To play using the quick-start rules, you won’t need to read the kickers 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 good luck that can help or hinder the player 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—in which cards and chips are put. There are six zones: deck, hand, deadwood, saloon, street, and salon. Cards are drawn from the deck into your hand and played into the salon. Cards that are buried or discarded are placed in the deadwood.

**Playing the Game**

Rapidly determine which player will go first, then player draws a hand of five cards, and then the other player draws 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 card in betting chips on top of the dude card. The dude is then in the salon.

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 $5 (the dude’s cost) in betting chips on it in betting chips on it.

Once you have a dude in the salon, 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 salon.

**Example 2**

After having played Henry Meek, Sam decides to play the Plains Saddle gear card on Henry. He puts the gear card concealed beside Henry’s dude, and then puts $2 (the cost of the gear card) in betting chips on it 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 kickers. You may declare to all players which dude you’ll play on your turn, familiarize yourself with the following concepts.

**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—allowing a player to minimize their chip losses.

- **Copy cards.** You can also use cardboard “marker tokens” punched out from the marker cards provided in each Starter Set, colored beads, or even unusual items! *High Stakes Drifter* cards turned upside down, each card is present with an inverted chip symbol in $1 (white), $5 (red), $10 (blue), $25 (green), and $100 (black) increments.

- **Tallies.** The game requires one, 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, saloon, street, and salon. Some zones belong to one player, while others are shared.

**Deck**

Each player has his or her own deck. A player’s deck includes cards with different values 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.

**Kicker chips**

Kicker chips are special cards 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 count betting chips to play.

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

**EXAMPLE**

Each side of a kicker chip is printed with a modifier (either positive or negative) that applies to the player on whose turn it is face up. For example, if a player plays a chip that says “no dudes may be reinforced after this shootout,” then no dudes may be reinforced after the shootout—even if one of them has an ability that says it must be. Otherwise, the player with the highest value of an ability on an opponent’s card is considered to have the better one.

**What you need to do**

To play a copy card, choose a card in the salon or street. Play the copy card, and reveal its effects when it enters the salon or street.

**Revealed Cards**

A card is revealed when it is face up in the salon 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 salon 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 number, faction, stats, kicker limit, set symbol, or rarity indicator. It is also considered to have no.
**Variant Rules**

Players are welcome to create their own rules for playing *High Stakes Drifter*, or they can use the following suggested variants. Because many of these variants encourage you to innovate new or different ways to build your deck, all players in a game should agree on which variant or combination of variants they will play prior to deck building.

Players may combine variant rules any way they choose. All variants use the rules of the standard game, except as noted in each variant’s description.

**Cold Hands**

In this variant, each player’s initial draw of five cards is his or her hand for the first shootout. After the initial draw, all players ante, and then each has a turn to take three actions to add to their deck: play dude cards, gear cards, or kicker cards. After each player has had a turn, the player with the badge issues a challenge. If the showdown fails to identify a winner, all cards in the street are buried, and any cards in hand are discarded. Each player draws a new hand of five cards, and the badge is passed to the next player to the left. Repeat this process until a winner is declared.

**Deuces Wild**

Players may include up to two copies of each card in their decks, no matter the rarity.

**Draw**

Each player brings six *High Stakes Drifter* Booster Packs, from which all players “draft” decks. A player may not include a different number of cards in his or her deck. Each player can have a limit to the value of kicker chips that may be in the player’s deck. Each player may play fortune cards in the street.

**Ending Your Turn**

Players then draw from their decks until they each have a hand of five cards.

**If you play a shootout or instead, of burying your dude, you may move it from the street back to the saloon, for this card is revealed.**

**Issue a Challenge**

If you win a shootout or fold, you may bury your dude and any gear cards and kicker cards on it. If you have revealed gear cards on it, bury the betting chips on them to the saloon. If you lose a shootout or fold, instead of burying your dude, you may move it from the street back to the saloon, for this card is revealed. Reinvest in the pot. If that’s not possible, the other players must make their bets on their dudes and gear cards in the showdown. A player who refuses the challenge, keep your dudes where they are, but you have no chance to win the showdown. A player who accepts the challenge is the lead bettor. Otherwise, the lead bettor is the player closest clockwise to the player with the highest value of all the cards in hand. Both players then pass their dudes to the lead bettor, and each player involved in the shootout must either accept or decline the challenge. If you accept, move one of your dudes to the street. If you decline, all players ante, and then each one of them draws a hand of five cards.

**Low-High**

Any dude with the highest value of the contested stat and any dude with the lowest value of the contested stat tie for the win of each shootout. All other dudes in the showdown lose the shootout.

**Man Standing**

Play continues until only one player has chips remaining in his or her stack.

**Lowball**

Any dude with the lowest contested stat wins the shootout. All other dudes in the showdown lose the shootout.

**On Your Lonesome**

Players may include no more than one copy of each card in their decks, no matter the rarity.

**Riding Shotgun**

Any time a player moves a dude into the street, he or she may put a dude into play in the saloon.

**Stud**

Each player opens six *High Stakes Drifter* Booster Packs and uses the contents to construct a deck. There is no limit to the number of copies of each card a player may have in his or her deck, nor is there a limit to the value of kicker chips that may be in a player’s deck.

**Tombstone**

In this variant, there can be only one copy of any given dude revealed in the saloon or street at any time. If a particular dude is already revealed in the saloon or street, and another dude with the same name is later revealed in the saloon or street, the dude is revealed second. If two or more copies of the same dude are revealed simultaneously during a showdown, all copies are buried. If this leaves no dude cards or face down, the pot is added to the pot for the next challenge.

**Tres Amigos**

Players may include up to three copies of each card in their decks, no matter the rarity.