

# NIRDS vs GNOMES

## INTRODUCTION

So you're the one they sent here to take over Project E.G.G. (Evil Garden Gnomes), huh? Well, I suppose, welcome to the team 'n that. Let's hope you do a better job than your predecessor. Excuse me- **ØLS! CUT IT OUT! CAN'T YOU SEE YOU'RE EMBARRASSING ME IN FRONT OF THE NEW BOSS!** No. Put it down. Sorry about that. He's not always like this, he just hasn't fired a gun all day and he gets a little... directionless. Oh, and there's my wife—Honey! Meet the new boss!

Hi, I'm Pennigins. So you're the one in charge now, huh? My condolences. You're now the leader of a bunch of highly untrained, trigger-happy idiots who think tactics is something you can eat. Anyhow, I'm heading back to the Senate. It was nice meeting you.

## GOAL OF THE GAME

Nirds is a cooperative dice game where you and up to three other players command armies of nerdy birds (Nirds) to survive incoming waves of garden gnomes.

To win the game, all players need to cooperatively survive all waves of Gnomes and manage to defeat the boss at the end of the game. If at any point one of you runs out of either lives or Nirds in your army, all players lose the game collectively.

## PREPARATION

### 1. Build Your Army

Every player: Randomly select one of the 4 starter sets and place the 3 cards (Leader, Assistant, and Techie) in front of you. These cards represent the beginnings of your Army. Take 4 dice and place 3 heart-shaped tokens in front of you.

### 2. Build the Market

Shuffle the decks for the Level 1 and Level 2 Nirds individually and place them face-down on the table as shown, then draw 5 cards from each and place them in a display next to the decks. This is the Market.

### 3. Set up Gnomes

Separate the Gnome cards into the 4 waves and - without looking at any of the cards - draw random cards from each wave to form the Gnome Deck. The number of cards drawn for each wave is dependent on the player count and chosen difficulty level. Pictured here is standard difficulty (5):

1 Player: 4xI / 3xII / 2xIII / 3xIV

2 Players: 8xI / 5xII / 4xIII / 5xIV

3 Players: 11xI / 7xII / 6xIII / 7xIV

4 Players: 14xI / 9xII / 7xIII / 8xIV

Arrange the cards in such a way that the Wave 1 Gnomes are on top of the face down deck, followed by the Wave 2, 3 and 4 stack.

Then, draw 2 Gnomes per player and place them above their armies. Leave a little space next to the Gnomes for the Gnome discard, called the Knock Out Pile.



Dice trading  
Be First Player



## 4. Tactic Cards and Remaining Dice

Place these within reach of all players.

## 5. Bosses

Place them to the side—you will not need them until the end of the game.

# OVERVIEW

Nirds is played in Rounds, which consist of three Phases:

The **Die Trading Phase**, where you roll your available dice and get to trade them with the other players in order to get yourself into the best possible position for the next phase.

The **Action Phase**, where you and the other players take turns to either attack Gnomes or recruit new Nirds for future rounds. This is the main phase of the game.

The **Nightfall Phase**, where the Gnomes you haven't knocked out attack and the game is reset for the next round.

The game ends when the players have survived all Gnomes and, after that, defeated the boss (victory) or when a player has lost all of their lives or Nirds (defeat).

## I: DIE TRADING PHASE

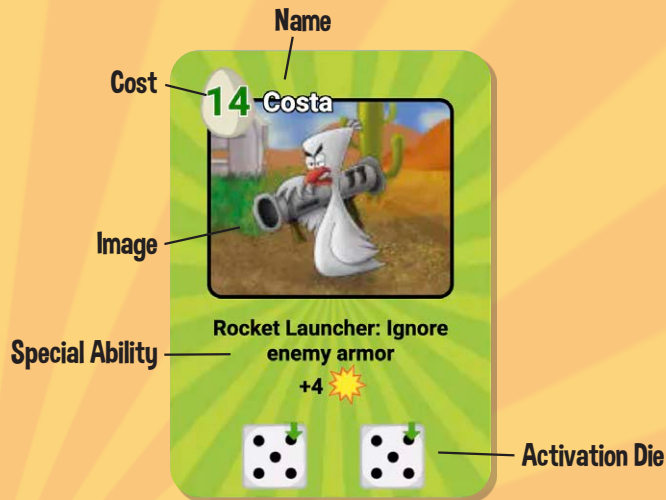
At the start of the round, effects with the ☀ symbol trigger (some cards show this symbol—you can skip this in the first round).


Then, all players roll their dice (four in the first round). You use this roll to put yourself in the best possible position for the next phase. All players do this simultaneously. The Die Trading phase ends once all players agree to move on to the next phase.

In this phase only, you are allowed to exchange dice with other players to help each other out. When trading dice, you must always trade a die for a die - you can never give a player more dice than they give you and vice versa.






To help you understand what you're trying to do in this phase, you first have to understand how Troops and Scientists work. These are the main cards you will be dealing with during the game.

## Troops



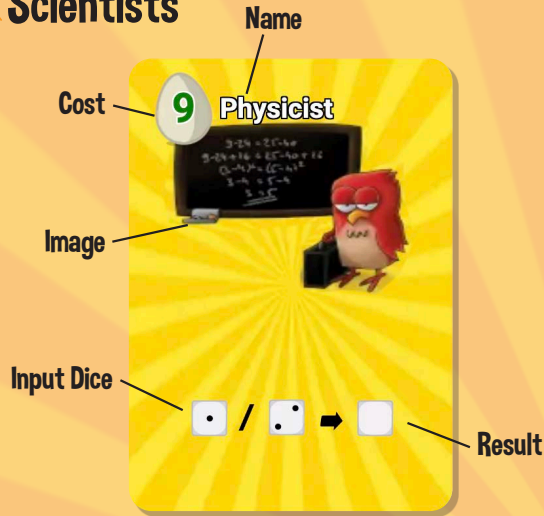
You will use Troops (  ) to attack Gnomes in the next phase. Since knocking out Gnomes is the only way to win the game, you will use them a lot. Before you can attack with a Troop, you first need to activate it, and for that, you need the dice shown at the bottom of the card. These are called Activation Dice.

### Examples:

-  This Nird needs to be activated by a 5
-  This Nird needs both a 3 and a 4 to activate
-  This Nird is activated using any two dice
-  This Nird is activated using any pair of dice
-  This Nird is activated using a triplet

**Note:** You may find it helpful to place the dice you intend to use for an activation on the designated spaces on the Troop card. However, this doesn't force you into using the dice for this card. You can still change your mind later, and use the dice to activate a different unit or use them to recruit instead.

# Scientists



Scientists (🐦) are used to modify your dice. This way, you can activate more Troops, make their attacks stronger or recruit better units. The card shows which dice this Scientist can modify, and what they can turn them into. The same die may be modified by more than one Scientist. You can never modify another player's dice.

### Examples:

🎲 / 🎲 ➡ 🎲: Either a 3 or 4 (but not both!) may be turned into a 5.

A A ➡ 🎲 🎲: Any pair may be turned into any two dice.

Scientists can modify ANY die roll, but they can only be used once per round. After using a Scientist, rotate the card 90 degrees to remind yourself that it has been used. This is called "putting it to sleep". You can not put a Scientist to sleep voluntarily.

### Example:

You have two troops, one which activates on a 🎲, and one which activates on a 🎲. Your scientist says 🎲 ➡ 🎲. You rolled 🎲 🎲 🎲 🎲. The other player rolled a 🎲 🎲 🎲 🎲. As it stands, you cannot activate any of your troops, so you exchange your 🎲 for the other player's 🎲. Then you use your scientist to turn your 🎲 into a 🎲, putting the Scientist to sleep. This way, you can activate both of your Troops, and you have two 🎲s left.

## II: ACTION PHASE

When it's your turn, you place dice to take one of two main actions (Attack or Recruit, see next section). If you are not able or don't want to perform an action, you must pass. Once you have passed, you're out and you can not take any more actions this round.

When you're finished with your turn, refill the Market (if needed, see also Action 2: Recruit). If any Market deck ever runs out, simply leave spaces empty. Then play progresses in clockwise order to the next player, who takes their turn and so on, until all players have passed. This marks the end of this phase.

At ANY time during this phase, including after having passed, you may activate as many Scientists as you want and play any number of tactic cards. "Any time" means you may use these cards before, after, or even during an action, including the actions of other players. You decide in which order to carry out the card effects.

However, note that these cards can never be played in another player's stead. In other words, your Scientists can never modify another player's dice and if a tactic card says "you", that means You, and not another player.

### Action 1: Activate and Attack

To attack with a Troop, you need to activate it using the dice shown on the card (for activating cards, see Die Trading Phase). Then you roll these dice AGAIN to see how strong your attack is. This is called the Attack Roll. That means every attack consists of TWO rolls: The Resource Roll to activate the Troop, and the Attack Roll to see how much damage (💣) you deal.

If there are multiple attack dice, add their results together. Scientists may be used to modify the dice in order to make an attack more powerful (remember hat this puts them to sleep). Some Troops also have Special Abilities printed on their card which may change or add to their attack somehow.

After having determined how much damage your attack deals, pick any Gnome (it doesn't have to be one of Your Gnomes) and place damage tokens on the card equal to the attack. Note that Troops always attack a single Gnome, even if they attack with more than one die. Like Nirds, Gnomes also have Special Abilities printed on the card which may change the attack somehow or affect the attacking player. If the number of damage tokens on the card has reached or surpassed the health of the Gnome, it is Knocked

Out. Discard it to the Knock Out Pile (cards in the Knock Out Pile are always face down). Do not draw a replacement.

After your attack, place the Attack Dice on the picture of the Troop and rotate it 90 degrees to show that both the dice and the Nird have been used (the Troop is now considered asleep). Like Scientists, each die and Troop may only be used once per round.

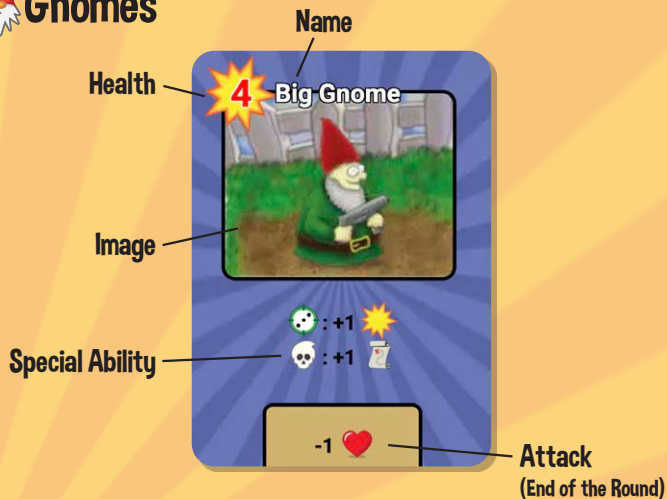
Notes:

- Attacks must always be dealt in full. You can not decide to hold back damage.
- In the rare event that a Troop is discarded that has already been activated, place the dice used for its activation on another already activated Troop to remind yourself that they have already been used this round.
- Damage can never be negative, even if a modifier would bring the total to less than 0.
- All Attack Dice attack at the same time.

**Example:**

You have activated a Troop with two s. This doesn't mean they will deal 12 however: You pick up the dice and roll them to attack. You roll a and a . You use your Scientist to turn your into a . Your Troop deals a total of  $6+4=10$  . You consider which Gnome to attack. You could either attack one with 12 health, weakening it for future attacks, or take out a Gnome with 8 remaining health. You would not be able to split the damage (dealing 6 to one Gnome and 4 to the other). You decide to knock out the Gnome with 8 health and discard it face down to the Knock Out pile.

## Gnomes



## Action 2: Recruit

With this action, you use your dice to buy new Nirds on the Market. Pay dice equal to or higher than the cost of the Nird. Multiple dice may be combined to buy more expensive Nirds. Add the card to your army, place the dice on top of it, and rotate the card 90 degrees (marking it asleep). Remember that you can use Scientists to modify your dice rolls. At least one die must be used per recruit action.

Notes:

- Since newly bought cards are put to sleep, they generally can't be used in the same round they were bought in.
- You don't get change for overpaying.
- Remember that you can reassign dice you originally intended to use on a Troop on a Recruit action instead. This makes sense if you don't want or need to attack any more.

**Example:**

You have a and a . There are two Nirds in the Market costing 5 but you can buy only one of them, even though their total cost is 10 .

## Tactic Cards

Fighting Gnomes, you will inevitably gain tactic cards. These are cards you can play at any point during the Action Phase, even when it's not your turn, even in the middle of an action, and even during another player's turn, unless the card text says otherwise. Discard a tactic card after use.



## III: NIGHTFALL PHASE


In this phase, the Gnomes attack and you reset the game for the next round.

### 1. Gnomes attack!


If you haven't managed to knock out all enemies, they strike now. You are only attacked by the gnomes in front of you. There are two exceptions to this: If an attack says "Any", that player chooses one player who gets attacked. If an attack says "All", all players get attacked.

If you are being attacked by more than one Gnome, you get to choose the order in which they attack. If a Gnome has more than one attack, the attacks occur in reading direction. For a list of attacks, refer to the Iconography page. If any player runs out of lives or Nirds, all players collectively lose the game.

### Examples:

-  You lose 1 life.

+  +  You add a Gnome to your enemies and gain 1 die.

Any: -2 , All: -  Any one player loses 2 Nirds of their choice, and all players lose a tactic card (if possible).

## 2. Upkeep

- Wake all sleeping Nirds by rotating them back to their upright position.
- New Gnomes approach. Every player has two slots for enemies that need to be filled. That means that if a player didn't knock out one of their Gnomes this round, only one new card will be added to their Gnomes, or none if they didn't knock out any. Once all cards have been revealed, read the special abilities of all Enemies out loud.

### Example:

Anton and Beatrix are resetting the Gnome Area. Anton managed to knock out both of his Gnomes, Beatrix still has two Gnomes left. Anton has to draw a total of two cards, and Beatrix none.

## 3. Get a new die

Every player adds a new die to their dice pool, to a maximum of 8 dice per player. That means all players should start round one with 4 dice, round two with 5 dice, etc. Skip this step if all players have 8 dice each.

Now you know how to play Nirds!

## GLOBAL RULES

- Rules on cards trump rules in this rulebook.
- The players are encouraged to problem solve together, but the final decision is always up to the player whose turn it is.
- You can't skip the effects of a Special Ability unless the words "you may" are used.
- When a card is discarded, it always goes to the bottom of the corresponding deck, with two exceptions: If a Gnome is discarded or removed, it goes to the Knockout pile. When you discard a Starter Nird, remove it from the game instead.

- If an effect causes you to lose a resource you don't have, nothing happens. The only exception to this is losing Lives or Nirds. If you run out of either, you lose.

## EASILY FORGOTTEN

- Once the Die Trading Phase is over, you can no longer trade dice until the next round.
- You decide which Gnome to attack after the Damage Roll, and each attack only targets a single Gnome, regardless of the number of dice in the attack.
- Scientists can modify any die roll. They can be used to activate more Troops, make Attack rolls stronger or increase your buying power on the market.
- At least one die must be spent on a card in the market to buy it, even if a discount reduces the cost to less than 1.
- Using Scientists and/or tactic cards does not count as an action and therefore can't be used to delay your next action.

## DIFFICULTY LEVELS

To increase difficulty, change the setup as follows:

- Ignore the effect on your Leader
- Add one or more Wave 4 Gnomes
- Remove one or more Distraction tactic cards
- Take out one or more Wave 2 Gnomes

The base game starts at Level 5. Every change increases the difficulty by one level.

To reduce difficulty, do one of the following:

- Remove one or more Wave 4 Gnomes
- Add one or more Wave 2 Gnomes
- Remove one or more Political Gnomes from the Gnome deck.
- Start the game with 5 dice instead of 4.

The base game starts at Level 5. Every change decreases the difficulty by one level.

## OTHER CARDS

### Leaders

You start the game with two Troops and a Scientist. One of your troops is called your Leader, which has a unique effect:

**General Froomp:** You start the game with 5 dice instead of 4. Unless you lose dice, you will get to the maximum of 8 dice quicker.

**Lieutenant Wompins:** Every time he attacks, he deals 1 additional damage.

**Major Pebbles:** Every time you recruit a new nird, you pay 1 less. This effect applies even if Major Pebbles has not been activated.

**Captain Sneefle:** Once trading is over but before the Action phase begins, you may turn one of your dice to any value. This effect applies even if Captain Sneefle has not been activated.

### Bosses

During the Reset Phase, if the Gnome deck runs out before each player has 2 gnomes, all gnomes are immediately placed in the Knockout pile and a Boss card is drawn instead (choose or draw one at random). Place the Boss in such a way that all players can see it well. Then do what the Boss card says. To win the game, you must defeat the Boss. Note that most tactic cards cannot be played against the Boss.

**Scarecrow:** When he enters play, immediately shuffle all wave-3 and wave-4 gnomes in the Knockout pile to form the Minion pile. Then each player draws 1 Minion and places it in front of them. All Minions must be defeated before any player may attack Scarecrow.



Scarecrow has 25/50/75/100 health in a 1-/2-/3-/4-player game, respectively. His attack targets one player (of your choice) to lose 1 life and all players must discard 1 nird of their choice. In the event that Minions remain, they also attack as normal. To win the game, you must defeat Scarecrow. In addition to the normal losing conditions, you also lose when the Minion pile runs out (i.e., after 3-5 rounds).

**Invisible Walls:** You have exactly 6 attacks to defeat this Boss or you lose. After each attack, choose an unmarked space, multiply the damage dealt by the factor given by the space (one of which is 0!), and carry out the associated effect (either good or bad). If Invisible Walls is still alive once all spaces have been marked, you lose.


# ICONOGRAPHY

 /  Damage/Additional Damage

 : +1  Weakness: Specific Attack Dice deal 2 extra damage.

 : -4  Armor: Specific dice do not deal damage to this enemy.

 Effect triggered when enemy is knocked out.

-/+  You lose or gain a life (max 3).

-/+  Lose or gain a tactic card.

-  Lose a die—an unused one, if possible. Return it to the dice pool.

+  Gain a die, to a maximum of 8 dice total.

-X  Discount of X for recruiting cards.

 Scientist or Troop. Does not include .

 /  Scientist/Troop

+  Gnome

+  /  Recruit any Level 1/Level 2 Nird from the market (at no cost).

 /  Wake a card of the indicated type.



 While visible, no Recruiting is allowed.

 While visible, no Die Trading is allowed.

 While visible, Scientists can not be used.

 Everyone (all players)

 Anyone (choose any player)

 /  /  2 or more players only / 3 or more players only / 4 players only

## CREDITS

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