When a player takes a turn, they play 1 card from their hand. **A player has 3 options when playing a card:**

The Player may play 1 Item card from their hand to their Cloister. To do this, the player chooses an Item card from their hand and places it faceup in their Cloister. *Or...*

The Player may play 1 Character card from their hand facedown to their Cloister as a Secret Character: To do this, the player chooses a Character card from their hand and places it facedown in their Cloister as a Secret Character. *Or...*

The Player may play 1 Character card from their hand to use its Ability: To do this, the player chooses a Character card from their hand and reveals it. The player uses the revealed card's Ability *to the best of their ability*, and *in the order indicated on the card*, and moves the revealed card to the discard pile (unless otherwise stated on the Character card).

PLAY EXAMPLES



Scout decides to play this Item card. She places it faceup in her Cloister.



Jeb chooses to play a Character card as a Secret Character, so he places the card facedown in his Cloister.



Liz decides to play this Character card for its ability. She reveals the card and uses its ability. She then moves the card to the discard pile.

There is no limit to the number of cards that a player may have in their Cloister.

Selling Cards: Some Character card Abilities allow the player to “**Sell**” an Item card in their Cloister. To do this, the player simply flips the appropriate card in their Cloister facedown, turning it into a **Gold Card**. Gold cards are always worth 3 Coins at the end of the game. **Once an Item card becomes a Gold card, it is no longer an Item card.**

Taking Cards: Some Character card Abilities allow the player to “**Take**” an Item card from another player’s Cloister. To do this, the player takes an appropriate Item card from another player’s Cloister and moves it to their Cloister.

Bonus Action: At the beginning of a player’s turn, if that player doesn’t have a faceup Character card in their Cloister, the player may reveal one of their Secret Character cards by flipping it faceup. If the player chooses to do this, they use the Character card’s ability, but the Character card remains in their Cloister instead of moving it to the discard pile.

Each player may do this *once* per game.

After each player has taken a turn, each player passes their hand to the player to their left and a new round begins.

Remember that the Royal Decree card passes as well!

ADDITIONAL TWO PLAYER RULES

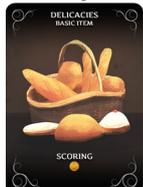
In a two player game, at the beginning of each round, after Hand Check, each player draws 1 card. Also, in a two player game, each player chooses and plays 2 cards during their turn.

ADDITIONAL FIVE PLAYER RULES

In the Five Player game, there is a special round after Setup. During this round, each player, beginning with a player of the Royal Decree player’s choosing, and continuing clockwise, chooses and plays 2 cards from their hand. After each player has played 2 cards, players pass their hands, draw 1 card, and then game continues following the rules above.

ENDING THE GAME & SCORING

At the beginning of the round, if any player has 0 cards in their hand, the game ends immediately. When the game ends, each player, one at a time, beginning with the player with the Royal Decree card, reveals their Secret Character cards, calculates the coins in their Cloister, and announces their number of Coins. The player with the most Coins wins. In the event of a tie, the player with the most cards in their Cloister wins. If a tie still exists, the tied players share in a new life in the Keep together.



Scoring Example: At the end of the game, after revealing her Secret Characters, Liz has these 9 cards in her Cloister. She has a total of 23 Coins. She has 6 Coins from her 2 Gold cards and 5 Coins from her 4 Item cards. Her Gardener is worth 6 Coins (2 Coins for each Produce card in her Cloister, and she has 3). Her Shrewd Trader is worth 4 (2 Coins for each Gold card in her Cloister, and she has 2). Her Constable is worth 2 Coins (1 Coin for each other Character in her Cloister, and she has 2).

OPTIONAL VARIANT: Each player may use the BONUS ACTION up to two times during the course of the game (instead of just once). If using this variant, the two Bonus Actions may not be taken during the same turn.