

SOLVER - Rulebook

A game by Gustavo Lira

SOLVER is a game for **2 to 6 players** that involves deduction, logic, and pattern perception. One player takes on the role of the **Master**, creating a **secret rule**. The other players try to discover it by playing cards to the track and formulating hypotheses.

Components

- 64 Game Cards
- 4 Feedback Cards (0, 1, 2+ and solver!)
- Rulebook and suggestion guide

The deck is composed of **64 unique cards**, formed by the combination of:

- **4 colors** (blue, red, green, yellow)
- **4 shapes** (circle, square, triangle, diamond)
- **4 numbers** (1, 2, 3, 4)

(Note: It is only possible to play with 2 players in Cooperative mode. Casual and Competitive modes support 3 to 6 players.)

Setup

1. Decide whether you will play **CASUAL**, **COMPETITIVE**, or **COOPERATIVE** mode
 2. One of the players will be the **Master**. The others will be the **Investigators**
 3. The Master receives the 4 feedback cards and places them face up in front of them
 4. Each Investigator receives **8 game cards** as their starting hand
 5. The Master creates a rule or chooses one from the suggestion guide (*You may write it down on paper or phone to avoid forgetting it*)
 6. The Master reveals the top card of the deck and places it on the **main track** or the **error track**, depending on whether it follows the rule
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Objective

Discover the **secret rule** defined by the Master of the round through the card track.

*Note: Guessing an **equivalent rule** that works exactly the same way also counts as a correct solution.*

- **Follows the rule**
 - **Does NOT follow the rule**
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Player Turn (2 actions)

Players take turns clockwise. On your turn, each Investigator must perform:

1) PLAY A CARD TO THE TRACK

Choose one card from your hand and play it to the table.

The Master evaluates whether the card follows the Secret Rule:

- **If the card follows the rule:**
Place it to the **right of the last accepted card** on the main track.
- **If the card does not follow the rule:**
Place it **below the last card of the main track**, starting or extending the error track.

Main Track vs Error Track

In SOLVER, the track works as a **timeline of plays**. The order of cards must always be preserved, as some rules may directly depend on the sequence formed.



2) Choose ONE action:

Guess the rule

Draw a card

Swap your hand

2A) GUESS THE RULE

The Investigator announces what they believe the rule is. The Master responds publicly using **one feedback card**

0

1

2+

Solver!

The guess does not match the rule in any aspect

Only one part of the guess matches the secret rule

Two or more parts of the guess correspond to the secret rule

Victory! The player successfully formulated the rule chosen by the Master (or an equivalent version)

During this action, the player **does not draw cards**.

2B) DRAW A CARD

The Investigator draws the top card of the deck and adds it to their hand.

2C) SWAP YOUR ENTIRE HAND

Each Investigator may perform this action **only once per game**. Discard all cards from your hand to the bottom of the deck and draw the same number of new cards.

End of the Game (Casual Mode)

The game ends immediately when an Investigator discovers the rule. In this case, the Investigator who solved it and the Master **win together**.

The game also ends when the **25th card** is played (counting both tracks). At this moment, before the rule is revealed, each Investigator gets **one final chance** to guess the rule, in turn order.

If no one guesses correctly in this final round, the rule is revealed and **no one wins**.

Notes

- The draw pile is considered the **start of the track (position zero)**
 - Always keep the track organized, as card order may be relevant
 - Players must manage their guesses carefully: **each guess costs one card**
 - If a player has no cards in hand, they can no longer guess the rule and are out of the race to solve it
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Competitive Mode (3 to 6 players)

Play rounds with each player acting as Master once. After that, the player with the most points wins the game.

The round also ends automatically when the **25th card** is played. At this moment, each player gets one final guess.

Was the rule discovered?

- The Investigator who solved it gains **3 points**

The Master scores based on how many cards were played to the track:

- 1 to 8 cards: **1 point**
- 9 to 16 cards: **3 points**
- 17 to 24 cards / Final guess: **5 points**

Was the rule NOT discovered?

The table judges the Master's rule:

- If the rule is considered **deducible: +3 points**
- If the rule is considered **impossible: -3 points**

In case of a tie, the table votes on which tied player created or chose the **best rule**. Only players **not involved in the tie** may vote. Majority wins.

Cooperative Mode (2 to 6 players)

In the 2-player mode, the Investigator draws **12 cards** for their hand. All other rules and turn order remain the same.

Players must cooperate to solve the rule using the **fewest cards possible**.

The game flow changes as follows:

- The Master draws **8 cards** and keeps them face down. These cards represent the team's **lives**.
 - Each incorrect guess of the rule causes one of these cards to be placed on the bottom of the deck. If all 8 cards are lost, the team **loses the game**.
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Role of the Master (all modes)

The Master is the **guardian of the rule**. They decide whether each played card follows the rule and must answer guesses **honestly**. The Master must create a rule that is **challenging but possible** to discover. Impossible rules harm the experience.

Best Practices for Creating Rules

Creating a good rule is an essential part of the fun in SOLVER! Here are some tips to ensure a fair and engaging experience:

- **Adjust the challenge level**
Create rules appropriate to the group's experience. For lighter games, avoid complex logic.
 - **Be clear and consistent**
The rule must make sense. Avoid confusing or ambiguous interpretations.
 - **Avoid overly specific rules**
Do not create rules that only work with very few cards. Example: "Only red circle 3 is allowed."
 - **Equivalent rules are valid**
If your rule is "red and yellow are not allowed", an equivalent like "only green and blue are allowed" is also valid.
 - **Use only card elements**
Rules must be based on card information (color, shape, number).
Avoid external or physical criteria, such as "cards played with the right hand only".
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Credits

Game design, art, and rulebook: **Gustavo Lira**

Thanks to all players who participated in playtests and contributed feedback to SOLVER.