

Quick Start Guide to Insectopia

Players: 2–4

Game Duration: 20–40 minutes

Age: 8+

Goal of the Game

You are biologists competing to create the best biotope in your garden. The goal is to build stable ecological equilibriums before your rivals sabotage your plans.

Setup

1. Each player gets a pre-built **deck** of 40 shuffled cards.
 2. Draw 3 cards for your starting hand.
 3. Decide on a starting player.
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How to Play

Play cards into your own or any rivals **tableau**. During the game, the **tableau** expands horizontally as more cards are added, but it also grows vertically, as cards become overlaid by others when they become defeated.

Tableau and Habitat

- Your **tableau** is all the cards in front of you.
- Your **biotope** is only the top row of visible cards in your tableau.

Winning the Game

- Score the most points by the end.
- At the end of the game, you score 1 point for each card in your **tableau**.
- Some cards let you earn victory tokens during play, worth 1 point each.
- Creating an **ecological equilibrium** in your **biotope** earns you 7 victory tokens instantly.

Game End

- The game ends when one player has no cards left in their **deck** and its becoming their turn.
 - Finish the round, then calculate scores.
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Turn Structure

1. Feeding Phase

- Predator (red) cards must “**devour**” its two direct neighbors if they are yellow or red. Slide the eaten cards underneath the predator.
- Choose order of all Devour activities.
- Fill in any gaps in your **tableau** by shifting cards together.

2. Play Phase

- **Play 1 Card:** Add a card to the left or right end of any habitat (yours or another player’s).
- **Compensation:** If you play a card into another player’s habitat, draw compensation cards as shown on the card’s symbol.
- **Card Effects:** The effect happens immediately for the player receiving the card.
- **Overlays:** Cards with the overlay symbol can additionally be placed on other cards with matching traits, often triggering bonuses, like
 - Play an additional Card.
 - Draw cards.
- **Enforcers:** These are a special type of effect card. They force you or an opponent to play a specific card of a certain color and/or in a specific position.
 - If the **enforcer** applies to you, you must follow its instructions immediately.
 - If the **enforcer** applies to an opponent, they must follow it the next time it’s their turn.

Only the most recently played **enforcer** is active, and it overrides any previous enforcers in play.

3. Synthesis (Optional)

- If 3 green cards are next to each other, you can “synthesize.” Slide the two outer cards under the middle card and draw 1 card.

4. End Your Turn

- End your turn if you have no more cards to play.
- **Trigger Effects:** Resolve “end of turn” effects.
- **Draw Cards:** If you couldn’t play a card or your hand is empty, draw 1 card.
- Clear any enforced rules from **enforcer** cards.
- **Overpopulation:** If your habitat has 9+ stacks of cards, merge them into a single stack with the leftmost card on top.

Creating an Ecological Equilibrium

An **ecological equilibrium** is exactly 7 cards in a row that meet these conditions:

- **3 green, 3 yellow, 1 red.**

- The red card **cannot be adjacent** to a yellow card within these 7.

Claiming the Balance:

- During your turn, declare and publish your balance at any time.
- Other players verify: 7 cards, correct colors, and no red-yellow adjacency.
- If approved:
 1. Earn 7 victory tokens.
 2. Combine the 7 cards into a single stack, choosing which card stays visible on top.
- **Hand Reset:** All players then **bury** their current hands (put them under their deck) and draw 3 fresh cards.

Good Luck Building Your Perfect Biotope!