

Belle OF THE Ball

a FANCY
SCHMANCY
CARD GAME

for
2 TO 5
PLAYERS
by DANIEL SOLIS



Second Edition

WELCOME TO THE PARTY!

You're hosting a ball for all the high-falutin' guests of Ludobel Island, including the Belle herself! Hooray!

But what's this... Your rivals are hosting their own parties on the very same night! *How uncouth!* Bah! No matter.

With well-timed matchmaking, dastardly shenanigans, and a bit of luck, you will host the greatest party of all time!

GAME COMPONENTS

60 GUEST CARDS

Each guest card depicts a unique combination of three **INTEREST** icons along the top. Some guests are a **LADY** or **LORD**, noted by a purple or blue background. Each guest also has a **TITLE** and **COUNTY**, also noted by small icons on the top right, which are used in advanced play.

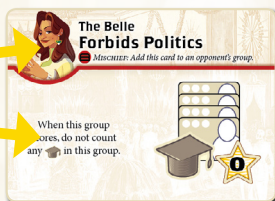


The back of each guest Card is a **REGRET**. Though regrets and guests are two sides of the same card, they are NOT used interchangeably.



27 BELLE CARDS

Each Belle card is an action that the Belle is doing at someone's party. The icon and italic text explain **HOW** each Belle card is put into play. Then the following **INSTRUCTIONS** explain the card's effect.



3 SCORE TRACKER CARDS, 15 SCORE TOKENS



3 of each

GUEST CARD BREAKDOWN

Common Interest (20 of each)



Uncommon Interest (15 of each)



Rare Interest (12 of each)



...and 5 guests each from 12 counties (one lord, one lady of each county); and 4 each of 15 Titles.

OPTIONAL CARDS

These are special cards used in advanced play.



12 County Cards

5 "Grifter" Cards

1 "Belle's Favor" Card

(with three stars on top)

GOAL

Score points by grouping guests with similar interests. You may also score points with the various effects of Belle cards. The game ends when the last guest is invited to a party. The player with most points at the end of the game wins!

SETTING UP

BELLE CARDS

Deal one random **BELLE CARD** to each player's hand. There is no upper limit to the number of Belle cards you can have in hand. Belle cards are the only cards you regularly keep in your hand.

REGRETS

Deal three **REGRETS** to each player. (*Deal four in a two-player game.*) Keep them to one side of your personal play area. Regrets are the back side of guest cards, so it is important to always keep them face-down during the entire game. Regrets move often during play, so be sure to not get them mixed up with the other cards.

STARTING PARTY AND GROUPS

Each player's collection of guests is called a **PARTY**. Each party has room for three stacks of cards, called **GROUPS**. Deal three guest cards face-up to each player. Arrange them in a row. These are the first guests in each group in the player's party. Parties are visible to all the players. A group can contain only up to four cards: either guest cards, Belle cards, or a mix of the two.

THE LINES

Shuffle the remaining guest cards and Belle cards into separate decks and place them **face-up** in the middle of the play area. Deal five cards from each deck in a row, face-up, beside their respective decks. This creates two **LINES** of six face-up cards each, including the face-up card on the top of each deck. The card furthest from the deck is considered the "front" of the line.



Your Regrets
(Always keep
face-down)



Your
Opponent's
Hand

EXAMPLE 2-PLAYER SETUP

Your Opponent's Party



Guest Line



Belle Line



Your Party

(Comprised of three groups. Each group has room for four cards.)



The first guest of each group.

Your
Hand

HOW TO PLAY

Each player takes turns, one at a time, clockwise around the play area. The player who most recently hosted a party takes the first turn. Each turn has two steps: 1) **Take a guest card into your party or Belle card into your hand** then, optionally, 2) **Play a Belle card from your hand.**

STEP 1

TAKE A CARD FROM A LINE

You must take a card from either the guest line or the Belle line. You may take the card at the front of the line for free.

YOU MAY PAY REGRETS TO SKIP CARDS IN LINE. Place one regret beside each card you skip until you reach your desired card. You may skip as many cards as you can afford, up to the top card of the deck. If a card already has regrets beside it, you must still pay regrets to skip it.

IF YOU TAKE A GUEST CARD, add it to one of the three groups in your party. Your party has room for three groups. (Feel free to announce the guest's name as it enters your party.) As you add guest cards to the groups in your party, stagger them so their interests are visible to all.

IF ONE OF YOUR GROUPS EVER HAS FOUR CARDS OF ANY KIND, even when it's not your turn, immediately score it and discard it. (Belle cards do count toward this total.) To score, count the number of matching interest icons in the group. Score one point for each matched interest icon. Use the provided score tracker cards and tokens to record your score. Keep guest and Belle cards in separate discard piles.

IF YOU TAKE A BELLE CARD, place it in your hand. There is no upper limit to the number of cards you can have in hand. If the Belle deck is ever empty, shuffle the Belle discard pile to make a new deck.

IF YOU TAKE A CARD WITH REGRETS BESIDE IT, add those regrets to your supply. Your supply of regrets should always be face-down so they are not confused for guest cards. Do not mix regret cards into your party and do not keep them in your hand.

After a card is taken from the line, move the remaining cards in line forward to make room for a new card to be added to the back of the line from the deck. Regrets also move with their respective cards.

EXAMPLE OF PAYING REGRETS

You want to invite Ffffff Flippinbird (A), but he is third in line. So you pay one regret first to Quentin Quanzaria (B), then another to Giggelack Lololol (C). You may now take Ffffff Flippinbird into your party.

After taking Ffffff Flippinbird from the line, you must move down the remaining guests in the line to fill up that space. (D) Amelio Shmelio, Apple Ash, and Zigzag Zithermend move down the line one space.



EXAMPLE SCORING

This group has four cards, so you MUST score this group. It scores 7 points because it has seven matched interest icons (highlighted in yellow here). Then you discard it.



STEP 2 (OPTIONAL)

PLAY A BELLE CARD

You may play ONE Belle card from your hand. Belle cards come in three types, each played a different way:



MAYHEM: The card is discarded for an instant effect. These cards are noted with an orange bar and a surprised Belle portrait.



MIRTH: The card is placed in one of your groups. These cards are noted by a blue bar and a smiling Belle portrait. A Belle card may be the first card in a group.



MISCHIEF: The card is placed in one of your opponent's groups. These cards are noted by a red bar and a sneaky Belle portrait. A Belle card may be the first card in a group.

END OF GAME & VICTORY

Continue taking turns until the end of the game. For 2-3 players, the game ends immediately after the turn when the last guest card is taken from the line. For 4-5 players, when the last guest card is taken from the deck, reshuffle the discarded guests to make a new guest deck. Thereafter, the game ends as in a 2-3 player game.

At the end of the game, count how many cards you have remaining in your party, your regrets, and your hand. Score one point for every two cards you have.

The player with the most points at the end of the game wins!

EXAMPLE OF ENDGAME SCORING

It's the end of the game and these are the cards you have leftover. Three regrets, two Belle cards in hand, and five guests in the party comes to a total of ten cards, scoring 5 bonus points.

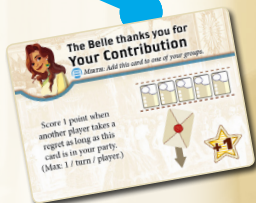
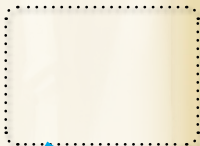


EXAMPLE OF PLAYING BELLE CARDS

Your Opponent's Party



Your Party



MISCHIEF Belle cards must be added to an opponent's group.

MIRTH Belle cards must be added to any one of your groups.

MAYHEM Belle cards do not get played into anyone's group. They are resolved and discarded.



ADVANCED PLAY

ADVANCED SETUP

Set up the game as normal, with the following exceptions:

- First, deal two **COUNTY CARDS** to each player. The group side of the County card gives point bonuses for scoring guests from that County, the power side gives a special power. Decide which County card you will use for point bonuses and which you will use for its special power. Place your tokens on the white starting space of your County cards.
- Before dealing regrets, set aside the guests from the counties from which each player has chosen to get scoring bonuses. (You want each player to have an equal opportunity to score their preferred guests.) Then reshuffle the guest deck, including with the **GRIFTERS**, and deal regrets from that deck. Once you've dealt regrets, shuffle all the set-aside guest cards back into the deck.
- Give **THE BELLE'S FAVOR** to the player who takes the last turn at the beginning of the game.

GRIFTERS

When you take a grifter, you may add it to your party or to *another* player's party. In your party, keep the grifter upright. An upright grifter is worth a flat rate of 3 points. When you invite a grifter to an opponent's party, turn it upside down. It is worth 0 points.



Upright Grifter: 3 Points



Inverted Grifter: 0 Points

BELLE'S FAVOR

You may play the Belle's Favor as a Belle card. Take any Belle card in the line without spending regrets. Replace it with the Belle's Favor. Play that Belle card immediately. the Belle's Favor remains in the Belle line and is treated like any other Belle card.

COUNTY CARDS

Each County card has a guest side and a power side.

GROUP SIDE: Each time you score a guest from this county, move your token to the right on the track.

POWER SIDE: Instead of playing a Belle card, you can use your power once. Each time you use that power, move the token to the right on the track.

Anglebottom: Discard a Belle card from the line. Take its regrets.

Boarsend: If you scored a group, keep one of those guests in your party in that group's space.

Craw: Add a guest from the top of the discard pile to any group in your party.

Dent: Take all the regrets from one card in the line.

Egg: Score 2 points for each of    in one of your groups:

Flappingcap: All players move their leftmost group to the party on their left.

Glitterfall: Discard a guest card from the line. Take its regrets.

Highmount:

You may take one more card from the same line you took a card this turn, following normal rules.

Indigum: Take a guest card from the top of the deck. Turn it face-down. It is now a regret in your supply.

Jamshire: Move one of your guest cards to one of your other groups.

Krinkle: Swap a guest card in your party for a guest from the line. (Any regrets in the line remain in place.)

Latesun: Force a player to score and discard one of their groups of your choice.



ADVANCED SCORING

GROUP'S SCORE STARTS AT -1 POINT. (*Thanks to Alex Fiedler for this variant.*)

EACH MATCHED TITLE IN A GROUP IS WORTH 2 POINTS.



COUNTY CARDS. At the end of the game, earn points noted by each of your tokens' current space. Scoring more guests from your county earns bonus points. Using your special powers costs you bonus points.

THE SHINDIG VARIANT

If you have want a more chaotic game, try this variant!

- During setup, shuffle the guest and Belle decks together into a single deck. Instead of two separate lines, play with a single line down the center of the play area. Otherwise continue with a standard setup procedure.
- Any Belle cards (or powers from County cards) that refer specifically to a Belle line or a guest line affect this line instead.
- The game ends when all cards have been invited from the line.

Be aware that this means the game will last *exactly* 72 turns, or a little over 14 rounds. It also means that you'll have slightly less control over your choices of which card to invite. Use your regrets wisely!



CREDITS

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