The game is simple: manage cooperation and competition with other players across 10 hands (or "releases" as we call them) to score the most points. Each release is played the same, but the scoring rules change each time as you reveal new Tools & Methods. Your team needs to continuously respond to these strategic shifts in order to produce the best release possible.
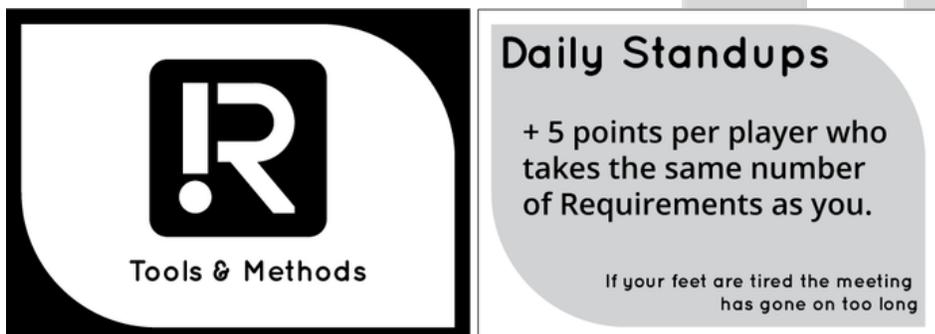
The Cards

The cards are divided into two decks

The Play Deck, the cards you will have in your hand.

This deck is composed of three suits:

Doors   Fruits   Birds

The Tools & Methods Deck, these cards will define scoring each round.

Daily Standups

+ 5 points per player who takes the same number of Requirements as you.

If your feet are tired the meeting has gone on too long

Set Up

With a single deck, the game can be played with 2, 3, 4 and 5 players. With additional decks, you can play with more (details to come later):

- 2 players: Deal out 3 hands of 13 cards, set one aside this hand will not be used
- 3 players: Deal each player 13 cards, that's it.
- 4 players: Chose a team, sit each team across from each other, and deal each player 9 cards.
- 5 players: Discard the 2 of Birds and deal each player 7 cards.

Release! Terminology

Release! is modeled after classic trick taking games like pinochle, and euchre. Although we have tweaked the syntax a bit:

- When we refer to a "release", we are speaking of a full hand of play.
- The term "requirement" describes a single round of play, also a trick. When playing a card, it's called "contributing to the requirement"
- Also some of the Play cards have special pictures, and rules, in addition to their numerical value. These are the Practitioner Cards.

Playing a Release

To get started, flip-up a card from the Tool & Methods deck. This will show you what cards you want to contribute to the requirement, in an attempt to take or avoid taking it.

At the beginning of a release, the team with the lowest points leads. At the start of a game, the last team who broke the build goes first. In following releases, each requirement is led by the player who won the last one.

Playing Requirements

The leading player plays a card from his hand, then in a clockwise order the rest of the players also play a card. There are 3 rules as to what cards you can play.

- A suit led must be followed if possible. For example, if the first card played is the 7 of Birds, then all players must play Birds if possible.

- The highest card of the led suit takes/wins the Requirement. If a player doesn't have any cards of the led they can play any card, these off suits can NOT win the Requirement.
- If a card played has special text on it (i.e. Practitioner cards) resolve them as the text describes on the card. Some of these affects take place immediately, after the Requirement or affect scoring. Special text that changes rank, does not change suit.

Players gather the Requirements they have won in front of them, and play continues until players have no cards remaining in their hands.

Scoring

After all cards are played in the Requirements, players tabulate scores. Each round the scoring rule change based on the revealed Tools & Methods Card.
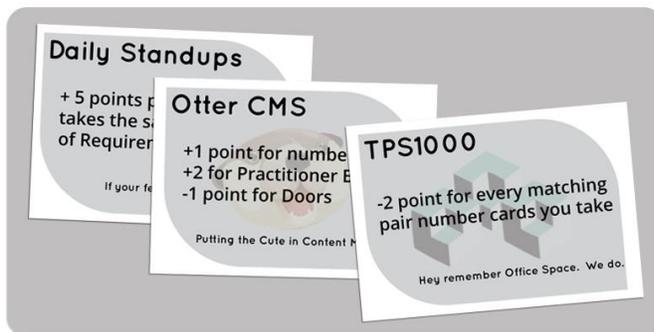
Scoring rules should be fairly easy to understand, some involve the cards you take in your Release as a whole, some the number of Requirements taken, some certain combinations of cards.

Essentially you will have to either take specific cards in tricks, or deliberately throw those cards to the other team or players in order to avoid losing points.

You can go below zero.

Teams add their scores as a single unit, but tabulate them separately (for combo scoring).

Game End

After ten Releases that's it, the team or player with the highest total wins. For longer or shorter games just increase or decrease the amount of hands played.