



# DETERMINISM THE CARD GAME

A FUN CARD GAME CREATED BY AUTHOR AND CONTENT CREATOR TRICK SLATTERY

Please visit my websites at [TrickSlattery.com](http://TrickSlattery.com),  
[breakingthefreewillillusion.com](http://breakingthefreewillillusion.com), and [TricksPlace.com](http://TricksPlace.com)

Determinism is an original card game created by me, Trick. The object of the card game is to build a card “universe” off of an initial Big Bang card and to either win by obtaining the most points *or* by entering a Black Hole. You play by following the game’s “rules of causality”. It’s a quick and easy game to learn.

## **Needed to play**

- 1 shuffled deck of 52 cards
- Paper and pen for scoring
- 2-4 players (4 players can play as individuals or 2 teams of 2)

## **Game Setup**

1. To determine the order of play, deal 1 card to each player. The player with the highest card plays first, and then the order of play goes clockwise.
  - a. For team play, players should sit opposite each other (i.e. Team 1, Team 2, Team 1, and Team 2). Teammates score together, but cannot see, or tell each other, what cards they have.
  - b. Shuffle the cards back into the deck.
2. Place 1 card face up in the middle of the Universe (middle of the table). This is the Big Bang – play builds off this card initially. (If the game ends with a card entering a black hole, use that card as the Big Bang for the next game).
3. Place 3 cards face-down off to the side. This is the Quantum Swap Pile. Players may “swap” with this pile, but the Pile should always have 3 cards.
4. Deal out the remaining 48 cards, as follows:
  - *4 Players (as individuals or as 2 teams of 2):* 12 cards to each player.
  - *3 Players:* 16 cards to each player.
  - *2 Players:* 24 cards to each player.
5. Players can look at their cards and sort them for easier game play.

## Object of the Game

The object of the game is to either:

- Get the most points; or
- Enter a black hole

The **game ends** when:

- no more cards can be played in the universe (in which case the player with the most points wins) or,
- someone enters a black hole (in which case the game ends immediately and that player wins, regardless of score).

*Optional play:* play a series of games and bet with chips or money. Place an ante in the beginning and winner wins the pot, or gamble each turn.









## The Big Bang and Expansion of the Universe





The game starts with a Big Bang (an initial card) and the universe expands out from it. Each turn, a player can either play 1 card in the universe or they can swap a card with the Quantum Swap Pile (but not both).

**\* Cards played must expand the universe by aligning with the long edge and/or short edge of at least 1 card already in the universe, based on a “causal” relationship. A card cannot align along any edge without a causal relationship to it.**

“Causal” relationships between cards are only along the long or short edge of a card, not diagonally. Causal relationships can be based on suit, number, or both. **Causality never goes in reverse here.** Causal relationships are as follows:

### Causality based on Suits

- Clubs  causes Hearts 
- Hearts  causes Spades 
- Spades  causes Diamonds 
- Diamonds  causes Clubs 

The order of **CHSD** (Clubs  , Hearts  , Spades  , Diamonds  ) can be remembered by the word “chased”: **CHaSeD**. If you think of the C chasing the H, etc. that could help you remember the order.



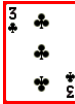

Causality based on number (or face equivalent to number)

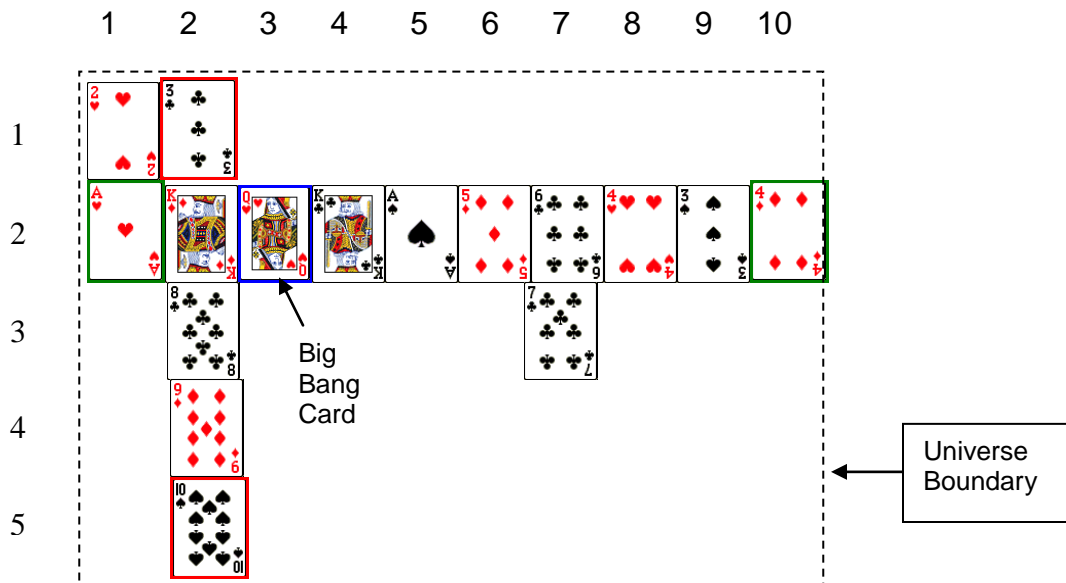
- Ace causes 2
- 2 causes 3
- 3 causes 4
- 4 causes 5
- 5 causes 6
- 6 causes 7
- 7 causes 8
- 8 causes 9
- 9 causes 10
- 10 causes Jack
- Jack causes Queen
- Queen causes King
- King causes Ace
- Ace causes 2....

**Boundary of the Universe**

The universe is 5 cards high (bottom to top) and 10 cards wide (side to side). The universe doesn't necessarily expand evenly: from the Big Bang, cards may expand more in one direction than another, but once a card is played such that the universe now has 5 cards vertically and/or 10 cards horizontally, that creates the game boundaries in that direction and no card can be placed beyond the boundary to either side.

For example, the boundaries have been set for the below, and cards cannot go

past the  and  width or the  and  height from this point on.



## Scoring


Cards are played based on causal relationships with cards already in the Universe. Playing a card based on....

1. Alignment with 1 other card:
  - suit – **1 point** and/or
  - number or face – **2 points**
2. Alignment with 2-3 cards
  - score as in #1 above for EACH connected card individually (see #1), and
  - score **1 extra point** if aligned with 2 cards, or
  - score **2 extra points** if aligned with 3 cards
3. Alignment with 4 cards:
  - You just entered a black hole and have won the game!! (Regardless of points). If betting – take the pot!

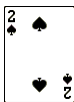
## Example Play and Scoring

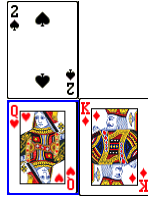
For our example, the Big Bang happens to be Queen of Hearts:



The first player decides to play a , following causality by **number (face) only**. This scores **2 points**. Resulting universe expansion:

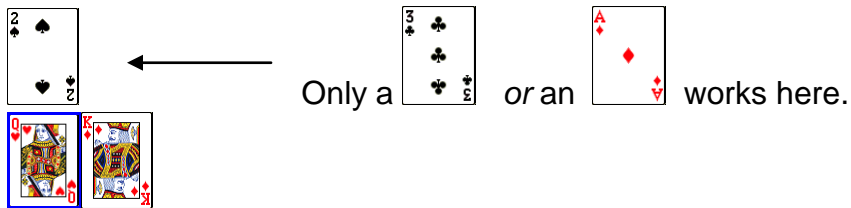




The next player decides to play a , following causality by **suit only**. Remember the order is **CHaSeD**: clubs→heart→spades→diamonds. This scores **1 point**. Resulting universe expansion:

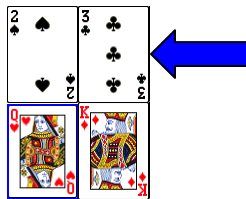


If a card played happens to have both causal relationships (i.e. suit and number/face), then the player scores points for both relationships:  
**suit 1 point + number/face 2 points = 3 points.**

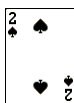



The next player wants to make as many causal relationships as possible, to score the most points. One way to do this is to align with 2 cards at once. Considering the current universe,



To play here, the card must have a causal relationship with  and .



Scoring this gives 4 points total:

- **2 points** for the number causal relationship to the ,
- **1 point** for the suit causal relationship to the ,
- **1 extra point** for aligning with 2 cards. (i.e. the  and )



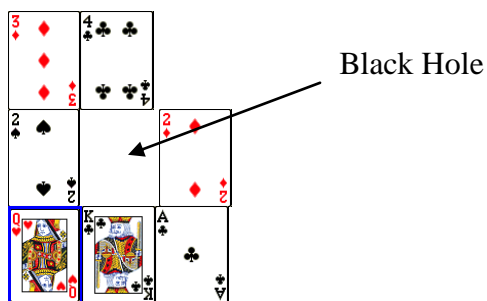
## Creating a Black Hole

A Black Hole is created when 4 cards surround a “hole” with no card in the middle. If a player creates a Black Hole (i.e. sets down the last of 4 cards that surrounds a hole), that player immediately gets another turn, but only to play into the black hole or swap a card with the Quantum Swap Pile. (If the player “swaps”, he/she needs to wait until the next turn to play again and other players have a chance to enter the black hole and win the game).

**\* A player who creates a black hole can then immediately place a card in the middle to win (if they have one): No waiting for the next turn.**

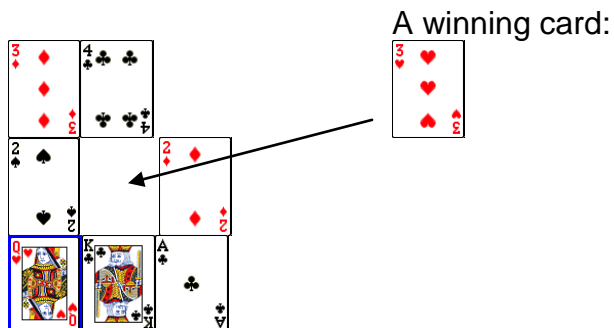
**\* A player who plays a card in a Black Hole wins the game immediately.**

Example Black Hole:

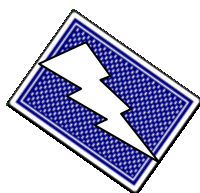


The only cards that can be played are those that have a causal relationship with each card it touches – side/side and top/bottom.

Entering a Black Hole:



(If playing another game, use this Black Hole card as the next “Big Bang” card)



## **Game play and the Quantum Swap Pile**

With each turn, a player can *either*:

- Play a card in the universe *or*
- Swap 1 card from the Quantum Swap Pile (only if the player has played a card in the universe since their last Swap) *or*
- Pass (skip) a turn.

A player “swaps” by taking 1 card from his/her own hand in exchange for a card of the Quantum Swap Pile. To swap, a player takes the top card from the Quantum Swap Pile and places their own on the bottom.

Initially the first 3 swaps will result in new cards coming into play, but swaps after that will be cards that one or more player has discarded. It may be an advantage to keep track of which cards you discarded and when.

A player cannot use the Quantum Swap Pile again until he/she has played a card in the universe.

A player who creates a Black Hole can play again immediately after (i.e. “extra” turn), but can only play in the black hole **or** swap with the Quantum Swap Pile.

*Note:* If a player does not have a card to play he/she does not have to swap, but it is an option.

## **Strategy**

Players will want to aim at making it difficult for opponents to play high scoring cards while working on setting up high scoring plays, and even black holes, for themselves.

Have fun!!!



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I hope you enjoy the free card game I created. Please let me know whatcha think or suggestions for improvements: [www.trickslattery.com/contact/](http://www.trickslattery.com/contact/)

*A special thanks to my wife Andie who helped to edit and reorganize Determinism (the card game) for better clarity. Her love of games and pet peeve of wonky instructions helped greatly.*

Thank you,  
‘Trick Slattery