

# BLANCO



Who will be the first  
to clear everything?



Reinhard Staupe

Players: 2–5

Age: 8+

Duration: 20 minutes

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120 playing cards

Each card features a **vertical lightning bolt** in one of ten colours, as well as a black number from 1 to 12. Each number appears ten times across the deck.

**Note:** For people who have difficulties distinguishing between colours, each card includes a small symbol beneath the number in the top left and bottom right corners. There is a unique symbol for each colour for easier identification.



## THE RACE

Each player begins with a 3x3 grid of 9 face-down cards. Once you've cleared all the cards from your 3x3 grid, you receive 12 new face-down cards, arranged in a 4x3 grid. The first player to completely clear their 4x3 grid wins the game.

## CLEARING THE GRID

To start off, all of the cards in the grid are face-down, but as the game progresses, more cards are revealed. Each player aims to clear more and more lines from their grid until it is completely empty. Only **completed lines** – horizontal or vertical – can be cleared.

**This rule applies at all times during the game to lines of 2, 3, or 4 cards:**

- 1.) If **all the cards** in a vertical line show **lightning bolts of the same colour**, that line can be cleared.
- 2.) If **all the cards** in a horizontal line display **the same number**, that line can be cleared.

**Cleared lines** are always returned **to the box**. If a **gap** is created in the grid after clearing a line, the player slides their grid back together to keep it **gap-free**.



**Example:** Sarah has three red lightning bolts in a vertical line in her 4x3 grid and clears the entire line. She then slides her grid back together to remove any gaps.



**Example:** Tim has four 6s in a horizontal line in his 4x3 grid and clears the entire line.

## GAME SETUP

The 120 cards are shuffled thoroughly. Each player is dealt **9 cards**, which they place **face-down** in a 3x3 grid in front of themselves (without looking at the front of the cards). The remaining cards form a **face-down draw pile** in the centre of the table. The top card from the draw pile is turned over and placed next to it, starting a **face-up discard pile**. Each player then:

- reveals any **one** card from their grid face-up
- looks at any **face-down card** in their grid (and then places it back face-down)
- draws **two** cards from the **draw pile** to hold in their hand.



**Example:** Maria has revealed a card from her 3x3 grid (a red 7), looked secretly at one card (the centre-right card), and is holding two cards in her hand (a blue 10 and a green 12). The face-down draw pile and face-up discard pile are in the centre of the table.

## GAMEPLAY

The player to the dealer's left goes first. They must choose and carry out exactly one of the following two actions: **A** (draw a card) or **B** (swap two cards).

The next player clockwise then takes their turn, choosing and performing one of these two actions.

**Note:** Action **A** is the main action and is usually chosen, while Action **B** is used less often.

## Action A: Draw a Card

The player draws **a card** into their hand, choosing either the top card from the face-down draw pile or the top card from the face-up discard pile. Now from the three cards in hand, they must choose to either:

- discard a card face-up to the discard pile and then reveal any **face-down card** in their grid (if they have no face-down cards, they do not need to reveal one)
- or play a card **face-up** to any position of their grid, replacing any card in that spot - regardless if it was face-up or face-down. The replaced card is then discarded face-up to the discard pile.



**Example:** Maria draws a card from the draw pile (an orange 5). Now holding three cards, she chooses the green 12, places it in the top right of her grid, and replaces the card that was face-down there. The replaced card goes face-up on the discard pile.

## Action B: Swap Two Cards

The player does **not** draw a card. Instead, they **swap** any **two adjacent cards** in their grid - either horizontally or vertically (not diagonally) next to each other. The two cards may both be face-up, both face-down, or one of each. The two chosen cards switch positions.

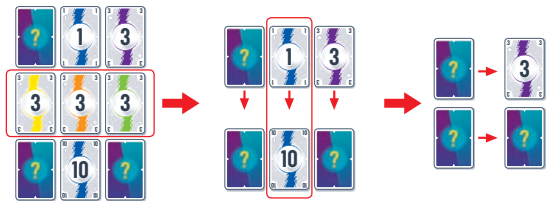
**Note:** If one of the swapped cards is face-down, it is turned face-up. If both cards were face-down, only one of them is revealed; the player may choose which one to reveal (without looking at it first).

## REWARD FOR CLEARING A LINE

As soon as a player clears a completed line (or lines) in their grid - vertically or horizontally - they may immediately **look at any one face-down card** in their grid (returning it face-down to the grid). A player can never look at more than one card per turn.

## CHAIN REACTION

When a player clears a line, it's possible to then immediately clear another line (or several lines) once the grid has been readjusted. This is expressly permitted and should be carried out immediately. **As a reward for triggering a chain reaction**, in addition to looking at any one face-down card for clearing a line (described above), you may also then reveal this card too (if you wish).



**Example:** Linus first removes the horizontal line with the three 3s, then shifts his grid together, which lines up and clears the vertical line with the two dark blue lightning bolts. He then shifts the grid together again. As a reward for this chain reaction, he may look at one face-down card and reveal it (if he wishes).

Each line is cleared one by one in sequence. If a played card simultaneously completes two lines (one horizontal, one vertical), the player clears one line first, then the other.

**Note, Special Case:** If two lines are completed simultaneously in a 2x2 grid (one horizontal, one vertical), the player can only clear one of these two lines (their choice).

## CONTINUING THE GAME & END OF THE GAME

Players take turns as described. If the **draw pile is ever depleted**, leave only the top-most card of the discard pile face-up. Shuffle the rest of the discard pile along with any cards in the box to form a new draw pile.

As soon as a player **completely clears** their 3x3 grid, the game briefly pauses. That player immediately receives **12 cards** from the draw pile, which are placed **face-down** (without looking) in a **4x3 grid** in front of themselves (4 cards across and 3 cards down). The player then reveals one card of their choice from the 4x3 grid and secretly looks at another card while continuing to hold two cards in hand. The game then resumes as normal.

**The first player to clear their 4x3 grid is the winner.**

To extend gameplay, multiple rounds can be played until a player wins a set number of games. Alternatively, you can track the remaining cards in each player's grid after each game (the fewer, the better). The player with the fewest points after multiple games is the overall winner.

## ATTENTION!



**Game Tip:** Try to avoid having your grid end up being a single line of 3 or 4 cards, as this can be challenging to clear. It's generally best to leave a line with exactly 2 cards as the final line.



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