

**About the game:** Circus Combat is a game about nonfunctional working communities and unhealthy competition at work, for two players. The play time is approximately 45 minutes, and it's designed by Miika Vihesaari and Miikka Junnila.

**Theme/Backstory:** *The circus performance is about to begin, again. You have to be the star that shines the brightest, and amaze everyone with your performance. You need to plan your show, find the state of perfect concentration to execute your tricks, and try to avoid the tiredness that easily kicks in when the demanding performance continues. Tonight, you have decided to be better than the average circus artists also trying to impress the audience.*

**Game components:**

28 Trick cards (prototype quality cards printable at end of this document)

36 black concentration D6 dice for player 1

36 gray concentration D6 dice for player 2

36 red fatigue D6 dice, shared by players

**Aim of the game:** You win the game by getting the most points. The points are based on the tricks in your show, how well you execute them and in which order they are performed for optimal dramatic effect. The point calculation logic is explained in chapter Resolution.

**Setup:** To start the game, the players should shuffle the trick deck and put 8 random tricks face up on the table (the circus stage). Players should have their own dice at hand, and also the fatigue dice. Each player should have space on the table for their show queue, which will later contain their trick cards, from left to right. The players throw dice to see who starts – higher eye count goes first.

**Progression of play:**

Each turn consists of

1. Throwing 3 concentration dice and 1 fatigue dice
2. Rethrowing any number of these dice once
3. Distributing all the dice on trick cards on the table. All dice must be placed on some trick cards on the circus stage if they fit somewhere (according to poker hand logic). Dice that don't fit anywhere are discarded. Fatigue dice discarded this way must be placed in front of the player, counting as minus points in the point calculation phase
4. If any tricks get ready (have all the dices making up the correct poker hand), moving the trick from the circus stage to the show queue of the player who has most concentration (more dice, or if even, more points) on that trick. If it's still even, the trick is discarded. A new trick is added from the trick deck. When placing a trick to the show queue, the player can perform a swap action if the trick card has a swap symbol consisting of two arrows. This allows the player to swap any two adjacent trick cards in their show queue to optimize point calculation (explained fully in the next chapter)

5. As a special case, if a trick gets full of red fatigue dice, the player who finished the trick can roll all the red dice on the card and distribute them to other tricks straight away

**Resolution:** When a player reaches 9 or more tricks in their show queue, the game ends after the other player still getting one more turn. After this, the points are calculated as follows. The point value of each trick is calculated by adding the eye counts of the player's own concentration dice, subtracting the eye counts from the fatigue dice, and ignoring the concentration dice of the other player. Then multipliers are applied as follows: The first three tricks in the show queue get a multiplier of 1, the next three tricks a multiplier of 2, and the last tricks a multiplier of 3.

Also the order and color of the tricks gives multipliers – the second trick in the same color as the previous trick in the show queue gets a multiplier of 2, and the third of the same color in a row gets a multiplier of 3. After three tricks of the same color, the color multipliers go back to one, so a fourth trick of the same color as the previous 3 again has no special multiplier.

It is possible to get negative points from a trick, if there is more fatigue there than concentration, and also negative points can get multiplied.

The player with the most points is the winner!

TWO PAIRS  
(22)

STRAIGHT

2 PAIRS

FIVE OF A KIND

FULL HOUSE

THREE OF A  
KIND TWICE

THREE PAIRS

ONE PAIR

three of a kind

ONE PAIR

four of a kind

FULL HOUSE

TWO PAIRS  
(22)

four of a kind

THREE OF A  
KIND TWICE

three of a kind

FIVE OF A KIND

THREE PAIRS

2 PAIRS

STRAIGHT

THREE PAIRS

FULL HOUSE

TWO PAIRS

22

STRAIGHT

THREE OF A  
KIND TWICE

ONE PAIR

FIVE OF A KIND

three of a kind

four of a kind

2 PAIRS

