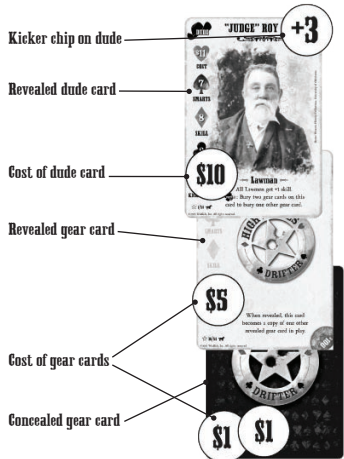




SUGGESTED DUDE AND GEAR CARD SETUP



When dudes participate in a challenge, they leave the saloon and move into the street.

Divide up the betting chip markers so that each player has an amount of chips equal in value. These chips are your stake, which is used to play dude, gear, and fortune cards, as well as to bet on the outcome of challenges.

Playing the Game

Randomly determine which player will go first; that player draws a hand of five cards, and then the other player does the same. The first player can now play a dude if he or she has one. To play a dude, place it on the table concealed—face down—and place the cost in betting chips on top of the dude card. The dude is now in the saloon.

You do not have to reveal to the other player which cards you are playing face down. That's part of the bluffing aspect of the game!

Example 1

Sam plays Henry Meek. He puts the dude on the table concealed, and then puts \$6 (the dude's cost) in betting chips on the card.

Once you have a dude in the saloon, you can play gear cards on it by paying the cost of a gear card and placing it concealed beside the dude it is attached to. The gear card is then also in the saloon.

Example 2

After having played Henry Meek, Sam decides to play the Plains Saddle gear card on Henry. He puts Plains Saddle concealed beside Henry, and then puts \$2 (the cost of the gear card) in betting chips on it.

You can take up to three actions on your turn, including playing dudes, playing gear cards, and issuing challenges. For the purpose of these quick-start rules, however, you cannot issue a challenge until both players have at least one dude with two gear cards in the saloon.

On your turn, after taking your actions, you may discard any number of cards from your hand and then draw from the deck until you have five cards in your hand.

Challenges

When you issue a challenge, both players must pay an ante of \$5 into the pot—an area in the center of the table where betting chips being wagered are kept. The challenger must declare which dude is issuing the challenge.

To accept a challenge, you declare which of your dudes will be involved; then the shootout begins. Starting with the player who issued the challenge, each player has a chance to bet that his or her dude will win by placing further betting chips from his or her stake into the pot. In order to stay in the shootout, the other player must place an equal value of betting chips into the pot. Then each player has a chance to reveal a gear card (on the dude they chose to enter the shootout) by turning the gear card face up and putting the chips on it into the pot. After both players have had a chance to reveal a gear card, there is another round of betting.

Example 3

A few turns into the game, Sam issues a challenge, and both he and Jane put \$5 into the pot. Sam then bets \$10, putting the chips into the pot. Jane wants to stay in the shootout, so she also puts \$10 worth of chips into the pot. Sam now decides to reveal a gear card on his dude, as does Jane. Both of them reveal their gear cards (turning them face up) and put the chips on the revealed gear cards into the pot. Because at least one player revealed a gear card, Sam may choose to bet again.

Once both players have revealed all the gear cards they wish to, and the following round of betting has finished, the player who initiated the challenge has a chance to play a fortune card by paying its cost in betting chips into the pot. Players take turns playing fortune cards until both players choose not

to play any more, at which point the dudes are revealed, the chips on them are placed into the pot, and stats are totaled. The dude with the highest stat (either smarts, skill, or luck) after all modifications wins the shootout, and its player adds the chips in the pot to his or her stake.

Example 4

Sam chooses to play the Gotcha Covered fortune card, paying its \$4 cost into the pot and putting it beside his dude. Jane chooses to play the Fort Up fortune card, paying its \$5 cost into the pot and putting the card beside her dude. Sam doesn't have any more fortune cards, and so he chooses not to play any more. Likewise, Jane is out of fortune cards.

Now both players reveal their dudes and place the chips on them into the pot. Sam reveals Henry Meek, with Plains Saddle and Gotcha Covered revealed on him for a total smarts of 9, skill of 3, and luck of 10. Jane shows Col. Frederick Benteen, with Dazzling Smile and Fort Up revealed on him for a total smarts of 5, skill of 12, and luck of 5. Jane's dude has the highest stat (skill 12), and so she wins the shootout! Jane adds the chips in the pot to her stake.

Winning the Game

For the purpose of these quick-start rules, after the first shootout, total up the value of the chips in each player's stake. Whichever player has the most valuable stake wins the game.

COMPLETE RULES

In **High Stakes Drifter**, players create decks filled with Wild West personalities. By equipping dudes with gear and initiating challenges with opposing dudes, players enter shootouts in an effort to increase their stakes. Playing fortune cards and flipping kicker chips enable players to bet and bluff their way to victory.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

High Stakes Drifter is a card game for 2–8 players, who use strategic bluffing and smart betting to maximize their chip gains while minimizing their chip losses. The object of the game is to be the player with the biggest stake at the end of the game. A game ends when a player cannot cover an ante.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Each player must have the following **High Stakes Drifter** game components in order to play.

A deck. Players can use the deck of cards provided in the Starter Set, or they can build their own decks using cards pulled from Booster Packs. In a standard game, each player plays with a deck of 54 cards.

Kicker chips. Kicker chips are also considered part of your deck. Kicker chips add the fickle finger of Lady Luck to the game—for better or worse. Each Starter Set contains two kicker chips, and each Booster Pack contains one.

Betting chips. Betting chips represent the value of a player's stake. Players can use actual poker chips as betting chips, but if you don't have poker chips, you can also use cardboard "marker tokens" punched out from the marker cards provided in each Starter Set, colored beads, or even unused **High Stakes Drifter** cards turned upside down; each card is printed with an inverted chip symbol in \$1 (white), \$5 (red), \$10 (blue), \$25 (green), and \$100 (black) increments.

In addition, the game requires one badge, which is included in each **High Stakes Drifter** Starter Set (any other item may also be used as a badge). The badge is used to keep track of whose turn it is.

ZONES IN THE GAME

The play area is divided into different areas—or zones—in which cards and chips are put. There are six zones: **deck**, **hand**, **deadwood**, **stake**, **saloon**, and **street**. Some zones belong to one player, while others are shared.

Deck

Each player has his or her own deck. A player's deck includes a face-down pile of cards and a stack of kicker chips. Cards in a player's deck cannot be viewed, and their order cannot be arranged. A player can count the number of cards in a player's deck at any time. A player may view the kicker chips in his or her deck at any time, but not the kicker chips in any other player's deck.

Hand

Each player has his or her own hand. Cards drawn from a player's deck go into his or her hand. You can view the cards in your hand at any time. Other players may not look at your hand. Any player can count the number of cards in a player's hand at any time.

Deadwood

Each player has his or her own deadwood. A player's deadwood is where that player's buried or discarded cards and buried kicker chips go. All players' deadwoods begin the game empty. Put buried or discarded cards face up into your deadwood. You determine the order in which cards and kicker chips are put into your deadwood.

Stake

Each player has his or her own stake. A player's stake contains any betting chips that are not currently being used to bet or to pay the cost of a card. At the beginning of a game, each player's stake contains the same value of betting chips. A player's stake is visible to all players and can be counted by any player at any time.

Saloon

The saloon is a shared zone where cards and kicker chips go once they are played or put into play; it is visible to all players and begins the game empty. In general, a card must be face up (revealed) in the saloon in order to have an effect on the game. A player can arrange his or her cards in the saloon in any way as long as they remain visible to all players.

Street

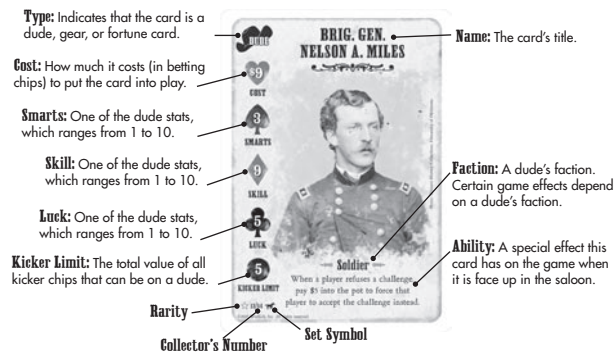
The street is a shared zone where cards and kicker chips go during a shootout; it is visible to all players. In general, a card must be revealed in the street in order to have an effect on the game. A player can arrange his or her cards in the street in any way as long as they remain visible to all players.

CARD TYPES

There are three primary **High Stakes Drifter** card types.

Dude Cards

Dude cards represent the dudes who challenge each other in shootouts.



Gear Cards

Gear cards represent equipment, characters, animals, etc. that aid the dude on which they are played.

Fortune Cards

Fortune cards represent twists of fate that occur during a shootout. Fortune cards can affect dudes, players, and other elements of the game.

Copy Cards

A miscellaneous card type is the copy card. A copy card is a gear or fortune card that becomes a copy of a card of your choosing in the saloon or street. Copy cards are identified by the phrase "becomes a copy" in their ability text.

A copy card becomes the card it copies in every way. The cost of a copy card remains the same, but it gains all other traits of the card you choose, including the target's name, card type, and ability.

To play a copy card, choose a card in the saloon or street. Pay the copy card's cost and resolve its effects when it enters the saloon or street.

KICKER CHIPS

Kicker chips are special chips played on dudes, and they come in four different colors: white, red, blue, and green. These colors correspond to different betting chip values (white=\$1, red=\$5, blue=\$10, green=\$25), even though kicker chips don't cost betting chips to play.

A dude's kicker limit determines the total "value" of kicker chips that may be played upon it. See "Playing a Kicker Chip," on reverse, for more information on the limitations of playing kicker chips on dudes.

Each side of a kicker chip is printed with a modifier (either positive or negative) that applies to one of the three dude stats (smarts, skill, luck). Both sides of all kicker chips in the saloon or street can be viewed by all players at any time.

SETTING UP

For a standard game, each player begins with a deck of 54 cards. Players can build their decks with any combination of dude cards and other card types. Up to three copies of any one common card, two copies of any one uncommon card, and one copy of any rare or fixed card is permitted in a deck.

Part of each player's deck includes a stack of kicker chips worth \$50. Select chips that will work well with the stat values of the dudes in your deck.

Each player begins the game with a starting stake of \$100. By mutual agreement, you may play a higher-stakes game—just make sure that all players start with stakes of equal value.

Each player shuffles his or her card deck and presents it to the player on his or her right to cut.

Each player then draws a starting hand of five cards. Once per game, when players draw their starting hands, if you have no dudes in your hand, reveal your hand to everyone, discard it into your deadwood, and then draw a new starting hand.

Randomly determine who goes first, and then give that person the badge.

IMPORTANT GAME CONCEPTS

Before learning about all the things you can do on your turn, familiarize yourself with the following important **High Stakes Drifter** concepts.

Play

You play a card when you pay its cost and put it into the saloon or street. You play a kicker chip by declaring to all players which dude you'll play it on and then flipping the chip.

Put into play. If a card ability says to put a card into play, you put the card into play from your hand without paying its cost.

Bury

You bury a card or kicker chip by moving it from the saloon or street to your deadwood.

Abilities

Card abilities have special effects on the game outside of the rules in this rulebook.

Abilities trump rules. If an ability contradicts a rule in this rulebook, the ability always takes precedence.

"Can" vs. "can't." If two rules or two card abilities contradict each other, the one that says you "can't" do something supercedes the one that says you "can" do something. For example, if a player plays a fortune card that says "no dudes may be reinvested after this shootout," then no dudes may be reinvested after the shootout—even if one of them has an ability that says it must be.

Impossible actions. If an ability or portion of an ability indicates that a player take an impossible action (such as to "play a kicker chip" if you have no kicker chips in your deck), ignore the ability or portion of the ability that indicates the impossible action.

Revealed Cards

A card is revealed when it is face up in the saloon or street. You reveal a face-down card by turning it face up. All of a card's printed characteristics come into effect when it is revealed.

Concealed Cards

A card is concealed when it is face down in the saloon or street. You conceal a revealed card by turning it face down.

In general, a concealed card has a limited effect on the game. It is considered to have no name, faction, stats, kicker limit, set symbol, or rarity indicator. It is also considered to have no

QUICK-START RULES

High Stakes Drifter™, an exciting game of betting and bluffing set in the wild days of the Old West, is played using collectable **High Stakes Drifter** cards. These quick-start rules will teach you everything you need to know to begin your first **High Stakes Drifter** game with two players. Once you feel comfortable playing the game using these simplified rules, you can get the full game experience by using the complete rules.

Starter Set Components

- One rules sheet
- One deck of 54 **High Stakes Drifter** cards
- Two kicker chips
- Marker tokens to represent betting chips
- One "dealer" badge

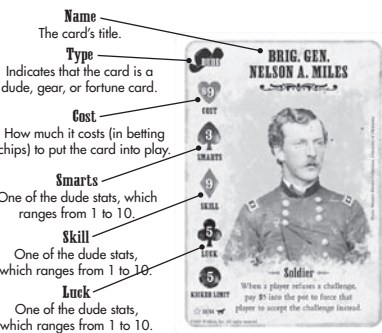
To play using the quick-start rules, you won't need the kicker chips or the complete rules, below.

Dude Cards

Dude cards represent personalities who challenge each other in shootouts. They are the basic cards in the game—everything else modifies how they interact with each other.

Only those card features that you need for the quick-start rules are described in the illustration below. All other card features are explained in the complete rules.

Gear and Fortune Cards



Gear and fortune cards represent equipment, lucky breaks, or just plain ol' good planning on the part of the dudes challenging one another. They modify one or more of a dude's stats, or provide some other game effect described on the card itself. Gear and fortune cards must be revealed—face up—in order to have an effect on the game.

Setting the Scene

These quick-start rules will run you through a simple two-player game, but **High Stakes Drifter** only gets better as more players join in the fun. Both players share the same deck in these quick-start rules, but you can find out more about building your own deck in the complete rules.

The play area is divided into different areas—or zones—into which cards are put. There are six zones: **deck**, **hand**, **deadwood**, **stake**, **saloon**, and **street**. Cards are drawn from the deck into your hand and played into the saloon. Cards that are buried or discarded are placed in the deadwood.

