Rafts!: the card game

AIM OF THE GAME

In Rafts! your objective is to be the first researcher to **design a bacterium** capable of solving a problem: cleaning an oil spill, detecting toxic compounds, producing blood for donations… To achieve your objective, you will need to combine a certain bacterium, a gene as well as a varying quantity of time, money and food for the bacterium. You will need to collect and defend these resources to be able to design your bacterium.

But you won't be the only one in the race to become the best scientist. Your co-players also have their own research projects and objectives to achieve… and sometimes you are going to have to compete for the same resources. Keep an eye on your colleagues!

CARD TYPES

Goal cards

Goal cards represent the biotechnological challenge faced by the players. They also provide the information regarding the resource cards needed for achieving the goal.
Every goal requires a bacterium, a gene and a varying quantity of food (culture medium), time and money. Unless a card states otherwise, **goals cannot be discarded**. Goal cards must always be visible to the other players. The first player to design a bacterium able to achieve the goal wins the game.

Resource cards

Resource cards are the required elements for designing a bacterium that can achieve a goal. For resource cards to be effective, they need to be placed in front of the player for the other players to see. They can be drawn or discarded by the effect of opponents' cards. There are two types of resource cards:
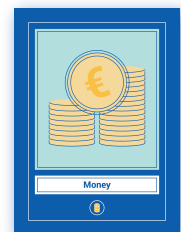
• **Specific resources** are exclusive for reaching a goal: the **bacterium** and the **gene.**
• **Generic resources** are useful for any goal: time, money and culture mediums. The Lipid Rafts card is also included in this group.

Each player can only have **one gene and one bacterium card** on the table. If a player plays another card of this category, their previous one must be discarded. A player can accumulate **up to two cards of each type of generic resource** on the table.

• A special case is the **Lipid Raft card**. The capacity of this microscopic structure to optimise processes in bacteria makes the microbes more efficient. The Lipid Rafts card can replace any resource (time, money or culture medium). This card isn't affected by sabotage cards like "Power outage", but it can be affected by other cards. Players can only have one Lipid Rafts card on the table at the same time.

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Action cards

Action cards affect the resources on the table. There are cards that affect both a player's own as well as other players' resources. There are sabotage cards, meant to damage or diminish the opponents' resources, and improvement cards, meant to protect or improve a player's own resources. Some of these cards force or allow a change of goal. Watch out, as there are action cards that can be played at any moment – even during other players' turns! These fast cards are marked with a "lightning" sign (⚡).
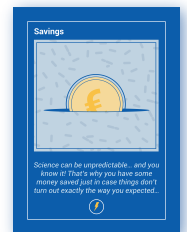
Sabotage cards

• **Industrial espionage:** Steal any player's bacterium, gene or Lipid Rafts and put it in front of you on the table. If you already have a gene or a bacterium on the table, you must discard it to make room for the card you've stolen – unless you have played a "Lab expansion" card (more information on this card below under the section "Improvement cards").

Note that you cannot use the "Industrial espionage" card to steal a Lipid Rafts card if you already have one on the table.

• **Research exchange:** Exchange your goal card with any other player. No player can be left with repeat copies of the same goal card.
• **Fungal contamination:** The player of your choice loses a culture medium card.
• **Antibiotic spill:** All players (including the one who plays the card) lose their bacteria.
• **Power outage:** All players (including the one who plays the card) loses a time card.
• **Unexpected expenses:** All players (including the one who plays the card) lose a money card.

Improvement cards

• **Lab expansion:** Now you can have two bacteria, leaving space for their respective resources, on the table. You can also associate a gene to each bacterium. More possibilities for winning!
• **Bioeconomy:** Choose any resource card from the pile of discarded cards.
• **European funding:** Choose a new goal of your choice and place it in front of you on the table. This card allows you to have two goals – and thus more routes to winning!
• **Serendipity** ⚡ **:** Take the last general or specific resource card that a player has discarded. If two players play this card at the same time, the first one to leave the card on the pile of discarded cards prevails. You must place the card you've taken immediately on the table: if it is a gene or a bacterium and you already have one of these types of cards on the table, you must discard them first (unless you have played a "Lab expansion" card).
• **Back-up generator** ⚡ **:** You can play this card when someone plays a "Power outage" card to protect your time card.
• **Antibiotic resistance** ⚡ **:** You can play this card when someone plays an "Antibiotic spill" card to protect your bacterium.
• **Savings** ⚡ **:** You can play this card when someone plays an "Unexpected expenses" card to protect your money card.

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PLAYING THE GAME

Before starting, place the different types of cards (actions, specific resources, general resources and goals) in separate decks. Deal to each player, face down, two cards from each deck, except goals: six in total. After this, deal one card from the goals deck face up to each player.

During each of their turns, a player can play as many cards as they want, however they are not obliged to play any. For their part, the other players can play their fast cards whenever they see fit. When a player ends their turn, they draw as many cards as they need to have 6 cards in their hand. The player can choose to draw from whichever deck, except from the goals deck. Players can draw cards from one single deck or from different decks. If a player needs a culture medium card and a gene card, for example, they would want to draw cards from both the specific and generic resource card decks to maximise their chances of winning. However, a player cannot have more than 6 cards in their hand.

A player can at any moment during their own turn claim victory if they have achieved all the necessary cards to fulfil their goal.

If the decks of specific resource and generic resource cards are left without cards, shuffle the discarded cards and place them on the table for drawing.