

Belle OF THE Ball

a FANCY
SCHMANCY
CARD GAME

for
2 TO 4
PLAYERS

by DANIEL SOLIS



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!

3 SCORE TRACKER CARDS, 15 SCORE TOKENS



3 of each

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.



GUEST CARD BREAKDOWN

Common Interest (20 of each) Uncommon Interest (15 of each)



Rare Interest (12 of each)



...and 5 each of 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

SETTING UP

REGRETS

Randomly deal three Guest cards to each player face-down. (Deal four in a two-player game.) These cards will be used as **REGRETS**, so it is important to always keep them face-down during the entire game so they don't get mixed up with the other cards. Regrets change hands often during play, but new Regrets will not be added to the game nor will Regrets be removed from the game.

Your Opponent's Regrets



EXAMPLE 2-PLAYER SETUP

Your Opponent's Party



Guest Line

STARTING PARTY AND GROUPS

Deal three Guest cards face-up to each player. Arrange them in a row. These are the beginnings of each player's collection of Guests, called a **PARTY**. A party has room for three stacks of cards, called **GROUPS**. A group can contain only four cards, at which point it is considered "**FULL**." Parties are visible to all the players.



Belle Line

THE LINES

Shuffle the remaining Guest cards and Belle cards into separate decks. Deal five from each deck in a row, face-up, in the middle of the play area. Place the face-up decks at an end of their row. This creates two **LINES** of six face-up cards each, including the face-up card on the top of each deck. Over time, as cards are removed from either line, new cards will be revealed from the deck.

Your Regrets
(Always keep face-down)



Your Party

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



The first Guest of each group.

HOW TO PLAY

GOAL AND OVERVIEW OF PLAY

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 from the line. Then each player scores a few compensatory points if they have any cards leftover. The player with most points at the end of the game wins!

The game is comprised of a turns taken by each player, one at a time, clockwise around the play area. Each turn has three steps: Play a Belle Card (Optional), Invite a Guest or Belle Card, Score Points from any Full Groups. Turns continue until the last Guest is invited from the line, at which point the game ends immediately.

STEP 1 (OPTIONAL) PLAY A BELLE CARD

You may play one Belle card from your hand. Note: This means a Belle card cannot be played in the same turn in which it was invited. It has to be in your hand first in order to be played. 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.



☹ **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.

You may add a Belle card to a group-space that is presently empty.

You may *not* add a card to a group that is full. **"FULL"** means the group has four cards in it.

Your Opponent's Party



MISCHIEF Belle cards may be added to any opponent's group that is not already full. The first space is legal because it is empty. The second space is legal because the group is not full. The third space is not legal because the group already has four cards, and is thus full.

MIRTH Belle cards may be added to any one of your groups that is not already full. The first space is not legal because the group already has four cards in it and is thus full. The second space is legal because its group is not full. The third space is legal because it is empty.

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



STEP 2

INVITE A GUEST OR BELLE CARD

You must invite a card from either the Guest line or the Belle line. Which card you invite depends on if you pay Regrets.

You may take the first card in either line for free.



You may pay Regrets to take cards from further back in line, as described below.

IF YOU INVITE A GUEST CARD, place it in any group in your party that is not full. (In other words, any group that has zero, one, two, or three cards.) Your party has room for three groups.

IF YOU INVITE A BELLE CARD, place it in your hand. There is no upper limit to the number of cards you can have in hand. Remember, you cannot play a Belle card in the same turn you acquired it.

IF YOU WANT TO TAKE A CARD FROM FURTHER IN THE LINE, place one Regret beside each card you skip until you reach your desired card. You may skip as many cards as you desire, all the way to the top card of the deck, if you have enough Regrets to spend. If a card already has Regrets beside it, you must still pay Regrets as normal. In this way, cards which get passed over multiple times become increasingly valuable in future turns.

IF YOU INVITE A CARD WITH REGRETS BESIDE IT, add those Regrets to your supply. Remember to keep Regrets face-down so they don't get confused for Guest cards. Do not get Regret cards mixed into your party and do not keep them in your hand.

As you add Guest cards to the groups in your party, stagger them cards so their interests are visible. When a group has four cards, it is full. Remember, full groups cannot take any more cards.

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



(A)



(C)



(B)

Example of paying Regrets to skip cards in the line: 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. Amelio Shmelio, Apple Ash, and Zigzag Zithermend move down the line one space. This reveals Obelisk Orlantop in the back of the line.



STEP 3 SCORE AND DISCARD ANY FULL GROUPS

If you have a full group, count the number of matching interest icons in that group. Score one point for each matched interest icon.

Scores typically range between 6 and 10 points per group, but can be higher with Belles and exceptionally good matches. You may score multiple groups in the same turn if they're all full.

Then, discard any full groups from your party. In doing so, you make room for new groups to join your party.

Example Scoring:
Your group on the right is full and it is step 3 of your turn, so you **MUST** score this group. It scores 7 points because it has seven matched interest icons. Then it's discarded to make room for a new group.



END OF GAME & VICTORY

Continue taking turns until there are no more Guest cards in line. This immediately ends the game.

Now, count how many cards you have remaining in your party, your Regrets, and your hand. Score half a point for each card in your possession. **Note:** These are the *only* points scored at the end of the game. If by some stroke of bad luck you have a full group but the game ends before your turn, you do not score the full value for that group.

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



Example 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.



5-PLAYER VARIANT

If you have an extra player, you can easily fit them into the game with 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. Using your regrets wisely!



CREDITS

Game Design: Daniel Solis

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For a video tutorial and a complete set of FAQs, visit dicehatemegames.com

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