Yokai Septet

3~4   10+   30 min

A long time ago in the land of the rising sun, spirits and demons known as Yokai were harming human lives. Yokai did not directly attack people, but they were causing supernatural disasters: Yokai caused farmlands to burn, rivers to flood, thunders to roar, and diseases to spread.

One day a chieftain of the nearby village visited you, an Onmyoji, a practitioner of Japanese esoteric cosmology. Through your knowledge of astronomy and occultism, you discover the only way to help save the village. It is simple: the more Yokai you manage to capture, the less the menace caused by these demons. After a few months in the village, you are successful in your efforts; the Yokai menace is completely eradicated in that village!

Then, word reaches you of the havoc being wrecked by the Yokai on your own village. In your absence, the village chieftain has consulted another Onmyoji to help save your village. This is an affront because this is your village and the people under attack are your people. It is your job to save the day!

Do not let another Onmyoji save the day and go down in history as the greatest there ever was and the Savior of your village at the time of need.

1. Game Overview

In Yokai Septet, your goal is to capture high scoring Boss Yokai by strategically playing cards from your hand. Each turn, players play a card from their hand following the rules of the "trick-taking games." (If you don't know what this means, don't worry. This is explained in more details later in the rulebook.)

After everyone has played a card, the player who played the strongest card matching the lead suit takes all the cards played this turn. A new turn continues until one of the round's end condition is met. At the end of the round, the winner of that round is determined.

In a 4-player game, the game is played as a team battle of two players versus two players, whereas in a 3-player game, all players play individually competing. The winner of the round is the team that captured four or more Boss Yokai in a 4-player game, and three or more Boss Yokai in a 3-player game. However, be careful on winning too many turns because you will lose the round if you win 7 turns before collecting the specified number of Boss Yokai!

The winner of the round scores points based on the Boss Yokai they captured. New rounds are played until the game's end condition is met, which can be either 2 points for a basic game, or 7 points for an advanced game.

2. Components

• 49 cards (7 suits - 7 cards each)

Front

Back

• 18 scoring tokens

• 4 player aids

• 1 lead player card

• 1 rulebook

3. Card Anatomy

- There are 7 suits (colors) with 7 cards in each suit.
- Each suit has different range of card values.

	A	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Green (Wind)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●						
Purple (Earth)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●					
Pink (Charm)			●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
Yellow (Lightning)					●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Black (Darkness)					●	●	●	●	●	●	●		
Red (Fire)							●	●	●	●	●	●	
Blue (Snow)									●	●	●	●	●

- The card with value [7] in each suit is a special card called Boss Yokai card.
- Boss Yokai card has point value icons next to the card value. This is used for "Advanced Scoring Rules" (see section 8 for details).
- Green suit has a special card with value [A] called the Super Trump card.
- All other cards are called Regular Yokai card.

Card value

Card value range

Range meter indicates the relative strength of the card within its suit.
If the "dot" is at the top, then that card is the strongest card of its suit.

Point Value

NOTE: Green (Wind) Boss Yokai doesn't have a point value.

4. Before the Game

The game is for 3 to 4 players. In this rulebook, we will describe it as a 4-player game.

> Rules for a 3-player game will be written in boxes like this. If you are playing with four, you can ignore them.

Before starting the game...
- Each player takes a Player Aid.
- The game is played as a team battle of two players versus two players. Randomly split up into two teams. The team members should sit **across from each other**, so that both of your opponents sit next to you.

> The game is played individually, instead of being played as a team battle.

5. Round Setup

Before starting each round...
- Shuffle all 49 cards face down and **deal 12 cards face down** to each player. Place the **1 remaining card face up** at the center of the table visible to all players. This face up card is called the **Trump Suit card.**
- All players choose **3 cards** and **pass the chosen cards** to your teammate **at the same time**.

> Deal 16 cards face down to each player.
> Each player then passes 3 cards to the player to their left.

Now determine the Lead Player...

<u>If this is the first round of the game:</u>

• The lead player is the **player who was dealt the [A] card**. Reveal the [A] card and **take the Lead Player card**. If no player was dealt the [A] card, then the lead player is the player who was dealt the Blue [13] card. (Note: The lead player does not need to start the game by playing the revealed card. The player may put it back into their hand and use it later in the round.)

<u>For all subsequent rounds:</u>

• The lead player is the **player with the Lead Player Card**. In other words, the player who won the last trick in the previous round.

The round is now ready to begin!

6. Game Play Rules

Each round is divided up into multiple turns called "**tricks**" where each player will be playing a card from their hand.

• Starting with the player holding the **Lead Player card** (this player will be referred as the **lead player**) and going **clockwise**, each player plays 1 card face up from their hand.

• The lead player may play any card from their hand. The **other players must play a card of the same suit as the lead player** from their hand.

• If you **do not have a card of the same suit** as the lead player in your hand, then you may play **any card from your hand**.

After each player has played a card, the winner of the trick is determined.

Winner of a trick

The winner of a trick is determined in the following order...

1) If the **[A] card** was played, the player who played it is the winner.
2) If cards of the **same suit as the Trump Suit card** were played, then the player who played the highest value card among them is the winner.
3) Otherwise, the player who played the **highest value card of the same suit as the lead player's card** is the winner.

<u>Start Here</u>   <u>The winner is the player who played...</u>

| The [A] card was played | **Yes** → | the [A] card |

No ↓

| Trump Suit cards were played | **Yes** → | the highest value card of the Trump Suit |

No →

| the highest value card of the lead player's suit |
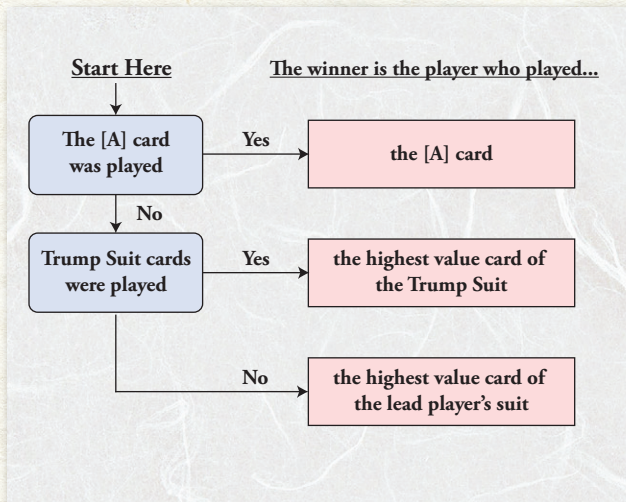
If you are the winner of a trick, do each of the following in order:

1) Take **all cards** played in this trick (four cards in a 4-player game, three cards in a 3-player game). If you took any Boss Yokai cards (cards with value [7]), then keep those cards **face up in front of you**. Keep the rest of the cards face down in front of you by creating a separate stack for each trick you win so everyone clearly sees how many tricks you have won in this round.

2) Take the Lead Player card.

3) Check if one of the "end of a round conditions" (see section 7) is met.

4) If the round did not end, then continue to the next trick. You are the lead player for the next trick.

Keep Boss Yokai cards face up in front of you so everyone knows which cards you have taken.

For Regular Yokai cards, create a separate stack for each trick so everyone knows how many tricks you have won.

Examples

Here are some examples to show who wins each trick. The trump suit is **Purple** for this round.

Trump suit card

Trick 1

Alice (lead) → Barbara → Charlie → David

Winner!

Barbara wins this trick since she played the highest card of the lead player's suit (Green). David does not win even though he played the highest card, because his card is not of the lead player's suit.

Trick 2

Barbara (lead) → Charlie → David → Alice

Winner!

David wins this trick since he played the highest card of the trump suit (Purple).

Examples

Trick 3

Charlie (lead)	David	Alice	Barbara

Winner! (under Alice)

Alice wins this trick since she played the [A] card, which beats every other card in the game. Although the [A] card is a special card, remember that you still need to follow the lead player's suit.

Trick 4

Alice (lead)	Barbara	Charlie	David

Winner! (under Alice)

Alice wins this trick since no one else followed her suit, which means that her card is the highest card of the lead player's suit.

7. End of a Round

The round is over if **any** of the three conditions below has been met.

Condition 1: A team won a total of **four or more** Boss Yokai cards (cards with value [7]) between the two team members.

Condition 2: A team won a total of **seven tricks** between the two team members.

Condition 3: Players have no cards left in their hand.

If none of the conditions above has been met, then continue to the next trick (see Game Play Rules in section 6).

Winner of the round

Determine the winner of the round <u>in the following order</u>...

1) If a team won a total of **four or more** Boss Yokai cards, then **that team is the winner**.

2) Otherwise, if a team won a total of **seven tricks**, then the **other team is the winner**. The winning team takes **all Boss Yokai cards left in everyone's hands**, and adds them to the stack of Boss Yokai cards they won during the round.

3) If neither of the above happened, then the team with a player who won the **last trick** is the winner.

> The round end conditions and winner of the round changes as follows:
>
> 1) If a player won **three or more** Boss Yokai cards, then that player is the winner.
>
> 2) If a player won seven tricks, then the other two players are the winner.
>
> 3) Otherwise, the player that won the last trick is the winner.

8. Score Calculation

Only the winner of the round scores points.

The winner scores points based on the scoring rules below.

• Play **Basic Scoring Rules** if this is your first time playing this game, or if players are new to "trick-taking games".

• Play **Advanced Scoring Rules** if all players are experienced in "trick-taking games".

Basic Scoring Rules

The winner scores 1 point. Take a scoring token from the supply.

The game is over when a team has **2 scoring tokens**. That team is the winner.

Otherwise, go back to to start a new round.

Advanced Scoring Rules

To determine your score, look at all the **Boss Yokai cards** that you won in this round. Each Boss Yokai card has 0 to 2 ⭐. In a 4-player game, ignore ⚫⭐.

The winner scores **1 point** for each ⭐, **except for the Boss Yokai card of the trump suit**. You score 0 points for the Boss Yokai card of the trump suit.

Take scoring tokens from the supply equal to the number of points you scored this round.

Suit	
Green	
Purple	
Pink	⭐
Yellow	⭐
Black	⭐
Red	⭐ ⭐
Blue	⭐ ⭐

The game is over when a team has **7 or more scoring tokens**. That team is the winner.

Otherwise, go back to to start a new round.

Advanced Scoring Examples

Example 1

Alice and Charlie are in a team, and Barbara and David are in the other team.

Alice and Charlie won two Boss Yokai each, so the round is over and they are the winner.

The Boss Yokai cards they won were Green [7], Yellow [7], Red [7], and Blue [7]. There is a total of five ⭐, but Red suit is the trump suit so they score 0 points for Red [7]. Therefore, the team scores a total of 3 points this round.

Boss Yokai cards that Alice won

 No ⭐ = 0 Points

 One ⭐ = 1 Point

Boss Yokai cards that Charlie won

 Trump suit = 0 Points

 Two ⭐ = 2 Points

Total score = 3 points

Advanced Scoring Examples

Example 2

Alice and Charlie has won 3 tricks each. Charlie just won his 4th trick, so the team has now won a total of 7 tricks.

The round is over and Barbara and David's team is the winner.

Barbara and David adds all Boss Yokai cards left in everyone's hands to the stack of Boss Yokai cards they've won during the round. They won Black [7], Purple [7], Yellow [7], Red [7] and Pink [7]. There is a total of five ⭐, but Yellow suit is the trump suit, so they score 4 points this round.

Alice won 3 tricks   Charlie won 4 tricks

Barbara and David scores Boss Yokai cards left in everyone's hands, in addition to the cards they won during the round.
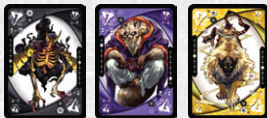
Cards they won during the round   Cards left in players' hands

🎲 8. Score Calculation

Only the winner of the round scores points.

When playing with 3 players, there may be 2 winners in a round.

The player(s) who score this round changes depending on how the round ended.

Basic Scoring Rules

1) If the round ended because a player won seven tricks, then the **other two players each score 1 point**.

2) Otherwise, the winner scores 1 point.

Players take scoring tokens from the supply to indicate their points they scored.

The game is over when a player has **2 scoring tokens**. That player is the winner.

If there are two players with 2 scoring tokens, then the winner is the left player of the player who won seven tricks in the last round.

If no player has 2 scoring tokens, then go back to <u>Round Setup (see section 5)</u> to start a new round.

⭐ Advanced Scoring Rules

1) If the round ended because a player won seven tricks, then the **other two players each score 3 points.**
2) Otherwise, the winner scores 1 point for each ⭐ and ⭐ on the Boss Yokai cards he/she took this round, **except for the Boss Yokai card of the trump suit.** You score 0 points for the Boss Yokai card of the trump suit.

Players take scoring tokens from the supply to indicate their points they scored.

The game is over if a player has **7 or more scoring tokens**. That player with the most scoring tokens is the winner.

If two players are tied for the most scoring tokens, then the winner is the left player of the player who won seven tricks in the last round.

Suit	
Green	
Purple	⭐
Pink	⭐
Yellow	⭐ ⭐
Black	⭐ ⭐
Red	⭐ ⭐ ⭐
Blue	⭐ ⭐ ⭐

If no player has 7 or more scoring tokens, then go back to <u>Round Setup (see section 5)</u> to start a new round.

Words from the designer

Yokai Septet is based on a game previously released in Japan in Spring 2015. It is still being played in Japan as one of the gateway game to the trick-taking genre.

My goal with Yokai Septet was to add more strategical "advanced" rules to a simple yet thrilling game play. I hope that this becomes one of the classic trick-taking game.

Please check our website prior to playing the game for the most updated rules and errata.

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