

Fish Food

It's a fish-eat-fish world

Welcome to the world of FISH FOOD, a fun card game for the whole family. It's a fish eat fish world out there so watch out! Get ahead by eating smaller fish and growing bigger. Use ACTION cards to modify your size to get a temporary defensive boost or to attack an opposing player. Look out for EVENT cards like the *Shark* or *Take the Bait* that can mix up the game. The first player to reach size 10 wins, but don't get knocked to 0 or you lose! Simple math skills are used throughout the game, although there are plenty of chances to use advanced strategy too.

Winning the Game

- ❖ Be the first [Character] to grow to size 10
- ❖ Or knock all other players to size 0 - If any player gets knocked down to 0, they lose. Play continues with remaining players.

Setup

- ❖ Choose a [Character] and set your starting size to 3 by placing a colored chip on it. Your character participates in encounters on your behalf. Targeting a [Character] is the same as targeting a player.
- ❖ Split the remaining cards into 2 piles: [Encounters] deck and [Actions] deck and shuffle each
- ❖ Roll a die or use some other method to determine who will play first.
- ❖ Deal 7 action cards to each player (5 cards if 5 or more players)

Game play

- Each turn the current player draws a card from the [Actions] deck (except the first turn of the game).
- Next, they flip over the top card from the [Encounters] deck.
 - If an [Event] is flipped over the current player should follow the instructions on the card. This is their turn and they may not play any additional cards.
 - If a numbered attacking creature is turned over, players have the

option of playing cards in their hands starting with the current player and continuing clockwise.

[Action] cards can be played targeting either a [Character] or the attacking creature from the [Encounters] deck, except in the case of the cards *Stun* and *Lost at Sea*, which can target any player directly. Tip: [Action] cards that modify the size of a participant can be placed on the corner of the card they are modifying and can be summed up easily at any time. Another useful tip is to imagine a floating number above a participant which is the current size; any modifications to this participant can easily be added or subtracted from the current size and a new number can be imagined as the total.

The current player gets first choice and can play any number of [Actions], or none. They should say Pass when done. The choice to play cards then goes clockwise to the next player. They may play any number of cards, (or none), and say pass. This continues until all players at the table say pass. Note: you can pass first, but play cards still if someone else plays an [Action] after you. Once everyone passes, then modified sizes are compared to determine the winner of the [Encounter].

Winning an Encounter

The final sizes of the [Character] and attacking creature are determined by taking the starting sizes and modifying them by all [Actions] played on each participant. Add and subtract all [Actions] to come up with the modified size of each participant. If your modified size is **equal to or greater than** the attacking creature's modified size, you grow +1 size. If not, you lose -1 size. Mark this by moving the colored chip to the next size on your character card.

During each turn it is only possible to either grow +1 size or lose -1 size, except in the case of an [Event] card. Modified sizes are temporary and only last until end of turn. (In other words, pumping yourself to size 10 only counts for the current turn and will not win you the game.)

Example Turn

Let's say you (player A) are being attacked by a size 7 creature from the [Encounters] deck. You are size 3 and there are two other players (B and C). You could play *School of Fish*, targeting your own [Character] and grow +4 sizes to a size 7 temporarily. Player B could then play a *Caught in the Net* [Action] card on your [Character] making you lose -1 size to a size 6. Player C could pass. You could then play a *Fish Food* [Action] on your [Character] to go back to size 7 and say pass. Player B could pass, since they might be out of cards or not want to do anything. Player C could play a *Fish Food* [Action] card, this time targeting the attacking creature and make it grow +1 to a size 8 and then play a *Stun* [Action] card targeting you, preventing you from playing additional [Actions] this turn. At this point, everyone involved either passes or can't play cards. Sizes would be compared (Player A = 7, attacking creature = 8). Since you are less than the attacking creature, you lose -1 size. Your starting size was 3, so you would go down to a size 2 by moving your colored chip on your [Character] card.

End of turn

- ❖ All used [Action] cards get placed into a discard pile next to the [Actions] deck and are reshuffled if the deck runs out.
- ❖ All [Event] and [Encounter] cards are similarly placed in a discard pile next to the [Encounters] deck and reshuffled as needed. For a faster game or if 5 or more players, you may remove the [Event] cards from the game instead of discarding/reshuffling them.
- ❖ All players must discard to a maximum hand size of 7 cards (or if 5 or more players, 5 cards)

Rule Variations

Here are several rules variations for different ages and skill levels.

Simple

In this variation, play only with the encounter deck. You can play with or without the event cards even. This is a great way to teach young children basic math skills. Flip over a card from the [Encounters] deck and compare against your [Character] size. If you are equal to or greater than the attacking creature, you grow +1 size, if not, you lose -1 size. First player to reach size 10 wins; or reach size 0 loses. If you prefer, you can also treat a tied size as a tie.

Beginner

In this variation, only 4 of the action cards are used. The cards: *Fish Food*, *Caught in the Net*, *Sunken Treasure* and *School of Fish* make up the [Actions] deck. All other [Action] cards are removed from the game. This version of the game is a great introduction to non game players and beginners, or a way to learn the game quickly without worrying about the finer strategy points. Play with a 5 card hand limit.

Credits

The following people helped make this game possible.

Game Concept/development:	Matthew Crofoot
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Legal

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Contact

If you have any rules questions about the game or need clarification or more strategy tips, jump over to our website or Facebook page and drop us a line. <http://www.sharkshark.com/>

Strategy Tips

1. It's always a good idea to play *Lost at Sea* early, as it takes away valuable cards from your opponents and gives them to you.
2. An [Event] can sometimes function as a player's turn. This means they don't have a chance to grow and can create a tempo race between the other players. For instance, if a player is at size 9 and is about to win the game if they are attacked by a creature, if they instead flip an [Event] card like *Feeding Frenzy*, (which doesn't help them), in effect, they lose their turn. The next player may have a chance to win the game. Don't underestimate the power of a turn.
3. Similar to [Events], *Swim Away* is a very powerful [Action] card as it basically causes another player to lose a turn. Sure it can be used on yourself to get away from that size 20 attacking creature that has been pumped up by all the other players, but it also prevents other players from swimming away.
4. *Switcheroo* is a very powerful [Action] as well. It can be used in a variety of ways including stealing a size one [Encounter] from another player, causing you to grow on a turn besides your own (and potentially even winning). You can also take a big attacking creature or one that has been pumped by your enemies and turn it back around on them or on a weaker player.
5. *Stun* is really powerful in a two-player game. For example, if a player is being attacked by a size 3 creature and are also size 3, they will probably pass (since they are winning). This lets you play a *Stun* on them and a simple *Fish Food* or *Caught in the Net* card. This guarantees they will lose the round since they are stunned and you are the only other player. *Stun* is also useful as a preemptive strike. For instance, say you are size 9 and about to win the game. Your opponent isn't sweating it since they have a *Swim Away* they are planning to use on you or even a *Switcheroo* to steal your winning turn. If you *Stun* them first (remember you have first choice), then they are out of the round. This means as long as you beat the [Encounter], you won't have to deal with a pesky opponent changing things up on you. *Stun* is still useful in larger games by putting the "nail in the coffin" on a team effort to take a player down or by Stunning that annoying competitive gamer.
6. Team play and temporary alliances: Often in a game you will find that the biggest [Character] at the moment is the common enemy. This can lead to mini alliances forming between other players. They might be implied or even overtly negotiated. Working with other players to take down the big fish is a great strategy. Often one player at the table can add a +1 [Action] or something similar, and others will be encouraged to "get on board" and add a bit to help out. A *Stun* at the end can be a nice touch to prevent the player from defending.
7. *School of Fish* - This card is great in the first few rounds of the game. If you are size 3 or under, it helps you bridge the gap, especially if you are attacked by a very large creature on your first turn. Later in the game it can appear useless if most of the players are above size 3. Don't be fooled, as often this card can be used to take a size 3 attacking creature quickly up to a size 7 with a supposedly useless card. This will often encourage other players to add on a bit more and can turn a useless card into a major helper.
8. Don't forget you can play more than one action card at a time.
9. A lot of games end with a slow climb to see who will be the first to 10. An alternate strategy is to aggressively attack a player until they are at 0. This can work great in a two player game or sometimes in larger groups if everyone can agree to attack the same player. If the cards are there to allow attacking, don't be afraid to try to pursue this strategy for a few rounds; you can always change your mind later.
10. Defense. Do not forget to save [Actions] to defend yourself. If you blow all your cards attacking other players, you won't have any cards to get out of trouble. You will also probably make a few enemies along the way that will take notice of your lack of cards.
11. If you have more cards in your hand than the maximum hand size, you may want to play one. It's better than discarding the card and can sometimes discourage other players from attacking you.
12. Card advantage wins games! What we mean by this is never use 2-4 [Actions] to do what 1 will do. If you are going to have to play 4 *Fish Food* cards to win the current [Encounter], you might be better off playing a *School of Fish* or even a *Swim Away* card instead. Sometimes the right choice might even be to lose a size, and come back to fight again with more cards next turn. This idea also holds true for choosing the best time to attack your opponents. It's always good to wait until the current attacking creature is pretty close in size to your opponents [Character] and with 1-2 cards you have a good chance of forcing them to lose a size.