

You're a chaotic little rat in a dangerously unstable lab.

Your job?

Survive! Out bluff your friends!  
Trigger explosive reactions!  
Repair your precious beakers!  
And ultimately, emerge as the  
Rat That Rules Them All.

## HOW IT WORKS

EVERYONE STARTS WITH 4 BEAKERS.

**IF ALL YOUR BEAKERS BREAK? YOU'RE OUT.**

BANISHED FROM THE LAB. FOREVER. MAYBE.

ON YOUR TURN, YOU'LL TRY TO DESTROY YOUR OPPONENTS' BEAKERS

BY CREATING **REACTIONS** (specific combos of cards).

BUT THEY'LL TRY TO STOP YOU USING **SHIELDS**... IF THEY CAN.

**BLUFFING** IS THE NAME OF THE GAME. PLAY CARDS FACE DOWN,  
PRETEND IT'S SOMETHING ELSE, AND SEE IF ANYONE DARES TO CALL  
YOUR RATTY LITTLE BLUFF.

**CHAOS ISN'T JUST ENCOURAGED, IT'S ESSENTIAL!**

## SETUP

**1 REMOVE** all the SPECTROMETER cards  
and NOBLE GAS cards from the deck.



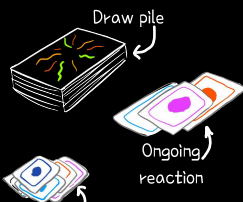
**2 GIVE EACH** player 1 SPECTROMETER and 1 NOBLE GAS  
Put 2 SPECTROMETER cards and 2 NOBLE GASES **BACK INTO**  
**THE DECK** and keep the rest (if any) away.

**3 SHUFFLE** the deck and **DEAL 4 MORE**  
cards to each player. Everyone should  
now have 6 CARDS IN HAND.



**GIVE** every player 4 BEAKER tokens

**4** Place the rest of the deck in the centre—  
this is your **DRAW PILE**



Leave a spot next to it —

this will be your

**TOXIC WASTE PILE (a.k.a. DISCARD PILE)**

That's it! You're a bunch of rats with unstable  
chemicals and way too much confidence. Let's go.

If the Draw Pile runs out, shuffle the Toxic Waste  
to make a new deck (except for any used Repair kits!)

## TAKING YOUR TURN

### ON YOUR TURN

Play **AS MANY CARDS AS YOU WANT** — face-up or face-down (more on  
bluffing later).

Here's what you can do on your turn:

#### 1. START A REACTION

**ONLY ONE** reaction can be active at a time.

If there isn't one currently... you get to be a troublemaker and start one.

You can **START A REACTION** by playing:

An **ALKALI METAL** (starts an Alkali Reaction), A **RADIOACTIVE** (starts a  
Radioactive Reaction) or A **WATER** (could support either alkali or radioactive  
reactions)

**QUICK CHEMISTRY LESSON** (you won't pass your finals with this)

There are two types of reactions —

Alkali Reaction = Alkali Metal + Water (+ Halogen = MAX chaos)

Radioactive Reaction = Radioactive + Water, or two Radioactives

Use the **CHEAT SHEET** on the back to help you as you play



#### 2. CONTINUE A REACTION

If there's already a reaction happening, you can—  
**ADD** to it

If it's **ALKALI**: Add **WATER** or **HALOGEN**

If it's **RADIOACTIVE**: Add a second **RADIOACTIVE** or **WATER**

**CHAIN REACTION** (Pass it to the next player)

**REVERSE REACTION** (Send it back where it came from)

You **CAN'T** START A NEW REACTION until the current one is resolved.

Only one of each card can be in a reaction (except for radioactive  
reactions with two radioactives).

#### 3. PASS

Nothing useful? Time to bail.

You **MUST DISCARD 1 NON REACTIVE** card (Shield, Repair Kit, Spectrometer,  
etc.) and draw 1 new card.

If you **ONLY** have reactive cards (Alkali, Water, Halogen, Radioactive), then  
yeah, you're allowed to discard those.

The ongoing reaction gets passed onto the next player (provided it isn't going to  
explode!)

#### 4. DEFEND

If an **EXPLOSION IS COMING YOUR WAY** and you don't want to go  
**BOOM**, play a **SHIELD** (NOBLE GAS, METAL) to neutralize it.

A shield ends the reaction. Reaction cards go to the Toxic Waste Pile.



#### ENDING YOUR TURN

**DRAW UNTIL** you have 6 CARDS in hand.

(For real. Don't forget. Every time. 6 cards. In your hand at the end of each turn. Draw. Do it.)

Drawing cards marks the end of your turn and it passes to the next  
person. You can no longer do anything.

### RADIOACTIVE CARDS

These are marked on the back. Everyone knows you have one.  
That's the deal. No secrets.

So when you draw one, **YOU MUST PLAY IT ASAP**.

Can't hold onto it like a coward — if you do, **YOU LOSE 1 BEAKER PER**  
**TURN IT SITS IN YOUR HAND** (This is your own fault. This is science.)



### ENDING A REACTION

Either someone gets **BLASTED** and **LOSES A BEAKER** OR it's **BLOCKED** with  
a **SHIELD**

All cards in that reaction go into the Toxic Waste Pile

The game continues like nothing happened (except someone might now have 1 less  
beaker and a lot more trust issues)

### BLUFFING

Lab Rats is not a game of honour. It is a game of deception.

**EVERY PLAYER** can play **ONE TURN** per **REACTION** as a bluff!

Any card can be played face-down as a bluff (except a Spectrometer)

**HOW TO BLUFF:**

**PLAY** a card **FACE DOWN**, **SAY** what it is. ("This is a Noble Gas!" / "Here  
comes an Alkali Metal!")

That's it. Try not to laugh nervously.

Bluffing lets you— pretend to attack, pretend to defend, confuse your  
enemies, lose all your friends.

**HOW TO CALL YOUR BLUFF —THE SPECTROMETER:**

If the **NEXT** player suspects you're lying, they can use a **SPECTROMETER**  
card (if they have one) to **CALL YOUR BLUFF**.

If you're **CAUGHT LYING:**

- **YOU LOSE 1 BEAKER.**
- Your card goes to the discard pile.
- The **REACTION CONTINUES.**

If you're **NOT LYING:**

- The person **WHO CALLED** you out  
**LOSES 1 BEAKER.**
- Your card **STAYS IN PLAY.**  
(For example, if you were bluffing an Alkali and it was real? The  
reaction goes boom.)



### PRO TIPS

- A bluff can be truthful. That's not cheating. That's 4D chess.
- Bluffing is core to this game. If no one bluffs, you are playing a lesser  
version of Lab Rats. Fix that.
- Early in the game, throw down something dramatic and claim it's  
deadly. Even if it's a Repair Kit. Fear is your weapon.

### GAME END

Start with 4 BEAKERS. If you **LOSE ALL 4**, you're **OUT** of the game. Leave  
the game and take 1 SPECTROMETER and 1 NOBLE GAS with you. The last  
remaining rat wins!

**OK, STOP READING AND START PLAYING!**

That's enough science. Check the back if you're confused.

Good luck, little rat. Only one of you will emerge as  
**THE RAT THAT RULES THEM ALL!**

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Be the last player with at least one beaker standing. If all your beakers are broken, you're out! Cause chaos, dodge disasters, and outwit your opponents.

# LAB RATS

2-5 players  
20-30 mins  
Ages 10+

Don't like reading?

VHETHA BY SWETHA

## REACTION CHEAT SHEET

(for the one friend who studied political science and doesn't know what an alkali metal is)

Elements can be added in any order

	+		=	Effervescent reaction!	
Alkali metal + Water				BREAKS 2 BEAKERS of the next player unless shielded	
	+		+		=
Alkali metal + Water + Halogen				Vigorous reaction!	
				BREAKS 4 BEAKERS of the next player unless shielded	
	+		=	Nuclear (but with a coolant)	
Radioactive + Water				BREAKS 2 BEAKERS of next player unless shielded	
	+		=	Fusion blast!	
Radioactive + Radioactive				BREAKS 4 BEAKERS of next player unless shielded	

## CARD GUIDE

### REACTIVE CARDS

**ALKALI METAL (6 cards)**  
Very reactive. Starts a chemical reaction.

**HALOGEN (4 cards)**  
Combine with Alkali + Water to destroy FOUR beakers instead of two. Only add it into a reaction after an alkali metal has been played

**RADIOACTIVE (5 cards)**  
Starts a chemical reaction. Must be played ASAP when drawn.

**WATER (8 cards)**  
Combines with Alkali or Radioactive to make things explode. Doesn't do anything alone.

**NOBLE GAS (7 cards)**  
Full shield. Fully protects against an ongoing blast. You don't lose any beakers.

**METAL (4 cards)**  
Partial shield. Absorbs half the damage – reduces 2-beaker blast to 1 or 4 to 2.

### OTHER CARDS

**CHAIN REACTION (5 cards)**  
Passes the current reaction onto the next player

**REVERSE REACTION (5 cards)**  
Passes the current reaction onto the previous player, changes the direction of the game

**SPECTROMETER (7 cards)**  
Use it to call out someone's bluff.  
If they lied → they lose a beaker.  
If they were honest → you lose a beaker.

**REPAIR KIT (5 cards)**  
Gain back 1 Beaker (up to 4). Ends your turn. Does not get shuffled back once used!

## BUT WHAT IF?

I lose my last Beaker during a blast, but I have a Repair Kit in my hand?

Too late. If you didn't play it before going boom, you're out. Byeee.

Can I play 2 Repair Kits on the same turn?

Nope. Repair Kit ends your turn. No double band-aids.

Can I play 2 Alkali Metal cards one after another?

Nah. Only one reaction at a time. Simmer down, chaos gremlin.

What happens to the ongoing reaction when I pass?

It keeps moving, to the next player.

Can I play a Halogen on JUST Water?

Nope. Halogen only reacts with an Alkali Metal (at least in this lab)

Someone's out of the game — what happens to Spectrometer cards?

One Spectrometer is removed from play when a player is eliminated. Fewer snitches.

Can I bluff a Repair kit?

Yep. If no one checks you're good to go.

I draw a Radioactive as my 6th card — when do I play it?

Immediately on your next turn...hopefully. It's glowing. Everyone saw it. Don't be a coward.

## EXAMPLE TURN

Player 1 plays Alkali metal + water = 2 beaker blast

Player 2 plays Halogen + Alkali metal + water = 4 beaker blast

That's a 4 beaker blast!

Passes the blast

"That's a noble gas shield"

"Not so fast! I call that bluff"

"Gotcha!"