

# Sun, Moon, & Stars

Rules by Eric Jome, 2015-07-21

## Background

*The spirit animals, totems of our ancestors, chase the Sun, Moon, & Stars through the heavens each seeking their own fulfillment. Wolf hunts Deer, hoping to catch his prey under the moon and stars. Deer is no easy catch, though, able to hide in starlit night and flee in sunlit day. Owl is the wise one, concerned only with the great movements of sun and moon, above the chase of Deer and Wolf. But beware! Sowing discord is Serpent! Serpent conspires to put one above the others or see that none are fulfilled - only tyranny or chaos will bring joy to Serpent.*

*The heavens spin and wheel while each animal spirit seeks to gain control of their celestial forces. In the chase of the Sun, Moon, & Stars is the meaning of life for the spirits.*

## Components

- 3 celestial object cards depicting the Sun, Moon, and Stars
- 4 spirit animal role cards (blue) depicting Wolf, Deer, Owl, and Serpent
- 11 action cards (tan)

## Overview

Sun, Moon, & Stars is a short, simple game for 2 to 4 players. To start each round, each player receives a hidden goal. On each turn, a player will draw a card then play one of the two cards in hand. This moves the celestial objects around the table helping players achieve their hidden goal or block others from achieving their goal. If at the end of any player's turn any player has met their goal, they win that round! The first person(s) to win three rounds is the overall winner!

## Round Setup

• **1. Deal goals.** Choose one player to be the Dealer. This should be the player who won the last round or can be chosen at random by the players. The Dealer shuffles all four blue goal cards and deals one to each of the compass points face down as in Diagram 1. The dealer is always at the South. In a two player round, the Dealer's opponent sits at the North. In a three player round, one of the Dealer's opponents sits at the North while the third may sit at the East or the West. In a 4 player round, all points are occupied by players.

Goal cards represent positions where the Sun, Moon, and Stars stop between actions. A goal card at a position without a player may not win and is not revealed. It is just a marker for that position in that round.

Players may look at the goal card at their position at any time so they know their goal, but they should keep it hidden throughout the round until someone claims victory.

• **2. Distribute objects.** Next, the Dealer looks at their goal and then gives out the Sun, Moon, & Stars cards so that the first player to take a turn does not get one and each position gets only one. The Dealer simply hands one card to each position, even if no player is there. The first player to take an action is the first to the Dealer's left; this player does not start with any of the celestial objects. For example, the distribution in Diagram 1 would break down like this;

- 2 Players (North and South): one object each at West, East, South
- 3 Players (North, East, and South): one object each at West, East, and South
- 3 Players (North, West, and South): one object each at North, East, and South
- 4 Players: one object each at North, East, and South

• **2. Deal action cards.** Lastly, the Dealer shuffles the action cards and deals one to each player. Positions where no player is sitting never get action cards. The first player to take an action is the first to the Dealer's left.



Diagram 1: Round Setup for Four Players

## Player's Turns

On a player's turn, that player starts by drawing an action card. If the action card deck is empty, the player about to take their turn should shuffle the discard pile to form a new deck. **However, if this has happened once already this round, the round ends instead!** See Ending The Round below.

If the round isn't over, the current player then plays one of the two action cards in their hand and resolves the entire effect. After it is resolved, players check to see if someone has won. If not, play continues with the player to the left.

## Resolving Actions

Actions use two common phrases. The first of these is of the form "A to B" (→) where A and B are each one of the celestial objects. This means the acting player should move A directly to B's current location. For example, "Sun to Moon" means move the Sun card clockwise around the table until it reaches the position of the Moon.

The other common phrase is "C moves on" (↻) where C is one of the celestial objects. This means the player resolving the action moves C in a clockwise direction around the table. They may move it one or two positions. For example, "Stars move on" means move the Stars card clockwise around the table one or two positions.

There are two special actions. The first is **Serpent Whispering** which allows the acting player to exchange all the celestial objects in one position for all the objects in another position. This can result in exchanging something for nothing, multiple objects, or between positions not involving the player taking the action. The second is **Serpent Speaking** which allows the acting player to switch any two goal cards. They may switch theirs, those of two other players, or with those no player is using.

## Ending The Round

The round ends at the end of **any** player's turn when **any** player's goal card conditions have been met. Each player should check at the end of every player's turn to see if they've accomplished their goal. When they have, they reveal their role and announce victory. **The acting player's action card must be completely resolved before any player can claim victory.**

The first time the deck of action cards runs out, shuffle the discard pile to form a new action card deck and continue. The second time it runs out, however, the round ends.

## Winning The Round and The Game

A round of the game is won by the first player to have the objects required on their goal card. The objects must be in front of that player at the end of ANY player's turn. Deer wants Sun and Stars. Wolf wants Moon and Stars. Owl wants Sun and Moon.

Serpent's goals are different. Serpent wants ANY player to have 3 celestial objects in front of them at the end of ANY player's turn or for no one to have won by the end of the round. If the player with Deer, Wolf, or Owl end up with 3 things, the Serpent player wins instead of that player! If no player has won when the deck runs out the second time and no one is Serpent, all players are considered to win together.

The first player(s) to win three rounds is the overall winner. If more than one player wins at the same time, enjoy the joint victory together.

## Special Thanks

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