

# 本草 Herbalism



*Rulebook*

English


In ancient times, "Herbalism" was a very important medical study. China is especially famous for utilizing ancient herbs to cure diseases, and its history can date back to thousands of years. According to the legends, Shennong, or the "God Farmer," was an expert in Chinese botany and also the founder of Chinese Herbalism. In 2700 BC, Shennong completed Shennong Ben Cao Jing, or "The Classic of Herbal Medicine," which is a collection of around 365 detailed descriptions of different herbs and their usage, laying the foundation for modern Chinese medicines.

In Herbalism, players take on the role of a group of novice farming pharmacists, hoping to find the cure to the pandemic that is currently plaguing the country. Players must exchange information with one another in order to gain more insight into the ingredients of the cure; however, only one can earn the honorary title of the "God Farmer," so be careful not to share all of your knowledge too easily!

## Game Overview

In Herbalism, players will take on the role of a group of novice pharmacists, performing different actions and racing to be the first one to figure out the secret ingredients of the cure to the pandemic. Games will take several rounds, and players will earn victory points between rounds. Once a player has accumulated a certain number of points (usually 6), the game ends and the player with the highest number of victory points will earn the honorary title of the "God Farmer!"

## Game Components

- ◆ **Rulebook x 3** (Chinese x 2, English x 1) 
- ◆ **Medicine Marker x 4** (1 for each player)
- ◆ **Cure Marker x 4** (1 color for each player.  
"Answer" on the front side, and "Follow" on the back side)



- ◆ **Action Card x 5** (inquiring, feeding, brewing, appealing, and curing)



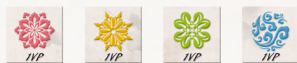
- ◆ **Medicine Card x 7** (Green-Yellow, Red-Green, Red-Blue, Yellow-Red, Green-Blue, Yellow-Blue, and identical pair)



- ◆ **Ingredient Card x 14** (red x 2, yellow x 3, green x 4, and blue x 5)



- ◆ **Prediction Marker x 8**  
(2 for each color)



- ◆ **Action Marker x 1**
- ◆ **Start Player Marker x 1**
- ◆ **Victory Point Marker x 12**  
(3-points x 4, 1-point x 8)



**Note:** To increase the enjoyment of the game, we recommend players to use extra paper, pencils, and erasers to assist them in memorizing the information they have collected throughout the game. You may also scan the QR code below to download our official record form.



**Note:** If you are using the official record form, you may also download the player screen online. Follow the instructions to set it up, and use it to conceal your recorded information from other players!

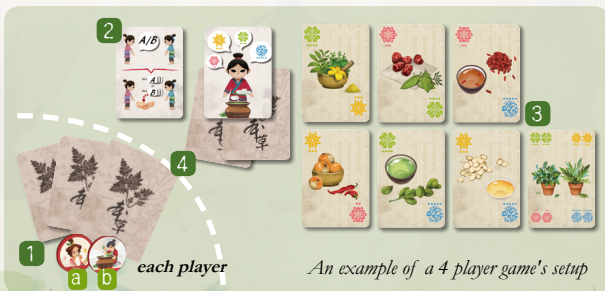


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# Game Setup

- 1 Each player chooses a color and takes the following items:
  - a **Medicine marker.**
  - b **Cure marker.**
  - c If you're using the **variant rules**, you may also prepare paper, pencil, and eraser.
- 2 Depending on the difficulty of the game, place the corresponding action cards on the table, and put the rest back into the game box:
  - **Basic:** Inquiring and curing
  - **Normal:** Feeding, appealing, and curing
  - **Advanced:** Some or all of the action cards (“curing” is mandatory).

✳ **For your very first game**, we recommend using only “appealing” and “curing”.
- 3 Place the 7 medicine cards face up on the table, so everyone can see them clearly.
- 4 Shuffle the 14 ingredient cards face down, and randomly place 2 of them face down under the “curing” action card. Distribute the remaining 12 cards evenly among the players, forming their starting hands. A player's hand is hidden information, and may not be revealed to the other players.
- 5 The player sitting to the **left** of the player who has most recently won the round is the start player and takes the start player marker. The start player will remain the same in the same round.





## Game Turn

- Beginning with the start player and going clockwise, each player performs the following 2 steps during his or her turn:

### 1 Move the pharmacist (medicine marker)

### 2 Choose an action

- After the active player completes the turn, the person to the left of the active player may now take his or her turn.

### Move the pharmacist

- The active player moves his or her medicine marker onto any medicine card on the table.
- He or she must move their medicine marker, and cannot choose to stay on the original medicine card (with the danger of the pandemic still looming, there is little time for the pharmacist to rest!).

**Note:** Multiple medicine markers may exist on a single medicine card.



*The Red player moves his or her medicine marker.*

### Choose an action

- The active player moves the action marker onto any action card on the table, and perform its action.



*The Red player moves the action marker and performs the curing action.*

❖ See **Page 6** for Action Cards



## Action Cards

### Inquiring



① Depending on the 2 colors of the medicine card where the active player's medicine marker is currently located, he or she chooses an ingredient card in hand that matches one of the colors, and gives it to another player.

② The receiving player secretly looks at the given card, and puts it into his or her hand. He or she must then publicly and honestly announce how many cards he or she has in the hand that matches the **other** color of the medicine card. The receiving player does **not** state the color of the cards.

**Note:** If the active player's medicine marker is on the identical pair medicine card, the receiving player must announce how many cards of the receiving colors he or she has in the hand (including the one just received).

### Inquiring



Q :  
How many?

①



②



③



**Example:** ① Amy has a medicine marker on the Red-Blue medicine card.

② She secretly gives Bob a blue ingredient card. ③ Bob must now state only the number of red cards he has in his hand.

## Feeding



① Depending on the 2 colors of the medicine card where the active player's medicine marker is currently located, he or she chooses an ingredient card in hand that matches one of the colors, and gives it to another player.

② The receiving player secretly looks at the given card, and puts it into his or her hand. He or she must then give the active player all the cards in his or her hand that match the **other** color of the medicine card.

**Note:** If the active player's medicine marker is on the identical pair medicine card, the receiving player must give back the active player all the cards in his or her hand that match the receiving color (including the one just received).

Feeding	
<p data-bbox="163 1025 333 1137">Q : Give me the other type?</p>	<p data-bbox="388 703 409 733">①</p> <p data-bbox="388 884 409 914">②</p> <p data-bbox="388 1065 409 1096">③</p>
<p><b>Example:</b> ① Amy has a medicine marker on the Red-Blue medicine card. ② She secretly gives Bob a blue ingredient card. ③ Bob must now give Amy all the red cards he has in his hand (if any).</p>	

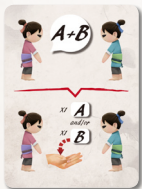
## Brewing



- 1 The active player chooses another player.
- 2 Depending on the 2 colors of the medicine card where the active player's medicine marker is currently located, the chosen player must give the active player 2 cards that **match** each of the colors. If he or she only has one of the corresponding colors, the chosen player only has to give 1 card of that color to the active player, regardless of how many he or she actually has.

**Note:** If the active player's medicine marker is on the identical pair medicine card, the receiving player may choose any 2 cards that share the same color to give to the active player. If he or she does not have any 2 cards with the same color, then the receiving player does **not** give any cards to the active player.

### Brewing



Q :  
One set of  
A and B?

1



2



3

**Example:** 1 Amy has a medicine marker on the Red-Blue medicine card and chooses Bob, 2 Bob has to give Amy a red and a blue ingredient card. 3 Bob doesn't have any red ingredient card, so he only gives 1 blue ingredient card to Amy.



## Appealing



- 1 The active player chooses another player.
- 2 Depending on the 2 colors of the medicine card where the active player's medicine marker is currently located, the chosen player must give the active player all the cards that **match** 1 of the 2 colors. The chosen player must give cards to the active player unless he or she does not have any cards that match the 2 colors.

**Note:** If the active player's medicine marker is on the identical pair medicine card, the receiving player may choose all cards of 1 color to give to the active player.

<p><i>Appealing</i></p> <p>Q : All of A or B?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1  </li> <li>2  </li> </ol>
<p><b>Example:</b> 1 Amy has a medicine marker on the Red-Blue medicine card and chooses Bob, 2 Bob has to give Amy all the red ingredient cards or all the blue ingredient cards</p>	

## Curing



❶ The active player puts his or her cure marker, “answer” side up, on any medicine card.

❷ In clockwise order, each player may choose 1 of the following options:

■ Place his or her cure marker, “*Answer*” side up, on any medicine card that does **not** have a cure marker.

■ Place his or her cure marker, “*Follow*” side up, on any medicine card that has a cure marker.

■ Pass and not use the cure marker.

❸ Starting with the active player, and going clockwise, each player who had placed his or her cure marker secretly looks at the 2 ingredient cards under the curing action card, and compares them with the colors on the medicine card where his or her cure marker is currently located. If they match, then that player has found the cure to the pandemic and the round will end (see **Page 11 for Game End and Victory Points**).

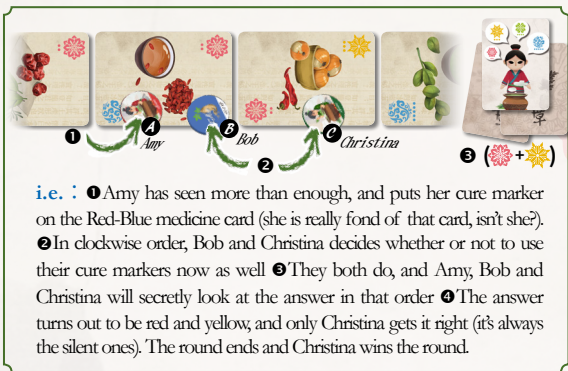
**Note:** If the player’s cure marker is on the identical pair medicine card, then it is considered a match as long as both of the ingredient cards under the curing action card share the same color. The actual colors themselves do not matter.

**Note:** If a player guesses correctly, all players that has their cure markers with the “follow” side up on the correct medicine card will earn 1 point as a result.

**Note:** If the 2 ingredient cards do not match the colors of the corresponding medicine card, they are returned face down back under the curing action card.

- ◆ A player without a cure marker cannot perform any more actions, nor can he or she share the secret ingredients of the cure with the other players.
- ◆ A player without a cure marker is still in the game and may be chosen as part of the action; however, his or her turns are skipped.

**Exception:** If there is only 1 player with a cure marker in the game, he or she must immediately perform the cure action.



**i.e. :** ❶ Amy has seen more than enough, and puts her cure marker on the Red-Blue medicine card (she is really fond of that card, isn't she?).  
 ❷ In clockwise order, Bob and Christina decides whether or not to use their cure markers now as well ❸ They both do, and Amy, Bob and Christina will secretly look at the answer in that order ❹ The answer turns out to be red and yellow, and only Christina gets it right (it's always the silent ones). The round ends and Christina wins the round.

## Game End

- When 1 player guesses correctly, or all the players have used their cure markers, the round ends! It might take several rounds until a player reaches the victory condition.

## Victory Points

- When the round ends, the player who has his or her cure marker with the “answer” side up on the correct medicine card will receive **3 points**.
- Any player who has his or her cure marker with the “follow” side up on the correct medicine card will receive **1 point**. on the wrong medicine card will receive **-1 point**.



When a player accumulates at least 6 points, the game ends and whoever has the highest number of victory points is the winner and earns the honorary title of the “God Farmer !” If several players are tied for victory, players may choose to play more rounds until a victor has been determined, or simply share the victory.

## Variants

- To increase the enjoyment of the game, we recommend players to use extra paper, pencils, erasers, and the custom player screen to assist them in memorizing the information they have collected throughout the game.



## Advanced Rules

- ◆ During Game Setup, separate the prediction markers by colors and put them in the center of the table.
- ◆ After a player takes an action other than the curing action, if he or she is feeling adventurous, he or she may choose to predict the ingredient of the cure.
- ◆ When predicting, choose a color that you think the cure contains and take a prediction marker of the corresponding color from the center of the table (if still available), placing it in front of you. Once you have chosen a color, you may no longer take a prediction marker of that color. There are no limits to the number of prediction markers you may have in front of you.
- ◆ When the game ends, check if your predictions are correct. For each prediction marker in front of you that does not share the same color as the ingredient cards of the cure, flip that marker to the back side:
  - Each prediction marker with the front side up will give you **1 point**.
  - Each prediction marker with the back side up will give you **-1 point**.

(If a player would go to negative points, he or she stays at 0 instead)



## Credits

**Designer :** Liu Xiao 、 Eros Lin

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