



# Knight Shift

*A Cunning Game of Pre-Violence*  
by Jasmine Davis and Pete Butler

Hell is other squires. It's hard enough serving a noble knight without those other worthless toadying lickspittles getting in your way, one-upping and undermining you at every turn. But this time, it will be different. This time, you're going to *win*. Sir wants weapons? You'll get Sir's *favorite* weapon! Sir wants undergarments? You'll get Sir the freshest, cleanest undergarments the land has ever seen! Sir wants "companions?" You'll find Sir the sketchiest, most scare-quote-worthy "companions" he's ever had the pleasure to meet! You'll find everything Sir needs to be battle-ready!

Assuming one of your rivals doesn't beat you to it.

**Knight Shift** is a card game for 2-6 players trying to draft, bluff, guess, press their luck, and scheme their way to becoming Top Squire. Equip Knights, guess which one is the most battle-ready (or least-burdened with gear they despise), and grab him/her before one of your rivals does. Guess wrong, and earn a sound thrashing. Guess right, and bask in your well-deserved praise!

## Components

- 20 Knight cards
- 144 Item cards
- 1 scorepad/sheet of scratch paper with pen/pencil
- Rulebook

## Setup

Choose the first dealer -- aka the first Head Squire -- at random.

Knight Shift is divided into three rounds. Before each round, shuffle the Knight cards and Item cards separately. The Head Squire then places face-up in the middle of the table one more Knight card than there are players. (So if you have three players, the Head Squire should put four Knight cards face-up in the middle of the table.) Each Knight will have their own pile of equipment right below their card. The Head Squire seeds those piles by dealing each Knight a single face-up Item.

The Head Squire then deals each player a hand of four Item cards. Players may look at their hands.

Finally, the Head Squire counts out 6 Item cards for each player and places them in a single face-down draw pile. For the math-averse, here's a chart:

Players:	2	3	4	5	6
Cards in Draw Pile:	12	18	24	30	36

Set the remaining Item cards aside, preferably out of reach so nobody gets confused and tries to draw from them. When drawing cards, players may **only** draw from the draw pile you just created. Once it's empty, it stays empty until the next round.

You're now ready to play a round. The Head Squire goes first, and play proceeds to the left.

## Game Overview

When it's your turn, draw one card from the draw pile into your hand. Then, you may either play an Item card from your hand onto an equipment pile belonging to one of the unclaimed Knights in the middle of the table, or discard an Item card from your hand and claim a Knight (and his/her equipment pile) from the middle of the table. When play gets back around to the Head Squire, everybody passes their hand of cards to the left. Play proceeds until everybody has chosen a Knight.

When everybody has chosen a Knight, the round is over, and everybody turns their Knight's Item cards face-up. Whoever has the most Booze passes-out drunk and doesn't score. The remaining Knights score points based off of their Item cards, gaining or losing bonus points based off of the Knight's individual preferences.

Update everybody's score. Whoever got the most points this round becomes the new Head Squire, and you play another round. Whoever has the most points after three rounds wins.

# Your Turn

On your turn, you first draw a card from the draw pile, assuming there are any still cards to draw. Once the draw pile runs out, it doesn't get replenished until the next round. You may then do one of three things: You may play an Item card from your hand, you may "peek and play" (assuming you're not playing the two-player game), or you may claim a Knight.

## Play an Item

To play an Item card, take a card from your hand place it face-down on an unclaimed Knight's personal equipment pile. You are not allowed to peek at the face-down cards already there, though you're allowed to look at any of the face-up cards on any of the unclaimed Knights. You may play an Item card on any Knight still in the middle of the table.

## Peek and Play

You may look at the top card of **one** unclaimed Knight's equipment before playing an Item card. Then, you play a card just as described above (comes from your hand, must be played on a Knight still in the middle of the table), but you must play it **face-up**.

**Peek and Play is not an option in the two-player game.** You may only Peek and Play if three or more people are playing.

## Claim a Knight

Instead of playing an Item card, you may claim an unclaimed Knight card from the middle of the table. When you choose a Knight, you also discard a card (face up) from your hand to the discard pile. Place that Knight and that Knight's equipment next to you. **Do not look at the Knight's Item cards. Do not get the Knight's Item cards mixed-up with your hand of Item cards.** Until the round ends, you're probably better-off just forgetting you have those other Item cards (hiding them underneath your Knight card is a safe bet).

Once you have claimed a Knight, you may not claim an additional Knight card until the next round. Thus, you must play an Item (or Peek and Play) every time it's your turn until everybody has their Knight.

When it's the Head Squire's turn to play again, **everybody passes their hand of Item cards to the left**, and play proceeds. When everybody has claimed a Knight, the round is over, and scoring happens.

If you don't have any cards, you **must** claim a Knight on your turn. Yes, even if you're quite certain the remaining Knights have all been loaded with things they hate and will likely beat their poor Squire (you) quite senseless. Squiring ain't easy, people.

# End Of Round Scoring

When everybody has claimed a Knight, it's time to see which squires are praised for their efforts and which have earned a savage beating.

**Item cards in your hand (if any) at the end of the round have no effect on scoring.** Toss them into a discard pile.

Discard the unclaimed Knight still in the middle of the table, and toss his/her cards in the discard file. (Or, set him/her aside to be counted later so whoever did poorly this round can torture themselves with hindsight. Whatever. Forget that loser. That Knight has no effect on scoring.)

Turn over the Item cards for each Knight. Then, score in this order:

## Drunks

Whichever Knight has the most Booze cards passes out dead drunk and scores zero points for their Squire this round.

**In the event of a tie, nobody passes out,** and all the Knights involved in the tie score normally for their Squires.

**Two-player variant:** When only two people are playing, whoever has the most Booze instead must discard their Booze before scoring continues, but otherwise scores normally. Again, in the event of a tie, neither player is penalized.

## Likes

Each Knight will have a set of Items they covet. If a Knight has at least one card of each Item in their list, their Squire scores the bonus points listed on the Knight's card. No bonus points are awarded for an incomplete set. The bonus points may be scored multiple times for each **complete** set the Knight has. (**Note:** Food cards have different values for figuring out who has the biggest feast. That doesn't matter during this step. If a Knight likes Food, each individual Food card may only be part of a single set.)

## Dislikes

Each Knight will also have one or two Items they hate above all others. For every card the Knight has that they hate, their Squire loses five points. **Discard those hated Items; they won't be scored further.**

## Feast

Next, figure out which Knight is throwing the biggest feast. Note that each Food card is worth 2, 3, or 4 for figuring out who has the biggest feast. Add up the amount of Food each Knight has. Whoever has (or ties for) the most Food gets six points; whoever has

(or ties for) the second most Food gets three points. You must have at least one Food card to score any points for Food!

### **Pairs**

Now, tally-up all the “paired” Items. As noted on the cards, all the weapons have a paired Item that, if present, will double the points for **both** cards. So, while an Axe and an Armor are both normally worth only one point each, if your Knight has both, they’re worth **two** points each, for a total of four. Note that a single Item can only be part of one pairing; if you get two Axes and one Armor, you only get the bonus points for one Axe; the second Axe is still only worth one point.

### **Everything Else**

Finally, score everything else. Each Item will have points listed on top of the card; add up the points for everything else that isn’t either something the Knight hates, Food, or part of a paired set. “Companions” are the only slightly tricky card left. A Knight scores 1, 2, 4, 8, or 16 points for having 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 or more “Companions”. Note that these points are for the *total* set of “Companions”; you don’t score them once for each card.

**Note that Items the Knight likes still get their normal score!** If you got any complete sets, you get to score the normal points for those cards in addition to the set bonus.

Add the score for the round to everybody’s running score for the game. At the end of three rounds, the game is over and whoever has the highest total score wins.

If the game isn’t over, whoever scored the most points this round gets to be the new Head Squire for the next round.

## **Two Players**

The two-player version of Knight Shift plays exactly like the 3-6 player version with two differences:

- The “Peek and Play” option isn’t available. On your turn, you must either play a card face-down or choose a Knight. You may play a card face-up if you really want to, but you don’t get anything for it.
- Whoever has the most Booze in a round must discard their Booze cards, but otherwise scores normally.

## **Feedback**

Got something to say? Was something in the rules unclear? Think you have a way to make the game better? Contact Jasmine at [jasmine.davis@gmail.com](mailto:jasmine.davis@gmail.com) or Pete at [pete@blairhippo.com](mailto:pete@blairhippo.com); we’d love to hear from you.

# Thanks, Yinz!

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# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
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Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

# Scoring

Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
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Food:							
Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 1 Total:							
Round 2							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
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Round 2 Total:							
Round 3							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
Dislikes:							
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Paired Bonuses:							
Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							

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Player:							
Round 1							
Too much booze?							
Likes:							
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Everything Else:							
Round 3 Total:							
Grand Total:							