

# A Game About Economics

by ndnplayers games

Level: Basic  
2 to 6 players or teams  
Ages 6 and older  
Playing Time 15 – 30 minutes  
In the box: 8 **House Cards**, 64 **Gifting Cards**, 32 **Status cards**, 4 **Rules cards**.



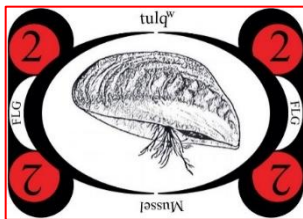
## The Basics:

Your goal is to share your **Resource Cards** as gifts onto other players' **House Cards** so that each player's house gets all of their needs met. The gameplay reflects an economic system of sharing resources.

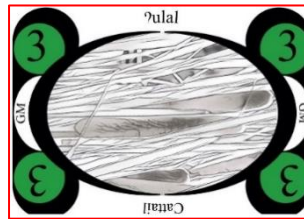
The game can end without the goal being met but this incurs a **Status** loss for every player.

## Cards:

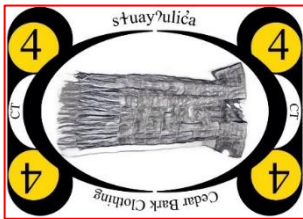
**Resource Cards** are used for **Gifting** other players' houses. Every card has colored circles in their corners with numbers inside. The color indicates the *type* of gift or need and the number indicates the *amount* of gift or need. They have red borders on back.



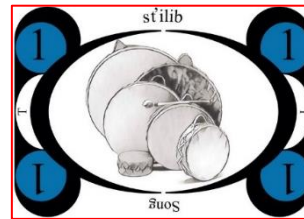
Red circles are Food or Life-Giving medicine. Note the "FLG" in the white crescents on the ends of the cards.



Green circles are Gathered Materials (GM) that are made into useful items.



Crafted Technology (CT) items are made from made from the materials and have yellow circles.



Blue circles are used for the types of Teachings (T) needed to maintain a thriving society.

**House Cards** represent human bighouses that need resources for everyone in their community to survive over time. **House Cards**, like the bighouses they represent, come in various sizes. Each size has different amounts of needs. The number in and the total amount of each type thought of as having several small smaller family grouping living inside family groupings. For this game, we came in many sizes with Old Man being the largest bighouse in the Salish Sea Region. Old Man House was 800 feet long with dozens of smaller family groups living inside. **House Cards** have all four colors because they need all four *types* of resources. **House Cards** have brown borders on back.



All cards are printed in both English and Northern Lushootseed. Lushootseed is a Salish language spoken in western Washington State.

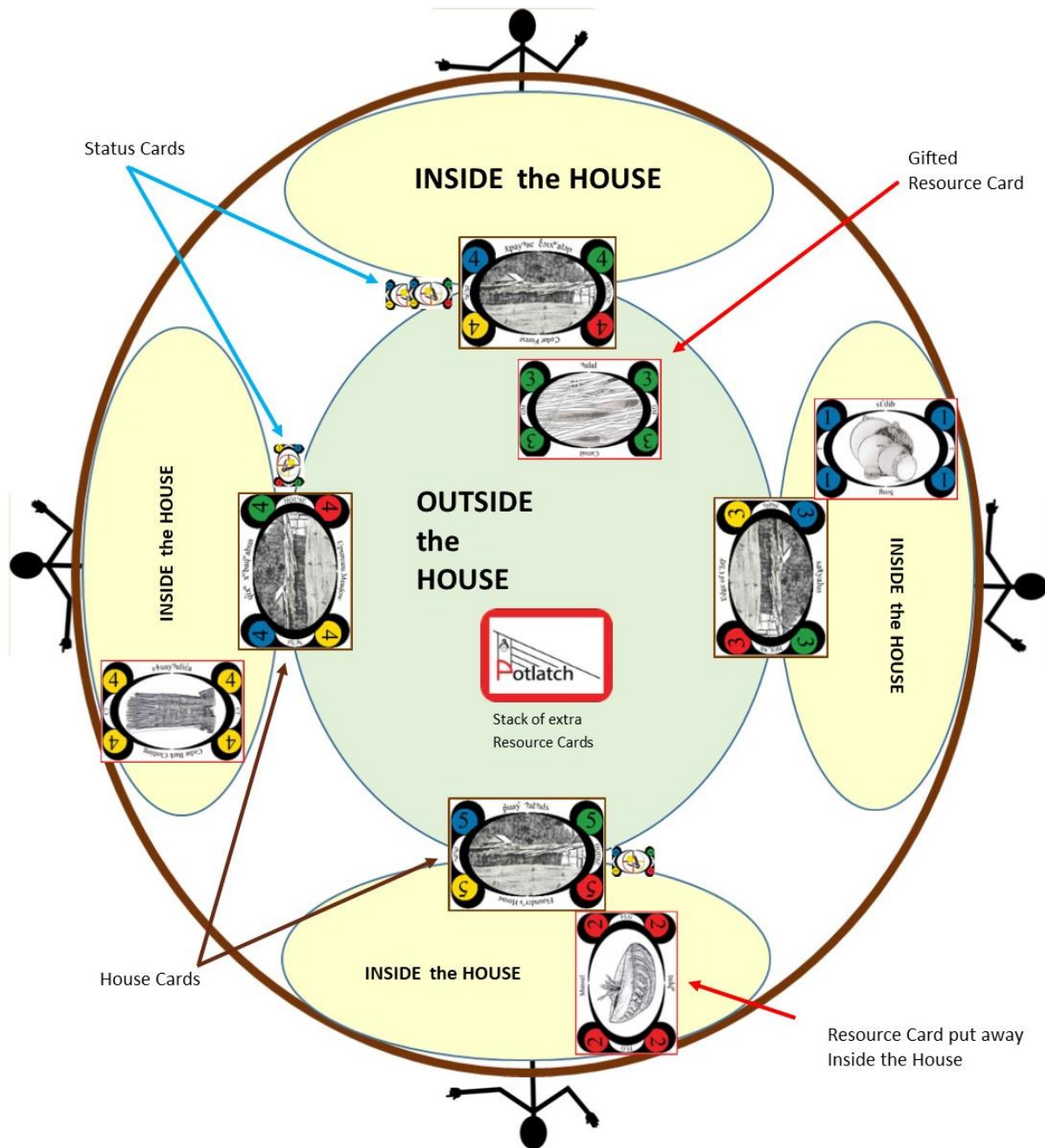
**Setting Up:**

Shuffle the **Resource Cards** and deal 6 to each player. Put remaining **Resource Cards** in the middle of the playing area face down as draw stack. Hold your **Resource Cards** in your hand.

Deal one **House Card** to each player. Unused **House Cards** will not be needed. Place your **House Card** face-up in front of you.

**Play Area:**

The play area reflects people who have traveled to a potlatch gathering. The gathering is “outside” their house. Everyone sits around the outer walls in with their family groups that live together in a bighouse. Gifted resources are handed out to everyone who is present. After the potlatch gathering, everyone gathers up their gifts and takes them home to store inside their bighouses. All gifts are distributed and taken home.



## Mechanics:

Gift - Players Gift each other by placing **Resource Cards** from their hands to the area outside other players' **House Cards** to meet the house's needs. At the end of each round, the gifted **Resource Cards** are moved into the storage area inside each player's own house.

Obligation - Obligation relates to reciprocity in a shared economy. When someone receives a Gift, they are obligated to repay the gift in the future, preferably with something of equal or greater value. Obligation is tied to Status and leadership. Sharing valuable Gifts confers favorable Status on individuals, families, and communities. Leaders who share their resources with community members are held in high esteem, or high Status. Community leaders who gain Status are obligated to make sure that all the people in their community have adequate resources to live and thrive.

The *amount* (number in the corner) of the first card played in a round sets the Obligation level for the round. Each subsequent player must meet or exceed the previous *amount* of a gift to maintain or improve the level of obligated reciprocity. For example, if the first player Gifts a **Resource Card** with a **3**, then the second player is obligated to Gift **3** or more on their turn. When the Obligation level exceeds **4**, multiple **Resource Cards** are played to meet the current Obligation level. If multiple **Resource Cards** are needed to meet the Obligation level, they can be different types of **Resources**. Each player must Gift with the smallest *amount* that they can to meet the Obligation level. Obligation level resets to **1** at the end of each round.

Combine Resources - If you do not have **Resource Card(s)** that can be played when it is your turn, then you invite one other player to join in your gifting by Combining Resources. This is a generic invite to share one **Resource Card** one time, not a request for a specific **Resource Card**. Inviting a player to Combine Resources does not add or subtract from your Status.

Players who are invited to Combining Resources, must give one of their **Resource Cards** if they have one that is playable. If they have more than one playable **Resource Card**, they can choose which one to give. If invited players are able to Combine Resources with you, they get **+1** Status. If invited players are NOT able to Combine Resources with you, they get **-1** Status.

If the requested player shares a **Resource Card** with you, then it becomes your **Resource Card** and you continue with your turn by Gifting any **House Card** that has unmet needs. If, after adding the shared **Resource Card** to your hand, you still do not have enough to play on unmet needs at the current Obligation level, then the round ends. If the requested player has no **Resource Card** to share with you, then the round ends.

Closing Action – A game can end two ways: (1) a player can get all their house needs met, or (2) a player does not have the correct type and/or size of **Resource Card** to Gift another, even after invoking the Combine Resources action.

Place all Gifted **Resource Cards** in front of the **House Cards** into their storage areas.

If a player gets all their house needs met, they pass all the **Resource Cards** in their hand to the player on their left.

If no house has all their needs met, the last player to receive a Gift uses all the **Resource Cards** in their hand to meet any of their own house needs by placing them in their **House Card's** storage area. Then they pass all the remaining **Resource Cards** to the player on their left.

The first player who receives these passed **Resource Cards** uses them, plus any **Resource Cards** from their own hand, to meet any of their own house needs by placing them in their **House Card's** storage area. Once they have used all the **Resource Cards** that can be played onto their own **House Card**, they pass all the **Resource Cards**, including the ones they received from the player on their right, to the player on their left.

Continue passing **Resource Cards** to the left and using them until all players have had a chance to complete their house needs, including the first player who passed cards to their left.

Status - Players can gain or lose **Status** by these actions:

- +1 for a player who completes another player's house needs in **one** category at the **exact** amount, not over. It is possible to get more than +1 status by this action in a single turn.
- +1 for all players at the end of a game if all players' **House Card** needs got met.
- 1 for all players at the end of a game if NOT all players' **House Card** needs were met.
- +1 for a player who was invited to **Combine Resources** and was able to join the **Gifting** by sharing one of their **Resource Cards**.
- 1 for a player who was invited to **Combine Resources** but was unable to join the **Gifting** by sharing one of their **Resource Cards**.



Status can be tracked using tokens, such as chips or other small items. Or as a written tally on paper. We have designed some Status Cards as a supplement to our game that are available at [drivethrucards.com](http://drivethrucards.com) and can be purchased separately or bundled with the deck of game cards.

## **Play:**

Gameplay consists of individual player *turns; rounds* that consist of every **House Card** receiving one Gift; and, *games* that consist of several rounds.

In each turn a player must Gift with the fewest amount of resources possible to meet the **Obligation** level, ideally meeting the **House Card** needs exactly to receive +1 **Status**. If a player must use multiple **Resource Cards** to meet the **Obligation** level, they must Gift as few **Resource Card amounts** as possible.

The goal of each game is for every player's **House Card** to receive enough Gifted resources to meet all of their needs.

Each game comes to a **Closing Action** when one player's house has been gifted enough to meet all its needs, **or** if no player has **Resource Cards** that are playable on unmet house needs.

**1.** The first player Gifts another player by putting one Resource Card (FLG GM, CT, or T) from their hand to another player into the area outside the house. They can play any amount (1 to 4) of any type of **Resource**.

**2.** The player who receives the first Gift plays next. They play one or more **Resource Card(s)** equal to or greater than the *amount* of the first player's Gift to meet the **Obligation** level set by the first player's Gift.

If multiple **Resource Cards** are needed to add up to the **Obligation** level of the first player's Gift, these can be the same or different *types* of **Resource Cards**. When a **Resource Card(s)** is played with a higher **Obligation** level than the previous player's, then the higher number becomes the new **Obligation** level for the next player's turn to Gift.

If it is your turn but you cannot play because the **Resource Cards** in your hand do not match any of the *amount* and/or *type* of unmet needs of other players' **House Cards**, then invoke the **Combine Resources** action.

3. The player who received the second Gift plays next. They must Gift one player's **House Card** that has not received any Gifted **Resource Card(s)** in this round with one or more **Resource Card(s)** that meets the **Obligation** level set by the second player's Gift.
4. Play continues with the gifted player taking the next turn until (1) every player's **House Card** has been Gifted once, or (2) a player does not have playable **Resource Cards** when it is their turn even after invoking the **Combine Resources** action. If (1), then the round ends and each player's Gifts get moved inside the house into the storage area. Each player draws from the stack of **Resource Cards** in the middle of the play area until they have 6 **Resource Cards** in their hand. The **Obligation** level is reset to 1. If (2), then the game comes to the **Closing Action**.
5. All subsequent rounds begin with the last player who was Gifted in the previous round. They Gift any player's **House Card** that has unmet needs. To determine a **House Card's** unmet needs, add together the *amount* of all the Gifted **Resource Cards** in both the inside storage area and the outside **Gifting** area. The play continues as in the first round.
6. The game comes to the **Closing Action** when (1) one player has all their house needs met, or (2) no player has the correct type and size of **Resource Card** to Gift another at the current **Obligation** level, even after initiating a **Combine Resources** action. After completing the **Closing Action** the game ends.

### Variations:

1. The number of **Resource Cards** each player is dealt at the beginning of the game and at the start of each round is the same as the number on their **House Card**.
2. Use only 4 **Resource Cards** for each player during the game play. Deal out 4 to start the game and draw to 4 at the beginning of each round.
3. Keep track of **Status** between games and players with higher status begin each new game as the first gifter.
4. For faster games, only use **House Cards** with a 3. For longer games only use **House Cards** with a 4 and 5.