

12 Thieves

A game by Thorsten Gimmler • for 2–4 players • Ages 8 and up

GAME COMPONENTS

- 6 palaces – in six colours



- 4 player boards – 1 per player colour



- 48 thieves – 12 per player colour



- 24 guards – 4 per player colour and 8 black, neutral guards

Dusk is slowly descending upon the desert city.

Now is the time for the players to send out their 12 thieves and compete to steal the most treasures from the palaces. The Maharajahs think they can prevent the robbery with their guards, but the guards can be bribed and used to help the players for their own purpose ...

- 102 palace cards – 17 cards showing one of the six palaces



- 8 dancer cards – to use as a joker as any palace card

- 24 treasure chests – 4 chests per each palace colour, marked with 4 to 7 pips



- 1 Rules booklet

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Each player can move his/her thieves and guards using palace cards. Everyone strives to smuggle their thieves into the palaces as fast as possible to rob the first treasure chests, while at the same time trying to place their own guards in front of the other thieves.

The player who succeeds in being the first person to steal the required number of treasure chests, completes and wins the game.

SET-UP

- 1) The six **palaces** are placed in the middle of the table in any order and set-up, for example in a circle.



- 2) Sort the **treasure chests** by colour and form stacks: The treasure chest with the 7 pips on it is placed at the bottom of the stack. The treasure chest with 6 pips is placed upon it, then the one with 5 pips and the treasure chest with 4 pips is placed on top. Place the stacks on the coloured terrace in the respective palaces.

- 3) One **black, neutral guard** is placed on a guard square in front of each palace.

- 4) The **palace cards** are shuffled and placed as a covert stack in the middle of the palaces. The **dancer cards** are placed facing upwards next to the stack.

Terrace
(coloured floor):
The place to put the
stack of treasure chests.

- 5) The oldest player is the starting player, the others follow in a clockwise direction. Each player chooses a player colour and puts the according player board in front of him/her.

If there are two players, each player receives:

- the **12 thieves** in the colour of his/her choice and
- **4 guards** of the same colour;
- the starting player receives **6 palace cards** from the stack, the second player receives **7 cards**.

If there are three players, each player receives:

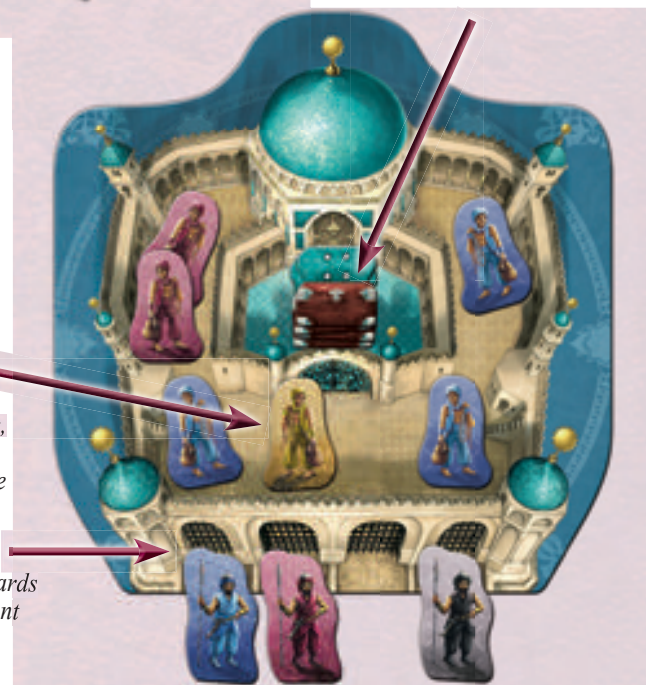
- the **12 thieves** in the colour of his/her choice and
- **3 guards** of the same colour;
- the starting player receives **6 palace cards**, the second player receives **7 cards** and the third player receives **8 cards**.

If there are four players, each player receives:

- the **12 thieves** in the colour of his/her choice and
- **2 guards** of the same colour;
- the starting player receives **6 palace cards**, the second player receives **7 cards**, the third player receives **8 cards** and the fourth player receives **9 cards**.

Courtyard
(beige floor):
Put the thieves here,
after smuggling
them into the palace

4 guard squares:
A maximum of 4 guards
can be placed in front
of each palace.



- 6) Now each player in turn places a guard of their own colour on a free guard square of their choice. This is repeated until all the players' guards have been placed on the palaces. Each player puts the 12 thieves onto his/her player board as their own supply and puts his/her palace cards in their hand.

HOW TO PLAY

The players move their thieves and guards by playing their palace cards, so they can rob the treasure chests from the palaces as quickly as possible. However, the chests are heavy and require a certain number of thieves. The treasure chests can only be robbed if there are enough thieves in the palace.

Actions using palace cards

Carry out the following actions by playing suitable palace cards:

- Smuggling one thief from your supply into a palace
- Moving your own guard
- Moving your own guard and taking one of your own thieves with you at the same time
- Moving a neutral guard

Palace cards that have been played form a joint discard pile next to the covert stack.

■ Smuggling one thief from your supply into a palace *COSTS: 1 card per external guard*

You need to play **1 card** of the respective palace **for each external guard** (i.e. guard of a fellow player or a neutral guard) standing there, in order to smuggle 1 thief from your supply into a palace.

It is required that there must be at least **1 of your own guards and 1 external guard** standing in front of this palace.



Example:
The green player places 1 thief in the red palace by playing 2 red cards (one for the neutral guard and one for the blue guard). He/she does not play a card for its own guard.

Note: As many thieves as you like can stay in a palace.

■ Moving your own guard *COST: 1 card*

To send **one of your own guards** from one palace to another one you must **play 1 card**. This card must either display the palace that the guard is standing in front of now or display the palace to which the guard is to be sent.

In addition at least 1 guard square must be unoccupied there.



■ Moving your own guard and taking one of your own thieves with you at the same time *COST: 1 card*

Your own guard, who is sent to another palace, can **take one of your own thieves with him**. Taking the thief with him does not cost any additional palace cards. That thief must be in the courtyard of the palace that the guard is standing in front of now.

The thief is placed inside the palace's courtyard.



Note: You may not move thieves of other players with you.

■ Moving a neutral guard COSTS: 2 cards

To send a neutral guard from one palace to another one you must **play 2 cards**:

One card must display the palace that the guard is standing in front of and the other card must display the palace to which the guard is to be sent.

In addition at least 1 guard square must be unoccupied there.



Note: Guards of other players may not be moved.

■ Combining any number of actions

In principle a player may carry out as many actions in his/her turn as he/she likes and can pay for with the required palace cards. He/she may also play the same action several times. He/she can freely select the sequence of actions.

Exception: A player may only play a **maximum total of 3 actions** () with thieves, within one turn.



Example: First the red player plays a white card, to move a guard from the green to the white palace. Then he plays another white card to move him (and one of his thieves) from the white to the purple palace.

Robbing the treasure chests

The pips on the top treasure chest in a palace indicate how many thieves a player needs to rob it.

As soon as a player succeeds in smuggling the number of thieves necessary to steal a treasure chest into a palace, he/she will take the treasure chest from the palace and place it on his/her player board with the reverse side facing upwards.

The thieves who were involved are returned to the player's own supply on his/her player board and are immediately available again.



Example: 5 Thieves are required to rob this treasure chest.

Note: Another player's thieves are not involved in your robbery. They stay in the palace.

Drawing new palace cards

You take **3 cards** from the covert stack and put them in your hand after you have completed your actions.

If the stack has been used up, the joint discard pile of palace cards is shuffled to form a new covert stack.

If you have not carried out any actions on your turn, you take **4 cards** and one of the cards may be a **dancer**.

The dancer (joker) can be used like any palace card on a future turn. Dancers that have been played are not placed on the discard pile but are put back with the open dancer cards.



Note: If the stack of the dancers is currently empty, you take a card from the covert stack.

END OF THE GAME

The player who is the first in the game to rob

- **6 treasure chests** in a 2 player game
- **5 treasure chests** in a 3 player game
- **4 treasure chests** in a 4 player game

immediately ends the game and is the winner of 12 Thieves!

2	♠	6	♠
3	♠	5	♠
4	♠	4	♠

Note:
On your player board you can find the number of treasure chests required to win the game.

OTHER GAME VARIANTS

People who prefer a more tactical version of the game can play the following variant:

Each player not only places the guards of their own colour at the start of the game but also 2 neutral guards.

Each player can choose in which order to place their own and the neutral guards.

No additional neutral guards are placed in this variant.