

Swing • State • Steal



Relax. It's just a board game.

Players: 2-6
Age: 16+
Playing Time: 45-90 minutes

Game Materials

- 1 Game Board
- 1 die
- 6 player pawns
- 24 Vote Counter Chips in 6 colors
(18 1V value, 6 5V value)
- 55 News Cards
- 72 Cheat Cards
- 18 Evidence Cards
- Quick Start Card
- Vote storage Bag
- Rule Book

Object of the Game

Win the presidential election by getting as many votes as possible by hook or crook.

One player is the Incumbent President seeking re-election and the other players are Swing States that are controlled by the opposite political party and who support the Incumbent's Challenger. The Incumbent is playing against each state individually. Cheating is allowed and encouraged!

If players can't pick who will be the Incumbent, it should be the eldest player at the table.

Another player should be the "banker" of votes ("Vs") and manage the pot and the transfer of Vs.

In the first 3 rounds, the Incumbent and the Swing States travel the board collecting votes and taking votes from each other. There are also opportunities for the States to cheat the Incumbent out of votes along the way. Votes are indicated as "V" in the game and 1 V = approximately 20,000 votes.

In the fourth and final round, which is a card game, the Incumbent has a chance to win back the stolen votes. On Jan 6th, there is a final tally of votes. The Incumbent wins if he defeats the majority of State opponents.

Rounds

The game is played in 4 rounds; each round is represented in concentric tracks on the board.

Round 1: The Campaign

Round 1 represents the Presidential Campaign, extends until Election Day and is played on the outer ring of the board. This round is used to acquire votes through *mostly* legitimate means. Round 1 is **two** laps around the board.

Round 2: Election Day

Round 2 represents Election Day and begins when polls open and ends when they close. Round 2 is played on the next inner ring of the board with **one** lap around the board.

Round 3: The Steal

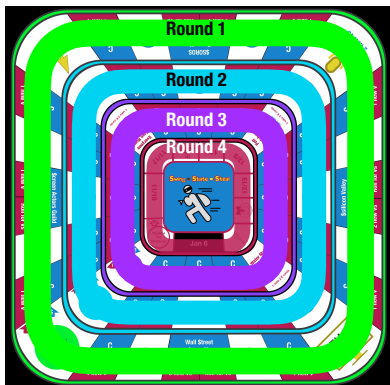
Round 3 begins after the polls close and the counting begins. It is played on the next inner ring of the board and in **one** lap. Much of the heavy vote stealing takes place in this round.

Round 4: The Challenge

Round 4 begins after Election Day and ends on Jan 6th when ballots are counted by Congress. In this round the Incumbent has a chance to win back ballots stolen by the States. Round 4 is the inner-most ring and played in **one lap, no die**.

The Board

The playing board represents all four rounds as concentric rings with the outermost ring being Round 1 and the innermost ring being Round 4.



Each round is color coded as shown above and this coloring is also on on the various cards that are played.

Setup

Prior to game play, the players decide who will be the Incumbent. All other players will be playing against the Incumbent as Swing States. One player is designated as the vote "banker".

The **News**, **Evidence** and **Cheat Card** decks are *honestly* shuffled by the banker.

The punch out chips are the votes ("**Vs**"). There are 1 and 5 V values in each color, with each Swing State collecting Vs in their own color.

The Incumbent starts the game with a predetermined number of Vs corresponding to each State in separate piles. For example, if there are 3 opponents, the Incumbent will maintain three piles of V chips, each one in each opponent's color. The remaining V chips stay in the "pot".

The starting number of Vs that the Incumbent has **per State Opponent** varies by the number of opponents as shown on this table:

# Swing States	1	2	3	4	5
Starting Vs per State	0	6	2	8	6

Example: If there are 4 opponents, the Incumbent starts the game with 4 piles of 8 Vs in each of the 4 opponent's colors.

The Swing States start the game with no V chips.

During the game, new V's are taken from the pot, given back to the pot, taken from other players, or stolen from the Incumbent using **Cheat Cards**.

The "banker" manages the pot.

When a Swing State takes Vs from the pot, he takes them in his color only.



The Incumbent separates votes by state, and keeps distinct piles of Vs according to the opponents' colors. If the Incumbent must give a Swing State a V, he gives it from the pile set aside for that State in that State's color. Likewise, if the Incumbent takes a V from an opponent, he stores that V in the pile associated with that opponent.

The Incumbent never mixes up the piles.

Keeping the piles separate is how the Incumbent knows how he is doing against each of the States.

During the first 3 rounds, the Incumbent may be instructed to take Vs from the pot or return Vs to the pot based on a **News Card**, or directed by the the space he lands on. *Unless specifically instructed otherwise*, the Incumbent can choose



any color(s) to take or put in the pot. This way, the Incumbent has some control over his piles.

If an Incumbent's pile of V chips for a particular Swing State is empty, he cannot transfer any more Vs to that State even if he has Vs stored for other states. The piles remain separate.

Game Play

Rounds 1,2 and 3. The players begin each of these rounds at the designated location on the lower left hand corner of the board. The first 3 rounds are played in a similar style (**Round 4 is played in a completely different manner and is explained later on**).

Each of the first 3 rounds are split into an outer track and an inner track. The Incumbent traverses the outer track on **red** spaces and the Swing States traverse the inner track on **blue spaces**. Certain spaces are shared between the two tracks and are used by all players.

Players take turns with the Incumbent going first and then proceed **clock-wise** around the table. Each player rolls the single die and advances that many spaces along their respective tracks.

Round 1 takes **two** laps around the board and rounds 2 and 3 are each completed after **one** lap. When the player rolls past the end of the round, that player advances to the starting location of the next round and **waits** for the other players to catch up.

The round is over when all players have completed the round.

If a State has completed a round and is waiting for other players to catch up, that State must skip its turn and may not play any more **Cheat Cards** until the next round begins.

Once all players have ended the current round, play begins on the next round and players roll the die to advance.

Board Spaces

The spaces on the board for rounds 1-3 fall into the following categories:

Vote Acquisition Spaces. The player accumulates Vs based on the instructions on the space itself. This could be through advertisements, rallies, or donations. V's might be based on a die roll. If the Incumbent lands on some spaces, he may get Vs for EACH state. Unless otherwise stated on the space, these Vs come from the pot.



News Cards. If a player lands on a **News Card** (marked with an "N"), the player draws the top card from the **News Deck**. The card title and top paragraph are read aloud. If the card was drawn by the Incumbent, he/she reads and follows the instructions of the **Red** paragraphs. If the card was drawn by one of the States, the

State reads and follows the instructions on the **Blue** paragraph. Normally, this results in an exchange of Vs. **News Cards** are discarded to the bottom of the **News Deck** after play.

Unless the News Card says otherwise, all the Vs gained or lost by a player are taken from or put in the pot.

Evidence Cards. When the Incumbent lands on an **Evidence Card** space (marked with an “E”), he draws an **Evidence Card** and holds it for Round 4. (States do not get Evidence Cards)



Cheat Cards. When a State lands on a **Cheat Card** space (marked with a “C”), he draws and keeps a **Cheat Card** from the deck. These cards are color coded by round and have a **Cheat Value** number.



Each **Cheat Card** provides a means of stealing votes from the Incumbent and identifies the nature of the fraud, an explanation of the fraud, the round for which it is valid, and the amount of Vs that can be stolen when the “cheat” happens.

“Stop Counting” Spaces. There are three spaces in Round 3 that indicate counting stops for the night. If a State lands on one of these spaces, any **Cheat Card** played on the next turn will yield twice the **Cheat Value**. If the Incumbent lands on this space, he/she draws 2 Evidence Cards.

Cheating

Cheating is how Vs are stolen from the Incumbent. Each **Cheat Card** is color coded by round and can *only be drawn by a State*. A State may play a **Cheat Card** that is color coded for the round he/she is currently in, or any *previous* round. Cheat Cards for *future* rounds may be kept but *cannot* be played until the State is in that round.

Example: If the players are playing round 2 (**Blue**), the State can play **Cheat Cards** color coded for rounds 1 (**Green**) or 2 (**Blue**) but not 3 (**Purple**). Round 3 cheats must be saved until the play reaches round 3.

Cheating is done by reading the **Cheat Card** aloud and taking the **Cheat Value** amount of Vs from the Incumbent. The Incumbent hands over the V chips from the pile he has been keeping for that State. When the Incumbent's pile for one State is exhausted, the State cannot cheat the Incumbent of any more Vs.

Black Cheat Cards are WILD and saved for Round 4.

If the Incumbent has less V's in his V chip pile for a particular State than demanded by the **Cheat Card**, the Incumbent hands over what he has left in that pile.

If the State chooses to play a **Cheat Card**, it must be played at the *beginning* of a State's turn, before the die is rolled. If a State has completed a round and is waiting for other players to complete the round, the

State can still use its turn to play a **Cheat Card** but cannot roll to advance to the next round until all the other players have completed the round.

States can play *only one* cheat per turn. A **Cheat Card** may only be played once.

After a **Cheat Card** is played, the State places the played card face-up in a stack to be saved for the final round. This way the State keeps track of which **Cheat Cards** were played.

Game Play for Round 4

Round 4 is the opportunity for the Incumbent to get back his stolen Vs. He does this by successfully challenging the States in court by playing **Evidence Cards** and proving he has enough evidence to overcome the cheat. **Alas, the States can no longer take Vs from the Incumbent in Round 4.**

Round 4 is a card game and **only the Incumbent's pawn is used**. The pawn is simply a marker that traverses the round one space at a time after each card hand is played. To keep the Incumbent honest, the banker advances the pawn one space at the start of each turn. **There is no dice roll.**

Each turn represents a week after the election. The last turn is played on Jan 6th or when the Incumbent runs out of **Evidence cards**, whichever happens first. At that point votes are tallied and a winner is declared.

Before Round 4 starts, all States keep *only* the face-up **Cheat Cards** they have already played and any **Black Wild Cards** they may have accumulated. **All other unused Cheat cards are discarded.**

For the First Turn Only: The Incumbent *may* choose to use this turn to roll for additional **Evidence Cards** instead of playing an **Evidence Card**. The number of **Evidence Cards** he draws matches the die roll.

Card play goes like this:

The Incumbent plays an **Evidence Card**. He can choose any **Evidence Card** in his hand to play. Each State then plays either a **Cheat Card**, or a **Black Wild Card** if they have one to play.

- States must play a **Cheat Card** that matches the color of one of the colors on the Incumbent's **Evidence Card**.

Example: if the Incumbent plays an **Evidence Card** that is valid for Round 2 (blue) or Round 3 (purple), the States can play either a Round 2 or a Round 3 **Cheat Card** (or **Black Wild Card**, see below).

- If a State plays a **Cheat Card** whose value is of *lesser or equal* value than the **Evidence Card's Value**, the State **MUST** return to the Incumbent the number of V's equal to the value on the State's **Cheat Card**.

- If State plays a **Cheat Card** of *greater* value than that shown on the **Evidence Card**, the State must return the **Cheat Card Value** minus the **Evidence Card value** number of Vs to the Incumbent.

Black Wild Cards:

- States can only use **Black Wild Cards** in round 4.
- If he has one, a State has the option of playing a **Black Wild Card** on any turn instead of a matching **Cheat Card**. However, if the State lacks a matching **Cheat Card** they **MUST** play any **Black Wild Card** they have in their hand.
- When played, a **Black Wild Card** will defeat any **Evidence Card** card played by the Incumbent, allowing that State to keep its Vs on that hand. Depending on the type of **Black Wild Card** that is played, it may also protect *all the other States* unless as noted below, the Incumbent plays a **Trump Card**.

Trump Cards:

- If the Incumbent plays a **Trump Card**, all States must play either a **Cheat Card** of their choice or a **Black Wild Card**. If the

State plays a **Cheat Card**, he must give the Incumbent Vs in the amount of the **Cheat Card's Value**.

- If the Incumbent plays a **Trump Card** and a State plays a **Black Wild Card**, *only* that State playing the card doesn't give back Vs regardless of what the card says in this case.

At the end of each turn, all cards are discarded to their respective decks.

Play is over after the Jan 6th space is reached and the last hand is played, or the Incumbent runs out of Evidence Cards.

Winning

After the last round is over, the Incumbent compares the number of V's he has in his State pile against that State. If he has more or the same amount of Vs, then he defeats the State. If he has less, he is defeated by the State. **The Incumbent wins ties.**

The Incumbent wins if he defeats a majority of the states.

If there is only one State opponent, he must beat that State.

If there are 2 or 3 States, he must win 2 of them.

If there are 4 or 5 States, he must win 3 of them.

If the Incumbent loses, the States win in order of the most retained Vs at the end of the game.

