

# BOTTLE IMP

GÜNTER  
GORNETT

LE FAGU AITU

MAXIME  
MORIN



“

Before we continue, just a few words on the ownership of the Bottle. It'll help to understand the game mechanic: "Of glass it is but the glass of it was tempered in the flames of hell. An imp lives in it, and that is the shadow we behold there moving; or so I suppose. If any man buy this bottle the imp is at his command; all that he desires - love, fame, money, houses ... - all are his at the word uttered ... There is one thing the imp cannot do - he cannot prolong life; and, it would not be fair to conceal from you, there is a drawback to the bottle; for if a man die before he sells it, he must burn in hell forever ... it cannot be sold at all, unless sold at a loss. If you sell it for as much as you paid for it, back it comes to you again like a homing pigeon ...

Only remember it must be coined money that you sell it for ..."

(from "The Bottle Imp" by Robert Louis Stevenson)

”

## ABOUT THE GAME/OBJECTIVE

Just as many others trick-taking card games, the idea of The Bottle Imp is to acquire the most points. The Bottle Imp works in a way that ensures that the highest card does not always take the trick. The player with the highest valued card that still fits under the price of the Bottle Imp receives the trick as well as the Bottle Imp. The value of the Bottle Imp then falls to the value of the winning card. The owner of the Bottle Imp changes until its value can no longer be undercut. Whoever owns the Bottle Imp at the end of the game receives minus points instead of positive points.



GÜNTER  
GORNETT

MAXIME  
MORIN

A diabolic card game for 2 to 6 players of 14 years and up.

### SUMMARY:

- COMPONENTS
- ABOUT THE GAME/OBJECTIVE
- INDIVIDUAL MODUS (3 - 4 PLAYERS)

### VARIANTS:

- TEAM MODE (4 - 6 PLAYERS)
- THE SECOND BOTTLE (5 - 6 PLAYERS)
- DEVIL'S EYE (2 PLAYERS)

Designer : Günter Cornett  
Illustrator : Maxime MORIN  
Art director: Maxime ERCEAU

Editorial director :  
Arnaud CHARPENTIER  
Proofreader: Valentin LE LAY

### COMPONENTS

1 Hell card. It contains the starting price of the bottle imp (= 19).



Front Back

6 Overview cards: one side is neutral, the other shows the color of the team.



Neutral side Color of team side

2 Bottles ("tempered in the flames of hell").



2 Rulebooks



## INDIVIDUAL MODE (3-4 PLAYERS)

Bottle Imp can be played in individual mode or team mode. The individual mode for 3 - 4 players contains the basic rules, which also apply to the variants.

Number of players	Number of cards	Teams (2 and single players 0)	Number of bottle imps	The team partner is always the player sitting farthest away
3	36	1-1-1	1	There is no team mode with three players
4	36	1-1-1-1	1	The dealer and the player opposite them play individually, while the other players play as a team.
		2-1-1	1	
5	54	1-1-1-1-1	2	The dealer is dealt one fewer card. They don't discard a card into The Devil's Trick. They are playing alone even in the team mode.
		2-2-1	1	
6	54	1-1-1-1-1-1	2	The only example where the dealer plays in team.
		2-2-2	1	
		2-2-1-1	1	
2	36	1-1	1	The Devil's Eye, the two player version, uses a few face up cards and 7 cards per trick.

= Single modus = (3-4 players)



- 54 cards (18 of each color: yellow, red and blue). They contain numbers (for ranking) and merit points (victory points). The basic set consists of 36 cards. It contains all numbers from 1 to 37. The version for two, three or four players is played just with the basic set. The additional set contains 18 cards. It contains every even number from the basic set increased by 0,5 (for example, 2,5 and 4,5 and 6,5 etc.). The colors and merit points of a pair card is exact the same as the pair card with the raised number (+0,5).



Example cards (front)



All cards (back)

- You will need a paper and pencil to keep track of the points.



### SETUP

Place the hell card face up at the center of the table, and put the bottle on it. Each player gets an overview card, and places it with the neutral side face up. All players receive the same number of cards from the 36 cards set.



### STARTING THE GAME

Each player starts by discarding one card. The discarded cards will be placed below the hell card and will be named «The Devil's Trick». Players cannot look at the cards in The Devil's Trick.

Then all players exchange two cards : one card with their right-hand neighbor and one card with their left-hand neighbor. To do this, each player places two cards face down in front. When all players have done so, they take the corresponding cards given to them by the players on their left and right.



## THE TRICK GAME

Play proceeds clockwise. The player to the left of the dealer begins and plays a card. **He will become the dealer for the next round.** No matter which color is played, the other players must follow suit (play a card of the same color as the initial card). If a player cannot follow suit, they may instead play a card of any color. If the value of each played card is higher than the current value of the Bottle Imp, the player who played the highest numbered card wins the trick, **regardless of whether or not they followed suit.**

## THE BOTTLE IMP

The Bottle Imp can always be re-sold as long as the new buying price is lower than the last buying price.

If somebody plays a card with a value that is lower than the current value of the Bottle Imp, then the Bottle Imp automatically transfers to a new owner at the end of the trick. If only one player has played a card with a value lower than the Bottle Imp's value, then this player gains ownership of the Bottle Imp and wins the trick. If several players played cards with values that are lower than the Bottle Imp's, then the player who played the highest value card out of those cards gains ownership of the Bottle Imp and wins the trick.

The card used by the player to win both the Bottle Imp and the trick is placed face up, under the Bottle Imp. It becomes the new value of the Bottle Imp. The card which indicated the previous value of the Bottle Imp is added to the taken trick pile of the former owner of the Bottle Imp. (This can be the same person as the current owner.)

At the start of the game, no one owns the Bottle Imp and it has a value of 19.



## EXAMPLE

The value of the Bottle Imp is 19. The following cards are played: Adam: 24, Betty: 15, Christian: 17, Doris: 32.

Adam and Doris played cards of a higher value than the Bottle Imp (19) while Betty and Christian played cards of a lower value. Out of Betty and Christian, Christian wins the trick and also gains ownership of the Bottle Imp, because his card has the higher value (and is close to the Bottle Imp's value).

The new price of the Bottle Imp becomes 17. The 17 card is placed under the Bottle Imp. The next trick is always led by the player who took the previous trick (in this case Christian).



The 17 wins the trick and slides into the bottle for the next trick.

## END OF GAME

When all cards have been played, each player receives the merit points value of the cards in their taken tricks.

There is one exception: instead of scoring positive points, the player who owns the Bottle Imp receives the total value of the devil's trick in negative points as a penalty. After a pre-arranged number of games (e.g. every player dealt two times), the player with the highest total of merit points wins.



## TIPS

**Discarding and passing cards (at the beginning of the round):**

In general, it is a good idea to pass your lowest cards to your neighbors. Vital game information is also passed with every exchanged card. For example, if a player gives their neighbor the Two and receives the One back, then the game is lost if the neighbor succeeds in taking the Bottle Imp with the Two (unless the player manages to play the One in the same trick).

It is also a good idea to get rid of a full suit, in order to have more choices each turn. Thus, you should also pay attention if, for example, one of your neighbours frequently passes green cards.

In any case, you should try to note which cards were passed and delivered, and to/from which players.

## DURING TRICK TAKING:

It is better to quickly play the cards which values are slightly under the starting price, in order to win cards with high value. If the price of the Bottle Imp sinks immediately, it will no longer be possible to do this. In order to not get stuck with the Bottle Imp at the end of the game, you should try to play the low value cards when they won't win the Bottle Imp. This can be done safely if cards of higher values but below the Bottle Imp's price have already been played in the same trick (or earlier).

It can be tempting to put many points into an (apparently) regular trick, but this is also risky. For example, if a player takes the 31 with the 37, the next player could take the trick (together with the Bottle Imp) by playing of a very low value card.

In general, noting which cards have already been played is very important.



## TEAM MODE (4 - 6 PLAYERS)

In Team Mode, players compete as teams of two players alongside 0, 1, or 2 individual players.

## PREPARATION

**4 PLAYERS:** Use just the 36 cards of the basic set.

**5 - 6 PLAYERS:** Use all 54 cards.

**5 PLAYERS:** The dealer is dealt one fewer card. Therefore, they don't discard a card into The Devil's Trick.

Teams are made up of two players sitting opposite each other. If there are individual players, the dealer is always an individual player. If playing with two individual players, then the individual players should sit opposite each other. Members of the same team should use overview cards of the same color. Individual players should use overview cards with the neutral side face up.

## SCORING

Players on the same team add their points together and both gain the combined total.

Individual players double their points from the round.

And, of course, if either member of a team ends the game with the Bottle Imp, both players lose the game. Instead of positive points, each of them receive the negative points from The Devil's Trick. If an individual player ends with the Bottle Imp, the negative points they gain from The Devil's Trick are also doubled.



## DEVIL'S EYE (2 PLAYERS)

**1.** Deal to every player 2 hands face down:

- First hand: 6 cards

- Second hand: 12 cards

**2.** Both players remove from their second hand:

- 2 cards to place in The Devil's Trick below the hell card

- 1 card to place in their opponent's first hand

- 1 card to place in their opponent's second hand

**3.** Both players then reveal the 7 cards of their first hand, which they place face up in front of them in the form of an arc. Both arcs together form "The Devil's Eye".

**4.** Each trick consists of 4 cards, 2 from each player. They take turns playing cards until there are 4 cards in the trick. Players are free to choose from which hand they play.

**5.** Following the suit is only required for the chosen hand.

For example:

Player B has blue cards in their first hand, but not in their second hand. Player A plays blue, which player B now has to follow (if possible). Player B may decide to play either a blue card from their first hand or any card of their choice from their second hand.



## THE SECOND BOTTLE (5 - 6 PLAYERS)

## PREPARATION

This variant uses both bottles. Use all 54 cards. In case of a five players game, the dealer is dealt one fewer card. Therefore, they don't discard a card into The Devil's Trick. Both bottles start on the hell card with a price of 19.

## PLAYING THE GAME

The player who first wins a trick by playing a card below #19 takes a bottle of their choice. From now on, the sold bottle will always be the one with the highest value (even if the new price is lower than the price of the cheaper bottle).

## SCORING

At end of the round, each bottle gives the owner the negative points of The Devil's Trick (and they score no points for their taken tricks). If each bottle is owned by two different players, each of them receives loses these points. A player owning both bottles loses points twice (and scores no points for their taken tricks).

## THANKS FOR PLAYTESTING

Alexander B.  
Bettina M.  
Daniel J.  
Felix H.  
Jenny W.  
Jochen K.  
Jonas M.  
Karsten L.  
Margret D.  
Mario K.  
Regina P.  
Ronald B.  
Stefan N.  
Wincenty G.



Edited by Matagot Edition  
161 rue Fernand Audouart  
33000 BORDEAUX  
(FRANCE)  
www.matagot.com



Bambus Spieleverlag  
Günter Conzett  
Kopfstraße 43  
D-12053 Berlin  
(GERMANY)



FR  
DONNEZ  
OU  
RECYCLEZ



OU  
ASSOCIATION



OU  
MAGASIN



OU  
DÉCHÈTERIE

Adresses sur [quefairedemesdechets.fr](http://quefairedemesdechets.fr)

