

Brains!



A TREASURE HUNTERS GAME



A GRAVEYARD-BUILDING GAME FOR 2-5 PLAYERS

by Peter C. Hayward and Kelly Jo

Your Mission

You command an army of the undead. Using your zombie horde, beat your opponents to be the first to collect valuable treasures!

Components



44 **Brains!** cards
5 gravestone cards
Rulebook



Setup

Each player takes a **gravestone** and places it in front of them. Return any unused gravestones to the box.

Shuffle the cards together to form the deck.
(Do not include any expansions for your first few games.)

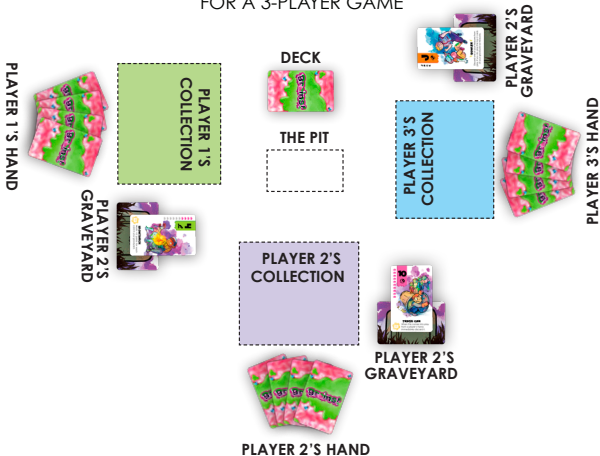
Deal 4 cards face-down to each player, then place the deck in the middle of the table.

Deal one card face-up to the top of each player's gravestone card. This is their **graveyard**.

The player who most recently ate takes the first turn and play continues clockwise.

Setup Example

FOR A 3-PLAYER GAME



Gameplay Basics

The first player with **21 or more points** (17 or more points in a 5-player game) at the start of their turn is the winner!

On their turn, players must do **one** of the following:

- **DRAW** 2 cards from the deck
- **PLAY** a card from their hand, either:
 - for its **Action**, into the pit
 - as a **Treasure**, face-up into their collection
- **BURY** the top card of the deck, face-up into their graveyard

Cards



- 1 The card's point value.** This adds to your point total while the card is in your collection.
- 2 Cards without a number** (*King, Queen, Jack, Ace, Joker*) have no point value.
- 3 The card's effect.** Cards with lightning bolts are **action** cards. Their effect only applies when they are played into the pit.
- 4 Cards with gear icons** have **ongoing effects**. Their text tells you when they apply. They must be played as **treasures**.
- 5 The card's suit and art.** These have no in-game significance.

Gameplay

Each turn, you must either

Draw, Play, or Bury



Draw

THE TOP 2 CARDS FROM THE DECK

Add them to your hand. There is no hand limit. If the deck is empty when a player needs to draw, everyone moves the bottom card of their graveyard into the pit. Then, shuffle the pit to form a new deck.

Play

A CARD FROM YOUR HAND

Cards can be played in one of two different ways:



1. PLAY FOR THEIR ACTION

Cards with lightning bolts can be played **into the pit** for their **action**. When you use a card this way, **ignore its points**.

If you can't complete a card's entire action, do as much as you're able to.

For example, if your hand is empty, ignore any part of an action that lets you play a card.

As soon as you have enough treasure in front of you to win (whether this happens on your turn or another player's turn), you must shout "**Brains!**". This tells everyone that you will win at the start of your next turn.

If you forget to do this, skip your next turn instead of winning.



2. PLAY AS A TREASURE

Cards which have a point value (indicated by the number in the corner and the row of brains down the side) can be played **face-up** into your collection as **treasures**. When you play a card this way, **ignore its action**.



Cards with the treasure chest icon have an **ongoing effect** as long as they are **face-up** as treasures in your collection.



Cards with a gravestone in the gear have an **ongoing effect** while they are **at the top of your graveyard**.



Cards with a coffin in the gear have a **one-time effect** at the time they enter your graveyard. *If a card with this icon is randomly dealt into your graveyard at the start of the game, ignore its effect.*

Cards with no point value (Ace, King, Queen, Jack, Joker) may not be played as treasures.

Bury

THE TOP CARD FROM THE DECK

Take the top card of the deck, and place it **face-up** into **your graveyard**. If there is a coffin icon on the gear, this will trigger the card's effect.

TIP: If an opponent is going to win next turn and you don't have any cards in hand that can stop them, bury the top card of the deck as your turn! The right card landing in your graveyard could be exactly what you need.



As soon as you have enough treasure in your collection to win, you must announce "Brains!" - this tells everyone that you are going to win on your next turn. If you drop below the winning number of points, let everyone know - the next time you have enough points once more, declare "Brains!" again.

At the start of the turn after you announced "Brains!", if you still have enough points, you win!

If you would have won but did not announce "Brains!" as soon as you hit the winning number, skip your turn. You cannot win until the start of your next turn.



More Ways To Play!



Brains! Extended Variant

Instead of needing 21 or more treasure to win, players need **exactly** 21 treasure to win! (17 in a 5-player game). When playing this way, the plunger requires you to have **exactly** 13 treasure.



Treasure Hunters series

Brains! can be played with other games in the **Treasure Hunters series**, including *Scuttle!* and *Ninjitsu!*. Shuffle them into the **Brains!** deck, and play by the rules of **Brains!**

Whenever a card refers to the "discard pile", it means **the pit**. Whenever a card is **discarded** from your hand or from your collection, **bury** it: move it to the top of your graveyard. When a card is protected from being **discarded**, it is also protected from being **buried**.

Cards of any type discarded from your play area are **buried**. Any cards discarded from the top of the deck are moved into **the pit**.

TREASURE HUNTERS EXPANSIONS:

Discarded **Weather** cards go to their own separate **Weather discard pile**. Discarded **Event** cards always go to **the pit**. When an event causes multiple players to discard cards, go in turn order, starting with the active player.



SCUTTLE!:

When the term **destroyed** appears on a card, it means **buried from play**. When the term discarded appears on a card, it means **buried from your hand**. In either case, move the buried card to the top of your graveyard.

When a card is **protected**, it cannot be **stolen, buried, discarded, moved, or swapped**.

Whenever a card refers to cards **in front of a player**, treat it to mean **in that player's collection**.

Permanents do not count as **treasures**.

When a **disease** is discarded from play or hand, it goes into **the pit**.



NINJITSU!:

While playing with **Ninjitsu!**, you do not have to announce 'Brains!' the turn before you are going to win.

Follow these **Ninjitsu!** rules: as their turn, players may play a card as a **secret**, or **steal a secret**.

Cards from **Brains!** cannot affect **secrets**.

Glossary



Cards with lightning bolts can be played into **the pit** for their **action**, which triggers immediately.



Cards with a gear icon have an **ongoing effect**, and cannot be played for their **action**.

PLAYED: Whenever a card is played for its action, move it face-up to the top of the pit.

BURIED: Whenever a card is buried from your hand or your collection, move it face-up to the top of your graveyard.

When **multiple cards** are **buried at once**, you choose the order in which they enter your graveyard.

When **multiple players** would **bury cards at once**, the current player chooses the order in which they are buried.

When cards are buried **from your hand**, you choose which cards to bury.

Effects which say **“any”** card can target cards belonging to any player, even yourself.

All cards in a player's **collection** are in play.

Cards in graveyards, the deck, the pit, or players' hands are **not** in play. They do not count towards your points.

NOTE: Cards moving in or out of your graveyard can have an effect even when it's not your turn! Any time a card is added to your graveyard, check to see if it has a card

with a coffin or gravestone in the gear. Cards leaving your graveyard might uncover a card with a gravestone icon, reactivating its effect.

Cards with a coffin icon have no effect when they're uncovered, only when they **enter** your graveyard.



Sample gameplay

Kelly plays a **Guitar**. It is worth twice as much as the top card of her **graveyard**, which is a 4.

Peter draws 2 cards.

Roxy plays a **Trash Can** as a treasure. Since he played it from his hand, it is immediately buried, and moves to the top of his **graveyard**.

At the start of **Kelly's** second turn, she has **8** points in her collection. Not enough to win! She decides to **bury** the top card of the deck into her graveyard. It's a **9** - she now has **18** points!

At the start of **Peter's** second turn, he has **0** points in his collection. He also **buries** the top card of the deck for his turn. It's a **Wrench** - when it enters his graveyard, he may bury any 1 treasure from play. He chooses to bury **Kelly's Guitar**. She moves it to the top of her graveyard.

At the start of **Roxy's** second turn, he has **0** points. **Roxy** plays a **Cafeteria Worker** as an action. He draws 2 cards, then plays the top card of his graveyard as a treasure. This moves his **Trash Can** into play - since it was not played from his hand, it stays in play! He now has **10** points in his collection.

How To Play

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

SETUP: Shuffle all the cards together to form the deck. Deal 4 cards to each player. Deal one card face-up to the top of each player's gravestone card. This is their **graveyard**.

EACH TURN, EITHER:

- **DRAW** 2 cards from the deck
- **PLAY** a card from their hand, either:
 - for its **Action**, into the pit
 - as a **Treasure**, face-up into their collection
- **BURY** the top card of the deck, face-up into their graveyard

WINNING: If your collection has 21 or more points (17 or more when playing with 5 players) worth of **treasure** at the start of your turn, you win!

Credits

Created by **Peter C. Hayward**.

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