

BYCATCH

A card game about flawed surveillance, impossible decisions, and the people caught in between, for 3–5 players.

In Bycatch, each player controls a nation on the hunt for suspected terrorists.

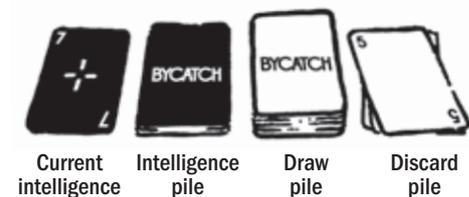
The players try to locate suspects hiding abroad using drone surveillance, and eliminate them using drone strikes.

Meanwhile, they must shelter their citizens from the attacks of their opponents. Who will gather the most accurate intelligence and strike with the least collateral damage?

Requirements

A camera phone for each player and one deck of Bycatch cards. A Bycatch deck consists of 63 citizen cards and 9 intelligence cards. Both sets of cards are ranked 1 to 9, and each rank has a unique illustration.

Preparation



Shuffle the citizen cards and deal a hand of seven citizens to each player. Place the remainder of the deck in the middle; this will be the draw pile. Take the top citizen card and leave it face up next to the draw pile. This will be the discard pile.

Shuffle the intelligence cards. Take as many cards as there are players, plus three, and place these next to the draw pile; this will be the intelligence pile. The remaining intelligence cards are not used in this game.

Determine the first suspect by drawing the top card from the intelligence pile and placing it face up next to it. This is the current intelligence card. All citizens in the game who match this card's rank and illustration are suspects until a new intelligence card is revealed.

Goal

As a nation, your goal is to protect your citizens and hunt down suspects hiding in other nations, all while causing as little collateral damage as possible. You earn points by building shelters for the citizens in your nation, and by eliminating suspects hiding in other nations. You lose points for collateral damage caused by eliminating citizens of other nations who are not current suspects. The winner is the player who has the most points at the end of the game.

Playing the Game

The game is turn-based. The player with the oldest phone starts. Play proceeds clockwise.

During their turn, and in the following order, players:

1. **must admit a new citizen**
2. **may take action**
3. **must control borders**

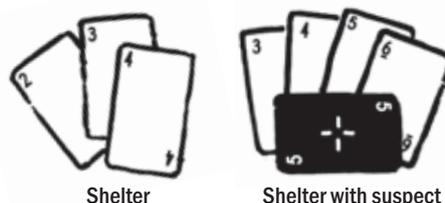
1. Admit a New Citizen

At the start of your turn, you must admit one new citizen to your nation. You can do this either by drawing the top card from the draw pile, or by taking the top card from the discard pile. If this citizen is a suspect, you may **seek refuge** (described below).

2. Take Action

After welcoming a citizen, you may do only one of the following three actions: **build a shelter**, **gather surveillance**, or **order a strike**.

Build a Shelter



You can keep your citizens safe from harm by sheltering them. Any citizen of your nation who is currently a suspect

can also seek refuge in a shelter.

A shelter consists of three or more citizen cards that form a run (e.g. 2-3-4, 5-6-7-8, etc.). Place shelters in front of you facing up. You can build only one shelter per turn. You cannot add to existing shelters.

Sheltering Suspects:

If the shelter you build contains a suspect, do the following:

- Place the current intelligence card face up on top of the shelter.
- Reveal a new intelligence card.

Gather Surveillance

Suspects hiding in other nations can be found through surveillance. You announce that you want to do this by saying "Surveil!" The other players must freeze (stop moving) immediately. They must hold their positions until you've finished surveilling.

Players may protect their citizens by holding them close to their body, but no closer than a hand's breadth. They may not hide a card behind another card. All cards must be held in one hand.

You then choose an opponent to surveil and take one picture of that opponent's hand of cards using your phone.

You may stand up, but you cannot take any steps. You may only use the back-facing camera, and you must have the shutter sound enabled.

After you've taken the picture, everybody unfreezes, and you can review your surveillance.



How to surveil

Order a Strike



How to strike

Suspects hiding in other nations can be eliminated by means of a strike. You choose the opponent you wish to target and go through these steps:

- Discard two identical citizens who are not suspects from your hand.
- Remove three consecutive citizens from your chosen opponent's hand.
- Show these cards to the other players.
- Place them face down in front of you.

Failed Strike: If none of the eliminated citizens are suspects, they are all collateral damage.

Successful Strike: If at least one eliminated citizen is a suspect, do the following:

- Place the current intelligence card face down on top of the eliminated citizens.
- Reveal a new intelligence card.

The remaining citizens are collateral damage.



Failed strike



Successful strike

3. Control Borders

At the end of your turn, if you have more than seven citizens in your hand, you must expel the extras. If you have fewer than five citizens in your hand, you must admit new citizens.

Expel citizens until your hand is down to seven cards by discarding citizens of your choice face up on the discard pile. Suspects may not be discarded. Admit citizens until your hand is up to five cards by drawing citizens from the draw pile. If any of these citizens is a suspect, you may perform **seek refuge** (described below) for each of them in turn.

Seek Refuge

Whenever you draw a citizen who is a suspect, you may refuse entry to that citizen, who will then seek refuge in another nation. In this case, take the following steps:

- Reveal the suspect you drew to the other players, and then place the card face down in the center of the table.
- All the other players must choose one citizen from their hands and place them face down on top of the suspect card. These chosen citizens may be suspects.
- Shuffle the resulting pile without looking at the cards.
- The other players should each pick one citizen from the pile, in turn, and add it to their hands.
- The remaining card is yours.

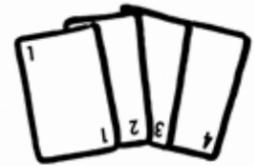
Game End

If there are no more citizen cards to draw, but there is still a discard pile, shuffle the discard pile to create a new draw pile and continue to play as normal. In cases where both the draw pile and discard pile are depleted, or where the intelligence pile is depleted, each player (including the current player) gets one final turn in which the player can choose to build a shelter, order a strike, or do nothing. After each player's final turn, the game ends.

Scoring

- **Shelters yield 20 points for the first three citizens. Add 20 points for each additional citizen.**
- **Multiply a shelter's points by two if it contains a suspect. Use the intelligence cards to identify sheltered suspects.**
- **Add 100 points for each suspect eliminated by a strike. Use the intelligence cards to identify eliminated suspects.**
- **Collateral Damage: Deduct 10 points for each citizen in a strike who was not a suspect.**

Examples



Shelter of four citizens
 $20 + 20 = 40$ points



Shelter of four citizens including one suspect
 $(20 + 20) \times 2 = 80$ points



Failed strike
 $0 - (3 \times 10) = -30$ points



Successful strike of one suspect
 $100 - (2 \times 10) = 80$ points

Credits

Original idea by Subalekha Udayasankar.
Game design by Subalekha Udayasankar, Alper Çuğun, and Kars Alfrink.
Artwork by Agnes Loonstra.
Graphic design by Pony Design Club.
The designers would like to thank all the people who have helped by testing the game.
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