

HOW TO PLAY

V. 3.0

# Squirmishy™



Squirmish is a card game where beasts, brawlers and bullies battle to see who's boss. It takes 30 minutes or so to play, and is for 2-4 players. **NO BABIES!**



### TO PLAY YOU WILL NEED:

- A deck of Squirmish cards (70 included)
- Six-sided dice (1 included)
- Hit counters (40 included)
- Chutzpah (not included)

# WINNING THE GAME!

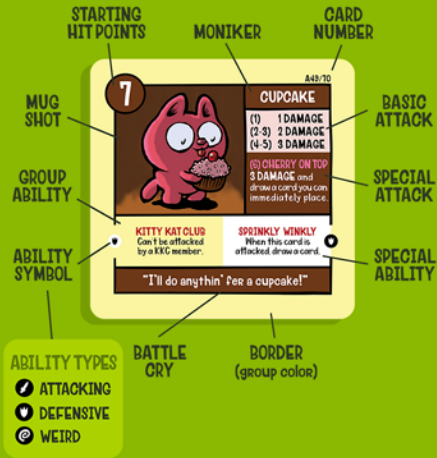
The first player with three cards in their victory pile wins the game!



## SETUP:

1. Shuffle the cards and deal out six face down to each player. Stack the remaining cards in a face down pile off to one side, which will be the deck. Reveal the top card and place it next to the deck to start the discard pile.
2. Familiarize yourself with your cards.
3. Place the hit counters in a pile off to one side.

# ANATOMY OF A SQUIRMISH CARD



# SEQUENCE of PLAY

1: **ATTACK!**

2: Resolve any abilities & clean up.

3: Place a card or move, if you wish.

4: Draw a card, if you wish.



# HOW TO PLAY

Squirmish starts with a weigh-in. Each player picks one of their cards and places it face down in front of them. Then everyone reveals their chosen cards at the same time. The player who revealed the card with the lowest hit points goes first by placing it face up in the center of the playing area (the Squirmish). Going clockwise, each player places their chosen card adjacent to another placed card until each player has a card placed. All cards are placed facing the player that places them to keep track of who controls what cards.



If more than one player reveals a card with the same hit points, each tied player rolls a die. The lowest roll places first (unless it is a hot buttered roll, as you don't want to get butter on the cards if you are not eating them).

After the weigh-in, the game continues clockwise, starting with the player who placed their card first. On each turn, players take the following steps, in order:

## STEP 1: ATTACK!



To attack an opponent's card, declare which one of your cards is attacking which other card. (For example, "Pooga is going to pummel the pasta out of Pompaduck") Cards can only attack adjacent cards unless the card says otherwise.

Next, roll your die and read the effects in the basic attack box at the top of your card. Depending on the outcome, place or remove hit counters on the attacked card to record the amount of damage or healing done... and if you rolled high enough to enact your card's special attack, it will usually have other immediate effects on the game as well.

The first time you attack with a card, if you say the "battle cry" at the bottom of the card out loud in a silly voice, you earn a **+1 DAMAGE** OR **+1 HEALING** modifier to your roll with that card on that turn. If multiple cards are affected by your attack, the battle cry modifier only affects damage or healing done to the card directly attacked.



- Some attacks heal rather than doing damage. Isn't that nice?
- When applying modifiers to an attack, addition or subtraction modifiers are always applied before any multiplication or division modifiers.
- An attack result of "NO EFFECT" cancels all modifiers, including from a battle cry.
- A knocked out card is added to a victory pile after abilities are resolved in STEP 2... some abilities can potentially affect the attack results.



## STEP 2: RESOLVE ANY ABILITIES & CLEAN UP

Every card has a special ability listed on it. Attacking abilities 🗡️ happen on attack, defensive abilities 🖐️ happen when defending against an attack, and weird abilities @ happen when specified by the card.

Some cards also have group abilities, which are similar to special abilities, but are affected by other group member cards in play. Group cards have a border color specific to that group, and the group abilities share this color.



Members of  
The Society  
of Slime

Cards in play with weird abilities can be resolved by their owners even if they are not part of an attack. These abilities are so weird they even work in outer space!



Group abilities are only activated when more than one member of that group is in play (and they are activated even if the cards in play are controlled by different players).

Read the cards and remember your abilities so you can use them at the appropriate time. If you forget to use an ability until after the turn it applies to has passed, it is too late to use it.

After all abilities have been dealt with, get out your mop... it is time to clean up the Squirmish. Any cards that have been knocked out go to the appropriate victory pile. That could leave the Squirmish broken!



Any cards disconnected from the Squirmish by a knockout (or for any other reason) are fragmented. We don't let them escape that easily, though! Fragmented cards must be immediately re-attached to any open card edge around the perimeter of the Squirmish by the card's controlling player. If multiple cards are disconnected, re-attach starting with the cards of the active player and go clockwise. The largest island of cards is the Squirmish. If there is more than one island of the same size, the active player picks which one is the Squirmish.

## STEP 3: PLACE A CARD OR MOVE, IF YOU WISH

Before a card can fight, it must be placed in the Squirmish.

TO PLACE A CARD YOU CAN EITHER:

- Set a card from your hand adjacent to another card in play, OR
- Replace a damage-free card you already have in play with a card from your hand. (Discard the replaced card in the discard pile.)



- At most, a card can have 4 adjacent cards, one on each side.
- You may have up to 5 cards in play at a time.
- You may have up to 17 fingers on each hand.

Cards you control are placed facing you, which is how you keep track of who controls them. Alternately, you can just smell your opponents on them.



If you choose not to place a card, you may instead move one of your cards. To move a card, you swap the positions of your card and another card. Cards can only move to an adjacent position unless a card says otherwise.

## STEP 4: DRAW A CARD, IF YOU WISH

To end your turn, you may choose to draw the top card off the deck and add it to your hand. You may have up to five cards in your hand at any time. If you have more than five cards, you must discard one. After drawing a card, the next player clockwise starts their turn.



# KNOCKOUT!

If a card has hit counters equal to or greater than its hit points, it is knocked out and goes into the attacker's victory pile.



- You may attack your own cards, but if you knock them out, they are discarded instead of going in your victory pile (unless a card says otherwise).
- **CONSOLATION PRIZE:** If your last card in play has been KO'd and the game isn't over, you may immediately place a card from your hand anywhere in the Squirmish. Then draw a new card. Feel better now?
- You may still resolve special abilities on cards in play in **STEP 2** before a card is officially knocked out. Go down fighting!

# VARIATIONS

Now you know the basic rules for playing Squirmish, but there are other ways to play the game... including ones you make up! Here are some suggestions for things you can try to vary the play:

- For a longer game, increase the number of victory points you are playing for.
- For increased chaos, raise the hand or card placing limits.
- Try smaller, customized decks to mix things up... 36-card decks are a fun size.
- Try letting players take turns drafting a hand of cards for their starting hands.
- For an exceptional challenge, try playing with your eyes closed.





# TERMINOLOGY

**ACTIVE GROUPS:** Groups with two or more of that group's cards in play (regardless of who controls them.)

**ADJACENT:** Cards that share edges to the top, bottom, left or right of another card. Diagonally located cards are not adjacent. Most cards can only attack adjacent cards.

**BASIC ATTACK:** Each card has a basic attack at the top of the card which is resolved by rolling a six-sided die and reading the results. Attacks can do damage or heal, and often have other effects as well.

**BATTLE CRY:** The quote at the bottom of a card. If said out loud in a funny voice the first time a card attacks, that card does **+1 DAMAGE** or **+1 HEALING** on one attack on that turn.

**CARD LIMIT:** Each player is limited to five cards in play at a time.

**DAMAGE:** Number of hit counters added to a card. These go against its hit point total.



**GROUP ABILITY:** Group abilities are activated when more than one card of that group is in play. (Note that this is true even when the group cards are controlled by different players.)



**GROUPS:** Some cards are members of groups, denoted by different color card borders unique to that group. Groups will often be referred to by acronyms on that group's cards (example: SVC for the Spooner Valley Cryptids group).

**HAND:** Cards held by a player that have not been placed in the Squirmish. Hands are not generally shown to other players.

**HEALING:** Number of hit counters a healing attack removes from a card's hit point count (up to a card's starting hit points).

**HIT POINTS (HP):** The number in the circle in the upper left corner of all cards is the card's starting hit point count, which is also the maximum number of hit points that card can have. If a card has damage on it, it can't be replaced in play by the player controlling it.

**IN PLAY:** Cards are in play when they are in the Squirmish.

**MODIFIERS:** Effects of special abilities or special attacks that alter the results of an attack (example: 2x **DAMAGE**).

**MOVE:** When a card is moved, it changes positions with another card in play. Cards can only move to adjacent positions unless an ability says otherwise.

**NO EFFECT:** If a card attacks and gets a result of **NO EFFECT**, that attack does no damage or healing, and any attack modifiers are ignored.

**PLACED:** A card is placed when a player takes it out of their hand and puts it into the Squirmish.

**REPLACED:** A card is replaced when a player chooses to put a new card in the position of a card they have in play that has no damage.

Replaced cards are discarded.

**RE-ROLL:** Ignore the results of a roll and roll again.



**ROUND:** The time from the beginning of a player's turn to the beginning of their next turn.

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** Abilities listed on a card after its basic attack. These vary greatly, and are used at different times in the game depending on the ability.

**SPECIAL ATTACK:** A named attack that happens on high die rolls.



Designed and illustrated by Steven Stwalley. Thanks and love to the wonderful Esther and Mitzi for inspiration and assistance. Also, thanks to Jeff Faust for his many good ideas and contributions.



**SQUIRMISH™** is ©2016-2024 by Steven Stwalley. All rights reserved. Learn more about Squirmish and the Squirmish videogame at [squirmish.net](http://squirmish.net)

# SQUIRMISH™

THE VIDEOGAME OF  
BRAWLING BEASTIES



Battle bizarre and ridiculous cards in both single-player and online PVP multiplayer modes. Rumble against a horde of odd opponents created just for the videogame, such as Tutufly, Picklepuss and Beatknock. Easy to learn how to play... but with wild and varied strategies to keep play interesting for up to 92 years, 163 days, 8 hours and 22 minutes!

**NOW AVAILABLE ON STEAM.**  
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