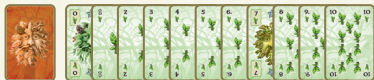


Holly Oak

CONTENTS

45 game cards

4 seasons of 11 cards, with ranks 0-10:



Spring



Summer



Fall




Winter

1 *Season Retreats* card:



5 summary cards

35 scoring chips, 25  and 10 

OVERVIEW

3-5 revelers seek the favor of the Celtic Holly and Oak kings as they grow, decay, and renew.

Holly Oak is a seasonal trick taking card game. A game typically lasts 3-5 rounds.

Each player must play a card in the current season (if they can). If they cannot, they may play *any* card. If its season is the *next* season (in the cycle Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring...), then the current season immediately changes to it.

Each trick is won by the highest rank card in the current season at the *end* of that trick.



The waxing and waning Oak and Holly kings are worth 1 or 2 points. Alternatively, a player can score points by taking *no tricks* during a round.

After scoring, if anyone has at least 15, 13, or 10 points in a 3, 4, or 5 player game, respectively, the game ends.

The player with the most points wins!

SETUP

With 3 or 5 players, use all game cards.
4 players: return the 0 Winter to the box.



Give each player a summary card (return any extras to the box). Put the scoring chips nearby.

Round start: shuffle the game cards and deal all of them.
Each player picks up their hand of cards.



The player with the 1 Spring plays it face up in the center to start the first trick (in Spring).

PLAY

A *trick* consists of each player playing one card.

The first trick of each round begins in Spring with the player dealt the 1 Spring playing it.

A trick continues clockwise. If the next player has at least one card in the current season, then they *must* play any one of those cards.

Example: After 1 Spring is played, the next player has the 0, 4, and 9 of Spring. They must play one of them, but they choose which one to play.

If a player does not have a card of the current season, then they may play *any* card. If the card they play is of the *following* season (in the cycle Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, Spring...), then the season *immediately* changes. The next player to play in this trick must now play in this new season (if they can).

Example: After **1 Spring** is played, the next player has no Spring cards and may play any card in hand. If they play a Summer card, the season will advance to Summer and the player after them must play a Summer card (if they have one).

Cards in non-following seasons do not affect the current season. The current season can advance several times in a single trick.

Example: Later, a player leads **3 Fall**. The next player has no Fall cards and plays **7 Winter**, advancing the season. The player after them has no Winter cards and plays **4 Spring**, advancing the season a second time. If, instead, this player had played a Summer or Fall card, the season would have remained Winter.

The six rank 0, 7, or 9 Oak and Holly kings, with bordered indices, are played normally, but are each worth 1 or 2 points to the winner of that trick.



Season Retreats: changes the current season to the *previous* season (e.g. Fall if the current season is Winter).

Season Retreats' rank is $\frac{1}{2}$ in the new season.

Season Retreats does *not* have a season until it is played. (It is not "all seasons".)

A player who holds both a current season card and Season Retreats may not play Season Retreats (they must play a current season card). A player without any current season cards is not required to play Season Retreats.

Tip: When playing a card that changes the season, say the new season out loud. When playing another season card that does not change it, repeat the current season.

Example: The 5 Spring is led. A player without Spring cards plays a Summer card and says, "It's Summer now." The next player, without Summer cards, plays 2 Winter and says, "Still Summer."

Winning a Trick: Each trick is won by the highest rank card of the current season at the *end* of that trick. The player who played it stacks the trick's cards in front of them for later scoring. This player is now *on lead* and begins the next trick.

LEADING

The player on lead *must* play either a current season card, a next season card, or Season Retreats. They may choose any of these options (unlike when playing on a card during a trick).


Example: After winning a trick with 8 Summer, a player holding two Summer cards, three Fall cards, and the Season Retreats card could lead any of these six cards to begin the next trick.

Tip: *When learning Holly Oak, it can be useful to state these options for the player on lead. For the above example, say, "Lead Summer, Fall, or Season Retreats."*

If the player on lead cannot play, lead passes to the next player clockwise. If all players cannot play, the round ends "out of season". Put all cards left in players' hands in the center. They do not score.

Otherwise, lead and play tricks until all tricks have been played. The round then ends and is scored.

SCORING

Players score points either from winning tricks that have the Oak and Holly kings (with ) **or** by taking no tricks at all. Taking no tricks is worth 8, 5, or 3 points in a 3, 4, or 5 player game, respectively.

Give players chips equal to the points they score. Chips are 1s (red) and 5s (brown). Make change as needed.

Winning: After scoring, if any player has at least 15, 13, or 10 points in a 3, 4, or 5 player game, respectively, the game ends. *The player with the most points wins!*

If several players tie for most points, the player among them who earned the most points in the final round wins. If still tied, these players rejoice in their shared victory.

Otherwise, shuffle and deal the cards to begin the next round of play.

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