

indulgence™



Rule book

Components



36 Family Cards

Nine cards, numbered 1 through 9, in each of the four families



Edict deck cover card



20 five-florin gems



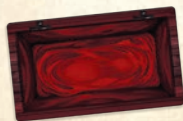
26 one-florin coins



4 Papal Bull cards



1 Indulgence ring
(gemstone colors vary)



4 Strongbox cards



20 double-sided Edict Cards

The front of the Edict card shows the goal for the hand. The flip side shows the Sin – the opposite of the Edict. The edicts with wax drippings in the corner are used in the expert game only.

Basic Game Set-Up

1. Give each player a strongbox card and 30 florins to put on it: five 1-florin tokens and five 5-florin gems.
2. Remove the eight Edict cards with the wax drippings and return them to the game box. Shuffle the remaining Edicts and deal three on the table with their Edict side face up. Place the remainder of the Edict deck to the side, Edict side up and cover it with the Edict deck cover card. (Return the papal bull cards to the game box. They are not used in the basic game.)
3. Place the Indulgence ring near the Edicts.
4. The Ruler (dealer) for the first hand is the player who is wearing the most red.



Ludo perfecto in eadem capsam rex et servus ponuntur.

“After the game, the king and the pawn
go back in the same box.” – Italian proverb

About the Game

Indulgence is a trick-taking game (see below). It is played over three rounds. Every round, each player gets one hand as the Ruler. The Ruler wins florins from the other players if they take cards forbidden by the Edict. But one of the other players might decide to Sin, winning florins if they take all of the forbidden cards.

Object of the Game

The player with the most florins at the end of the game wins.

How to Play Trick-Taking Games

Indulgence is a trick-taking game. You might be familiar with other trick-taking games like Hearts, Spades, or Bridge. If not, this is a simple explanation of how to play.

Each hand is made up of a series of “tricks”. One player will play a card from their hand face-up, to the middle of the table. Playing the first card in a trick is called “leading”.

Once the first player leads a card, play moves to the left around the table. The next player must “follow suit”, which means playing a card of the same suit that was led (in Indulgence, suits are called families). If they have more than one card of that suit, they may choose which of those cards to play. If they don't have a card of the same suit, they may play any card from their hand.

After each player plays a card, the player who played the highest card of the suit led wins the trick. The exception to this is “trump”. In some games (including one of the Edicts in Indulgence), one suit is the trump suit. If a trump card is played, the highest trump card wins the trick, regardless of the value or suits of the other cards. You still must follow suit if you can.

When a player wins a trick, they take the cards, meaning they gather all the cards from the trick and put them in a face-down stack in front of them. The winner of the trick leads the first card in the next trick. When all the tricks have been played, the hand is over.

Playing the Game

1. Draw the bottom card from the Edict deck and place it, Edict side up, next to the other two Edict cards.



Note: Skip this step in the first hand as there are already three.

2. The Ruler shuffles the Family Deck and deals out all cards equally to players. After examining their hand, the Ruler chooses one of the face-up Edict cards. This tells the other players which cards they will be penalized for taking.
3. Starting with the player on the Ruler's left, each player decides if they will pass or attempt to Sin. If they pass, the player to their left decides, and so on, until one player attempts to Sin or they all pass. Only one player may attempt to Sin. The Ruler may not attempt to Sin.

SINNING: The sinning player places the Edict card in front of them, Sin side up, and tries to complete its goal. They also take the Indulgence ring. If they succeed in their Sin by taking all the forbidden cards, the other players pay florins to them. If they fail, they pay florins to the Ruler.

If all players pass on the Sin, the Ruler takes the Edict card and places it in front of them with its Edict side face up.

4. The Ruler leads in the first trick unless someone is trying to Sin, in which case the sinner leads the first card.

Note: The Edict may prevent certain cards being led in the first trick. After the first trick, any card may be led.

5. The winner of the previous trick leads the next trick. Play continues until all cards have been played.

Note: You can end the hand if there are no more scoring cards left to be played or once a Sin has failed.

6. When the hand is over, players pay or gain florins, based on the cards they've taken, as indicated by the chosen Edict or Sin. The Ruler does not pay anything if they take cards forbidden by the Edict - they just lose the chance of winning florins from the other players.
7. The player to the left of the Ruler becomes the Ruler for the next hand.

Indulgence: The sinning player may play the Indulgence on top of a card they play in that hand. The Indulgence changes the value of their card into a 10 of the same family as the card played.



The Indulgence can only be used once per hand. After it is used, it is returned to the table near the Edict deck.

The Indulgence **CANNOT** be used in the first trick.

A card that was changed to a 10 with the Indulgence reverts to its original value during scoring.

An indulgence was issued by the Catholic Church to absolve someone of their sin. In some cases, this might be granted for doing good works. But indulgences were often sold to anyone willing to make a significant "contribution" to the Church. During the Italian Renaissance, an indulgence offered a clear conscience for many a questionable deed committed in the name of power.

Winning the Game

The game ends in one of two ways:

1. After three rounds, with each player having been the Ruler three times.
2. When one or more players do not have enough florins to pay what they owe. In this case, the players pay as much as they have. The player to whom the florins are owed is credited with the amount missing.

The player with the most florins wins the game. If there is a tie for florins, the player who was Ruler more recently wins the game.

Expert Game

The expert game is played the same as the basic game with the following changes:

- Include all the Edicts in the Edict deck, even those with the  symbol.
- At the start of the game, give each player a papal bull card.
- Each player may, once per game when they are the Ruler, use their papal bull to play ALL three available Edicts for that hand. After the hand, remove all three Edicts and replace them with three new ones. If the Edict deck runs out, just use the remaining face-up Edicts.

If a player chooses to Sin during a papal bull, they turn over all three Edicts (and the papal bull) card and must satisfy all three Sins. If they do, they win the game instantly. If they fail any Sin, they pay the Ruler 18 florins.



A Papal Bull is a type of public decree issued by the Pope. The name comes from the seal (bulla) traditionally attached to the decree.

Edicts

Don't take the most of any family.

Whichever player has the majority of cards in each family pays the Ruler. In the case of a tie, the Ruler decides who has the most. During the Sin, in case of a tie, the sinner decides who has the most.

Don't take any trump.

This is the only Edict that has trump. The Ruler names the trump family before players decide if they are going to Sin. You still have to follow suit but the highest trump played in a trick (if any) takes the trick.

Don't take any tricks.

All cards are played face down, with the person leading saying what family the card led is. After all the cards of the trick are played, the cards are turned up to see who won the trick. You have to be truthful about what is led.

Don't take pairs of (two families)

If, at the end of the hand, you have two cards with the same number from the two families named, pay the Ruler for each pair you have.

Don't take any even (two families).

At the end of the hand, players will pay 1 florin to the Ruler for each card that is both even and from one of these families.

Don't be the first to take three tricks.

The first player to win three tricks loses and owes the Ruler. You don't have to take them in a row - it's just the first to three.

Don't take any 2s or 3s:

Pay the Ruler 1 florin for each 2 or 3 you take.

Don't take any 6s:

For each 6 that you have at the end of the hand, pay the Ruler 2 florins.

Don't take the first or last trick:

The person who takes the first trick pays the Ruler 4 florins, as does the person who takes the last trick. You may find it easier to pay after the first trick so you don't forget who took it.

Don't take any (family):

For each card that you take in the family named on the Edict, you will owe the Ruler 1 florin.

Don't take the LAST of (family):

It's all about one card, the last card of that family played. Take it and you owe the Ruler 8 florins. When you take any cards in family named on the Edict, keep them in front of you, face down, but separate from the other cards you have taken, so everyone knows when the ninth and last card of that family is played.



Historical Accuracy

Indulgence is a game of intrigue among the ruling families of the Italian Renaissance. But it's a game first and foremost. Which is to say, our primary goal was to make the game fun, not to capture the period in exacting detail. The characters on the cards are all real figures from their respective families (except Stefano). In many cases, though, they were separated by centuries. Also, in order to have more diverse art, we took liberties with capturing their actual likenesses. Basically, what we're saying here is: Don't use Indulgence to study for your European History final exam—use Indulgence to recover from it.

Who The Heck Is Stefano Medici?

The Jack Vasel Memorial Fund is a wonderful charity that assists gamers who have suffered from catastrophic setbacks. Every year, the JVMF runs a charity auction. In 2016, Restoration Games offered the opportunity to be memorialized as a card in Indulgence. Stephen Eckman was the winning bidder. We thank Stephen for his generosity. He's a much nicer fellow than any of the real Medicis.

If you would like to learn more about the Jack Vasel Memorial Fund, you can visit their website at www.jackvasel.org.



Game History

In 1981, Milton Bradley published Dragonmaster, designed by Jerry D'Arcey. It was itself a reimagining of D'Arcey's prior game, Coup d'État, which traces back to its progenitor, Barbu, originating in France in the early 1900s. Dragonmaster enjoyed lavish production, with oversized cards, art by the incomparable Bob Pepper, and some nifty interlocking gems for keeping score. Mike Gray tells us the interlocking gems were designed to avoid losing bits if you were playing sitting around a campfire after a long day of hiking.

In restoring this game, we knew we had to keep the high production quality (even if we could pay less attention to the needs of playing by campfire). We also ramped up the original game's unique variable contract system and the shoot-the-moon mechanic to create a card game that's as casual or cutthroat as the players.

CREDITS

Restored from: Dragonmaster, designed by Jerry D'Arcey and published by Milton Bradley.

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