Reed Ambrose

Wispwood

The forest is full of fantastic lights!
What if you follow them into the night?

Jacks

Mischief-making Jack-o'-lanterns scatter through the forest, delighting in chaos.

Witches

Also known as *ghost lights*, these wisps are very interested in cats.

Hearts

Spoken of as *friar's lanterns*, these holy wisps love the forest for its trees.

Orbs

These playful, social wisps form glowing chains along the forest trails.

Step into the forest and learn how to play in a video:

cge.as/ww-htp

SETUP

1. The Pond

Wisps gather around a mysterious pond. Assemble the pieces in the center of the table. The 4 pieces around the edge of the pond can be in any order.

2. Tree Tiles

Mix up the tiles face down and organize them into random stacks near the pond. These are called **tree tiles**. Trees are not wisps.

3. Wisp Tiles

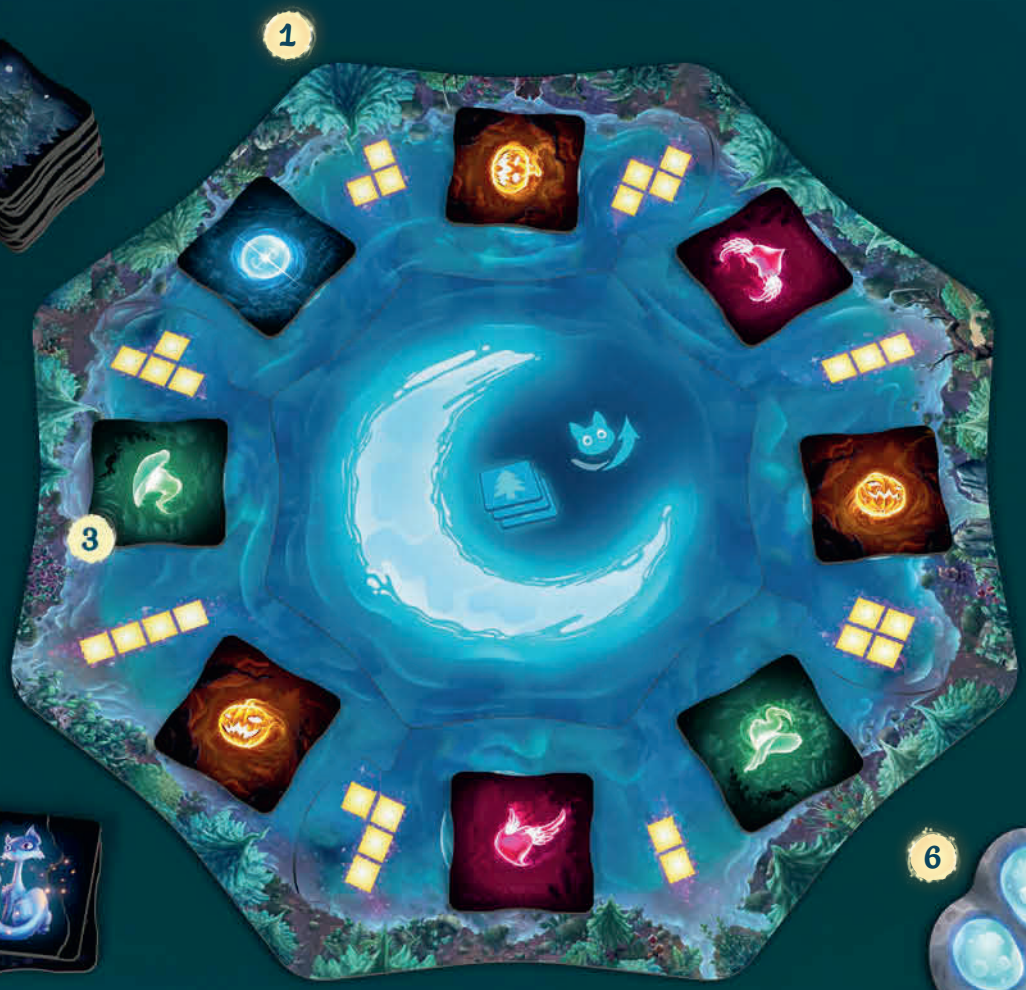
Take 8 tiles and deal them randomly, face up, to the 8 spaces of the pond. Their colorful side is up, so these 8 tiles are **wisps**.

4. Your Cat

Everyone chooses a cat. Take a tree tile and place it in front of you. Place your cat on the tree tile, as shown. This is the start of your forest.

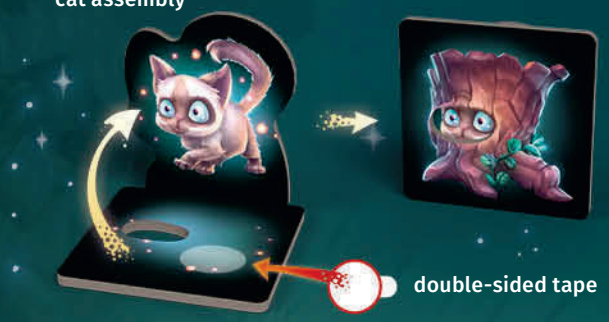
*Note: The tile with your cat on it is no longer a tree. Your cat is obviously more important than a tree, so this square of your forest is called **your cat**.*

Your game has 160 tiles, 40 of each type of wisp.



cat atop a tree tile

cat assembly



double-sided tape

Grid Guide

Some players like to have a grid guide to help them plan their forest. For the first round, your forest will be a 4×4 grid.

5. Goal Cards

There are five decks of goal cards – one for each type of wisp, and one for trees.

Choose one card from each deck. You can choose them randomly, or, if some players are new to the game, you can intentionally choose goals marked with just **one paw** – they are more straightforward than the two-paw goals.

Goal cards tell you what you want to accomplish in a game. Be sure everyone understands each goal.

The upper half shows a scoring example.

The lower half tells you how that type of wisp scores points ( ).

Specific goals are explained on pages 14 and 15.

6. Starting Player Paw

Give the starting player paw to the player sitting closest to a light. That player will take the first turn of the game.

Firefly Tokens

Firefly tokens are used only in the solo game. If you are not the only player, leave them in the box.

BASIC TURN

Players take turns beginning with the starting player and continuing clockwise around the table. You will take several turns during the round. A typical turn looks like this:

1. Choose a wisp.

Choose one of the wisps available on the pond.

2. Choose one of the 2 shapes.

Your chosen wisp is between 2 shapes. You choose one of these.

Take your chosen wisp and enough tree tiles to make your chosen shape.

The wisp can be anywhere in the shape. The shape can be mirrored or rotated in any orientation.

3. Add the shape to your forest.

At least 1 tile of your shape must be placed beside a tile already in your forest.

Turn by turn, your forest will grow. The tiles must stay inside a 4×4 grid.

Watch out for witches.

The goal card for witches gives a special rule about where witches can be placed. You are not allowed to take a witch tile that cannot be placed according to its rule. See page 14.

Tip: You can use your grid guide to help you plan the growth of your forest. For later rounds, the grid will be bigger.

round 1	round 2	round 3
4×4	5×5	6×6

Note: When you start the game, your forest is just your cat. And you don't know if your cat is in the corner of your forest or in the middle. You don't know if your cat is on the north edge or the south. So, you can grow your forest in any direction, as long as it always fits inside some 4×4 grid.

THE POND

Dwindling Wisps

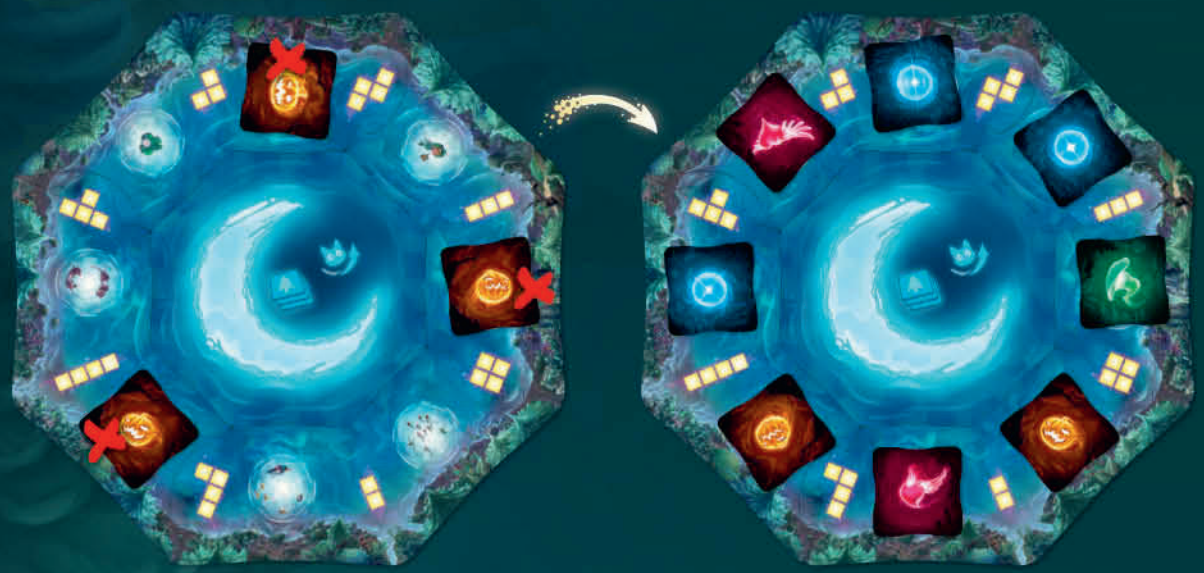
When a player takes a wisp tile, it is not automatically replaced. This means each following player will have fewer wisps to choose from.

Dealing New Wisps

At the start of your turn, if all available wisps are the **same type**, you **may discard them** all and randomly deal out 8 new wisps. And if you start your turn with no available wisps, you must randomly deal out 8 new ones.

After you deal new wisps, continue your turn as usual.

MAY DEAL NEW WISPS



Discard Pile

Keep discarded wisps face up in a messy pile somewhere far away from the stacks of tree tiles. You are unlikely to run out of tree tiles, but if you ever do, flip the discarded wisps over, mix up the tiles, and make new stacks of tree tiles.

CAT ACTIONS

At the start of the game, your cat tile should be flipped to its fully-visible side to show it is **ready**.

The other side is its **hidden** side. You flip the cat to the hidden side to show you have taken a cat action. We call this **hiding your cat**.

READY HIDDEN

There are 2 possible cat actions:

Deal New Wisps

On your turn, before you choose a wisp, if your cat is ready, you may hide your cat to discard all available wisps and randomly deal 8 new ones. You may do this even if you started your turn by dealing new wisps because the old ones were all the same type.

Usually, you will use this action when you want a certain type of wisp and none of that type is available.

OR

Choose Any Shape

On your turn, after you choose a wisp, if your cat is ready, you may hide your cat to choose any of the 8 shapes around the pond (instead of being limited to the 2 that are beside your wisp).

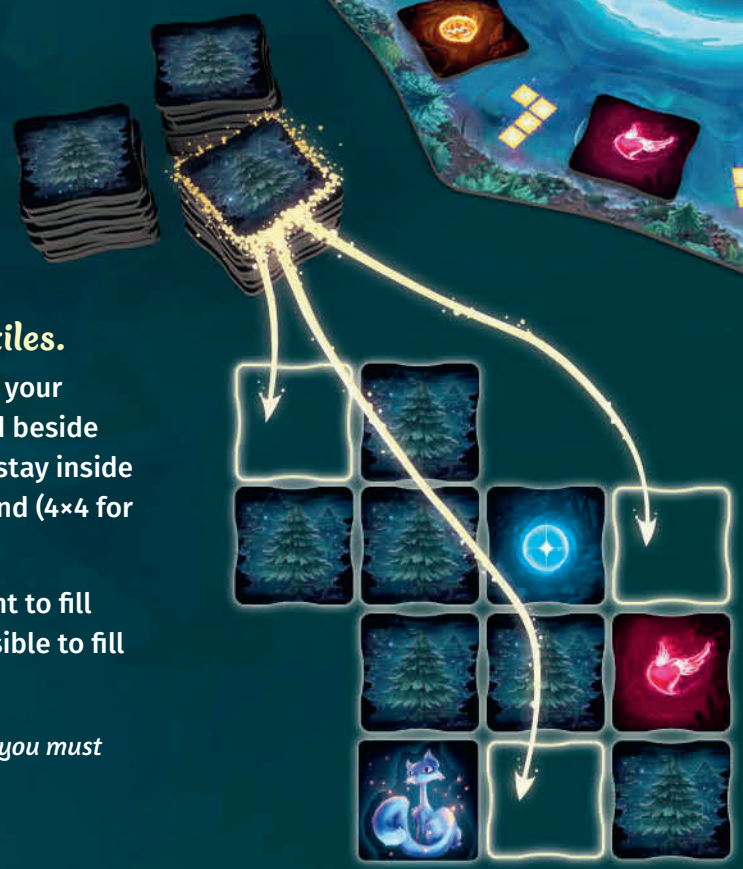
This action lets you pick the best shape for the wisp you take.

Note: If your cat is hidden, you cannot take either of these cat actions. If you want to make your cat ready again, you will need to take a "tree turn", which is described on the next page.

TREE TURN

Instead of taking a wisp, you may take a tree turn.

Note: You may do this even if you dealt new wisps to the pond this turn.



1. Take 1, 2, or 3 tree tiles.

Place them one by one into your forest. Each must be placed beside another tile, and you must stay inside the grid for the current round (4×4 for round one).

In particular, you might want to fill holes that would be impossible to fill using any of the 8 shapes.

Note: When taking a tree turn, you must always take at least 1 tree tile.

2. Then, make your cat ready.

If your cat is currently hidden, flip it back to its "ready" side. You may do this even if you used your cat to deal new wisps this turn.

Note: Sometimes a basic turn will be impossible because you have no legal way to add any of the available wisps to your forest. In this case, you ***must*** *take a tree turn.*

END OF ROUND

The round ends when one player has filled all spaces in their grid. Those who play later get to take a final turn.

This ensures all players have the same number of turns. The last turn will always be taken by the last player – the one sitting to the right of the starting player marker. If the last player is the first one to finish their grid, then no one gets another turn.

Before proceeding to the next round, do the following:

1. Score your grid.

Count up your score for the round. Scoring will be explained on page 11.

2. Move your cat.

You may move your cat to a different tree tile or leave it where it is.

Think about witches.

The witch placement rule applies only when placing them. They will all score in the following rounds even if you move your cat to make space for placing more witches. See page 14.

3. Remove all trees.

Return all your tree tiles to the stacks. No one has seen their wisp side, so they are still just random tiles that can be dealt on someone's turn. (Do not return the tile under your cat. Your cat is very possessive of that particular tile.) **Your wisp tiles stay where they are.**

Finally, pass the starting player paw to the left and start a new round.

LATER ROUNDS

The game lasts 3 rounds. Each round has a larger forest. In the first round you are limited to a 4×4 grid, round two uses a 5×5 grid, and round three goes up to 6×6.

Don't reset everything between rounds.

- All wisps on the pond remain there, and new ones are not automatically added.
- All hidden cats remain hidden.
- Although trees are removed, you start the new round with old wisps still in your forest.

  This means in later rounds you will have to figure out how to fit the shapes into a forest that is already inhabited by some wisps!

Expanding Your Forest

In later rounds, you can expand your forest on any side.

Some wisps may start the new round disconnected from your cat (or any other wisps). This is okay. New tiles can be placed beside any tile still in your forest.

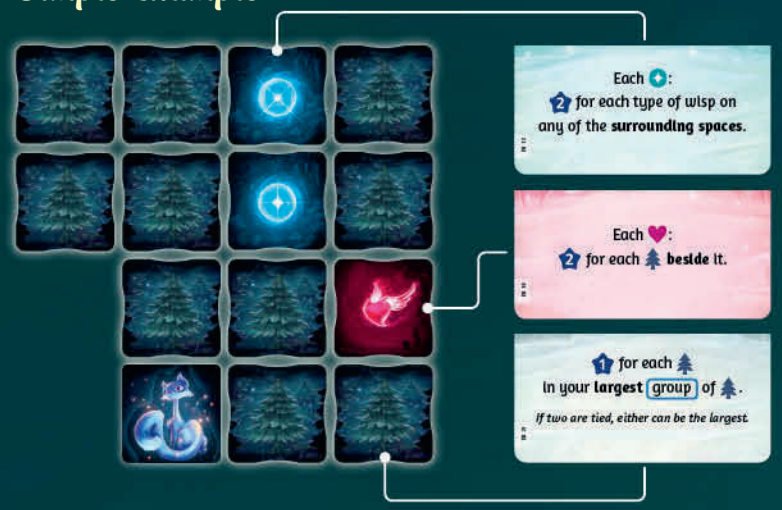
SCORING

At the end of each round, score the following:

End of the Game

After 3 rounds, **the player with the most points wins.** Break ties in favor of the player who completed their grid more times. (If still tied, the players share their victory.)

Simple Example



The upper orb scores 2 points for only a single type of wisp in its surroundings. The lower orb scores 4 points for two types (orb and heart). So, orbs score 6 points in total.

The 3 trees beside the heart cause it to score 6 points.

The largest group of trees consists of 8 tiles, so it scores 8 points.

Don't want to score manually? Use this app!

Scan this QR code to download the app. Or search for **Wispwood Scoring App** on Google Play or the App Store. The app works on phones and tablets.

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

cge.as/ww-app

SOLO GAME: SETUP & GAMEPLAY

You can play Wispwood by yourself, attempting to score more points than a ghost player. Set up the game as shown on pages 2 and 3, but with these changes:

Scoring Guide

Instead of building a forest, the ghost player will collect wisps and score them according to points shown on a scoring guide.

The scoring guides are on the back sides of the grid guides. Each offers a different difficulty level – higher numbers are for harder games. If you are new to Wispwood, start with the easiest scoring guide – it is marked with only one paw: 🐾.

Set aside one wisp of each type and randomly assign them to the 4 levels of the scoring guide. The highest wisp is worth the most points for the ghost player, so it is the type the ghost wants the most.

The scoring guide is only for scoring the ghost's wisps, not yours. You score points for 5 goal cards, as usual.

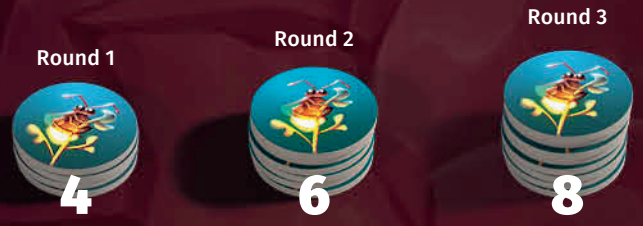
The Pond

Deal 8 wisps to the pond, as normal. Then, choose a cat for the ghost player and **replace one wisp with the cat** (discard the wisp).

During the game, the ghost's cat will wander clockwise around the pond, collecting wisps. Keep this in mind when choosing the cat's starting space.

Firefly Tokens

Mix up the firefly tokens face down. Make a stack of 4 at random for round one. Set the others aside without looking at them. For round two, you will mix them all together again and choose 6 at random. And round three uses all 8.



The ghost always plays first.

Ghost's Turn

1. **Flip over the top firefly token.** That number is how many wisps the ghost's cat can see this turn. Look ahead clockwise at that many wisps. (Do not count empty spaces.)
2. If there are not that many wisps on the pond, remove all wisps (not the cat) and deal 7 new wisps at random.
3. From the wisps the cat can see, the ghost takes **the one that scores the most points**. If there are more wisps of that type, the ghost takes the one closest to the cat (the one the cat would meet first, walking clockwise). Put the ghost's new wisp on the right side of the scoring guide, in the row for that wisp type.
4. **Move the cat** into the space the wisp was taken from.

Your Turn

You always take your turn after the ghost's turn. If you deal new wisps, leave the cat where it is and deal 7 wisps at random.

Rounds

If you complete your grid, the round ends immediately. Otherwise, after the ghost resolves the final firefly, you take your last turn, and the round ends then.

At the end of each round, you score points as usual, including points for trees and completing your grid. The ghost scores points only for the 4 types of wisps. Each wisp is worth the points shown on the scoring guide.

Like you, the ghost keeps its wisps between rounds and scores them again in the following round.

The ghost scores 51 points at the end of round two.

End of Game

Play 3 rounds and add up scores, as usual.
If you meet or exceed the ghost's score, you win!

NOTES ON GOAL CARDS

In most cases, any questions you have about a goal card can be answered by studying the example shown on the card. However, some players may want to check these notes to reassure themselves that they are interpreting the card correctly.

Note that some cards give you points for **each wisp** while others reward you for **each group**. Be sure to read each condition carefully. The terms BESIDE, SURROUNDING, and GROUP are illustrated on the back page.

Jacks

Pumpkin Patchwork, Pumpkin Seedoku, Double Cross
For these three cards, count all the jacks that meet the condition described by the card. Then look that number up in the table to see how many points you score.

Pair of Jacks
A pair is the same as a "group of two". It is two jacks beside each other, but not beside any other jacks.

Oh My Gourd
Count each group exactly once. If a group has multiple jacks, count it once. But don't forget that a jack all by itself also counts as one group.

Witches

Witches work differently from the other wisps.

Each witch card shows where you can **place a witch** in your forest. If you can't place the witch where you are supposed to, you are not allowed to take it.

Tip: When you move your cat between rounds, you can put it somewhere that gives you space to place more witches.

All witch cards follow the same **scoring system**, which goes by threes and then gives some extra points for extra witches.

When you score witches, count them all! Count the ones you placed this round and the ones you placed earlier, regardless of where your cat is now.

Example: You score all 7 witches, even though some of them no longer meet the placement condition. The first three witches earn 18 points, the next three add another 18, and the last witch contributes 4 points. You score 18+18+4 = 40 points in total.

Checkershire Cat
If you can trace a zigzag path (always diagonal, never horizontal or vertical) from your new witch to the cat, and if each square in this path already has a witch, then your new witch is diagonally connected as required by the card. The card shows one witch off by itself, but that's because the cat was moved between rounds.

Orbs

Orbs are always concerned about types of wisps. Remember that trees are not wisps.

A Light Following, Merry Glow Round, Sign of Light
You count types of wisps. For example, a group with 1 orb and 3 jacks has exactly 2 types of wisps.

Energy Synergy
An orb with no wisp beside it does not score.

Hide & Glow Seek
The placement of the wisps doesn't matter for this card – you only care about how many there are.

Hearts

All these goal cards work the same way: For each heart in your forest, count up the trees that meet the condition and score points for each of them. Even when the example shows just one heart, you still count all of your hearts, each one separately. It's possible for one tree to be counted multiple times (by different hearts).

Way of Light
Think of a beam of light, horizontal or vertical, coming from the heart, shining through the trees. The beam doesn't stop until it hits an empty space, your cat, or a wisp.

Trees

When counting trees for tree goals or wisp goals, ignore the tree tile with your cat on it. That square is not a tree, it is your cat.

Lower Branch, One Grove to Rule ...
If groups are tied for size, just pick one. For Lower Branch, if you have only one group, then you score 0 points.

Wispwood

Game by: Reed Ambrose

Development Team:	Ondřej "Kew" Kurka Jan "Zvonda" Zvoníček Tomáš "Uhlík" Uhlíř Mín & Elwen Jakub Uhlíř Jarmila Havířová
Graphic Design:	Radek "RBX" Boxan Tibor Vizi Dávid Jablonovský
Art:	Štěpán Drašťák
Trailer & 3D Assets:	Roman Bednář
Community Manager:	Michael Murphy
Production:	Vít Vodička
Rulebook:	Jason A. Holt
Project Management:	Jan "Zvonda" Zvoníček
Project Supervision:	Petr Murmak

I'd like to dedicate this game to Betsy, Graham, and Holden, for always being there. I'm forever grateful to Felix Podlesný and CGE for giving this game a chance, especially Petr and Vlaada. Big thanks to the development team and their superpowers: Kew, Uhlík, Mín, Elwen, Kuba, Zvonda, and Jarča. The only thing more beautiful than the art is the artist, Štěpán. Special thanks to Radek, Tibor, and Dávid for your craftsmanship and eye for design; Jason for his expert skills with the rulebook; Regi, Yume, and Pavlína for marketing and more; Eleni for videos; Vít for production; and Klára for the title.

To the many playtesters, from online to in-person, from Czechia to Texas and everywhere in between, I can't say thank you enough for your time and efforts.

This game would not exist without my good friends Wey Scoggin, Ross Wood, Gabe Deem, Steven Aramini, and Danny Devine. Publishing a game is done in community, and I'm thankful for the one this game brought together.

Here's to following the light ...

— Reed Ambrose

Copyright © 2025
Czech Games Edition s.r.o.
www.czechgames.com

USEFUL TERMS

BESIDE
Only these 4 squares are beside your cat.

SURROUNDING
There are 8 squares surrounding your cat.

GROUP
A group of wisps is any number of wisps (even 1) that are connected by their sides. (The same is true for groups of trees.)

RULES SUMMARY

ON YOUR TURN:

1. **If all available wisps are the same type,** you may discard them all and deal 8 new wisps at random. (If no wisps are available, you must do this.)
2. **If your cat is ready,** you may hide it to discard all available wisps and deal 8 new wisps at random.
3. Decide whether to **take a wisp** (by taking the basic turn) or **take a tree turn**.

BASIC TURN

4. Choose an available wisp tile.
5. Choose one of the two shapes beside it, **OR, if your cat is ready,** you may hide your cat to choose any of 8 shapes offered by the pond.
6. Take your chosen wisp and enough tree tiles to make the chosen shape.
7. Place the shape in your grid, beside an existing tile.

or

TREE TURN

4. Take 1, 2, or 3 tree tiles and add them to your grid, beside existing tiles.
5. If your **cat is hidden**, flip it over to **make it ready** again.

END OF ROUND

1. When one player has filled all the spaces in their grid, the round is about to end.
2. The round ends when everyone has taken the same number of turns.
3. Calculate scores for the round.

SETUP FOR NEXT ROUND

1. You may move your cat to a different tree tile in your grid.
2. Remove all tree tiles (except for the one with your cat) and return them to the stacks.
3. Pass the starting player paw to the left.

SIMPLER VARIANTS

- Scoring can be simplified by using only 4 goal cards – one for each wisp. Leave the tree cards in the box.
- For a shorter game, you can play 2 rounds instead of 3.

NOK250741 / 11735002