

Schrödingers Katzen

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10 and up



2-6



about 20 minutes

The Idea of the Game

What's in the box – an alive cat or a dead one? This question was posed by quantum physicist Erwin Schrödinger in his famous thought experiment – and now you get to ask it, too! In a game of *Schrödingers Katzen*, you'll come up with tall claims about what's hidden in the boxes on all the cards in play – and, crucially, how much of it. With these claims, you'll try to outbid each other. Too bad, though, that you each only know the cards in your own hand! Your choice is either to gauge the situation cleverly – or to bluff as much as you can. However, if someone doubts your claim, all cards are revealed, and your claim is checked. And you'd better be right, or else you're out of the game! Who's going to be the last cat standing?



Components

52 Box Cards



20x Alive Cat



20x Dead Cat



8x Empty Box



4x Heisenberg's
Uncertainty Principle
(or Heisenberg for short)

Each box card shows one of 3 quantum states: an alive cat, a dead cat, or an empty box with no cat. Heisenbergs are special cards, as they can take on any of the 3 quantum states.



1 Clipboard



1 Marker



10 Physicats



4 Player Aids

If you have questions during the game, you can consult these cards.



6 Lives (only for 2- or 3-player games)

Setup

Setup for 4 Players



- 1 Place the clipboard in the middle of the table and the marker next to it.
- 2 Shuffle all the box cards and deal 6 face-down hand cards to each player for the first round. In each subsequent round, deal 1 less card to each player than in the previous round: In the second round, you'll play with 5 cards each, 4 cards in the third round, and so on.
- 3 The remaining cards make up a face-down draw deck. Leave some space next to it for a face-down discard pile.
- 4 Place the player aid showing the turn overview and the card distribution within easy reach of everyone.

- 5 Each player takes 1 random, face-down **Physicat** and places it in front of them. You may look at your own **Physicat** at any time, but keep it secret from the other players. Reveal 1 of the remaining **Physicats** and place it next to the clipboard, face up. The rest of the **Physicats** won't be needed for this game; put them back in the box without looking at them.
- Put the 3 "Physicat Overview" player aids within easy reach of everyone.

Note: If you prefer an easier game of *Schrödinger's Cats* to start with, leave the **Physicats** aside for your first game. Simply skip step 5 during setup.

If there are 2 or 3 players, please note the changes described under "Two- and Three-Player Games" on page 16.

Playing the Game

A game of *Schrödinger's Cats* plays out over several rounds. Each round begins with a claim of how many cards (or more) of a certain quantum state are in play in the current round. Then, all players take turns in clockwise order, choosing 1 of 2 actions:

Action A:

Make a new claim that must be higher than the previous one
or

Action B:

Doubt the current claim

If you pick Action B, the current round ends. Everyone reveals their hand of cards to check the current claim. If you

were right, you stay in the game; If you were wrong, you are eliminated from the game. In the next round, the game continues with 1 player less, and 1 less card in each player's hand until only 1 player is left. This player wins the game.

The player who has last seen a cat in a box starts the first round. Start the round by calling out the **total number** of box cards that have been dealt for the current round.

Example: Albert kicks off the first round in a 4-player-game. Each player holds 6 hand cards, so a total of 24 cards were dealt. Albert calls out: "In this round, there are 24 box cards in play."

Next, the player must make a claim (see below).

Action A: Making a Claim

Make a claim about how a **minimum** number of box cards in **this round** must show a certain quantum state. Your claim can refer to alive cats, dead cats, or empty boxes, but never to Heisenbergs.



A Heisenberg always takes on the quantum state that the current claim refers to. For example, if you make a claim about alive cats, each Heisenberg counts as an alive cat. If you or another player make a claim about dead cats later on, each Heisenberg counts as a dead cat, and so on.

Take a good look at the cards in your hand and think about what the other players' cards might show. Pick 1 of the 3 quantum states and say loudly and clearly how many cards at least you think show that quantum state, out of all the cards in play.

Mark your claim by placing the marker on the corresponding space on the clipboard: Green numbers indicate alive cats, gray ones stand for dead cats, and brown ones for empty boxes.

8 alive cats



Example: Albert must make a claim first. He has 4 alive cats, 1 empty box, and 1 Heisenberg in his hand, so he alone has 5 alive cats. He claims: "There are at least 8 alive cats in play." Then he takes the marker and puts it on the clipboard in the space showing the green 8.

Hint: Make use of the player aid showing the distribution of cards when you're making a claim!

Increasing a Claim

After the first claim, every subsequent one must be at least 1 step higher than the previous claim. However, new claims do not have to refer to the same quantum state as the previous one.



The clipboard easily shows you how to increase the claim: To make a higher claim, you must move the marker at least 1 step along the red thread in the direction of the ball of yarn in the middle. You are allowed to skip spaces, but you can neither go backwards nor leave the marker in the space where it currently is.



9 dead cats

Example: Once Albert is done, it's Sally's turn. To increase the claim, she'd have to claim at least 8 dead cats, 4 empty boxes, or 9 alive cats. Sally doesn't have a single alive cat in her hand, but she has 5 dead ones and 1 empty box. She claims: "There are at least 9 dead cats," and moves the marker to the corresponding space on the clipboard.

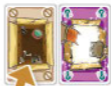
Showing Proof (optional)

Every time you make a claim, you may show proof to support your claim. Reveal any number of cards from your hand showing the quantum state of your claim and place them in front of you, face up. You may always reveal Heisenbergs, as they support every claim.

Note: Don't draw any replacement cards!

1	1	2	2	3
6	13	13	14	7
7	21	22	22	2
12	21	18	26	20
11	10	20	19	15
11	5	10	10	9

6 empty
boxes



Example: Stephen is up next. He, too, makes a new claim: "There are at least 6 empty boxes." To support his claim, he places 1 empty box and 1 Heisenberg in front of himself.

You may show matching proof every time you make a new claim by placing cards face up in front of you. Proof cards stay on the table until the end of the current round.

Swapping Out Hand Cards (optional)

If you reveal cards from your hand as proof, you may then swap box cards from the remaining cards in your hand for new cards from the draw deck. The number of cards you played as proof determines the maximum number of cards you may swap out.

First, place the cards from your hand that you want to swap out on the discard pile, face down. Then, take the same number of new cards from the draw deck and add them to your hand.



Example: After Stephen has played 2 proof cards face up in front of himself, he swaps out 1 card from his hand. He picks 1 dead cat from his hand and places it face down on the discard pile. Then, he takes 1 new card into his hand: an empty box!

Important: You can only swap out cards if you show proof cards on the same turn! Also, note that the total number of box cards in play for this round doesn't change when you show proof or swap out cards. If the draw deck gets used up, you can no longer swap out cards.

Action B: Doubting the Current Claim

It's your turn and you think that the current claim is too high or it's too risky to increase it once more yourself? Then you can **doubt** the current claim instead of making a new one. This marks the end of the current round, as you'll now check the current claim.

Note: Only the player whose turn it is can doubt the current claim.



Example: It's Marie's turn. She has 4 alive cats and 2 dead ones in her hand. Marie doubts that there really are 6 empty boxes in play in the current round. She says: "I doubt the current claim."





The End of a Round:

Checking the Current Claim

The round ends after a player has doubted the current claim. Everyone reveals all of the cards in their hand and places them with any face-up proof cards in front of them. Count all cards that support the current claim and compare that number to the current claim. Don't forget to count the Heisenbergs!

There are two possible outcomes:

-  There are fewer cards than claimed: The player who made the claim was wrong.
-  There are at least as many cards as claimed: The player who doubted the claim was wrong.

The player who was wrong is eliminated from the game (but only if there are 4–6 players! If there are 2–3 players, see “The Two- or Three-Player Game” at the end of these rules). The player who was right stays in the game.





Example: All players reveal their hands of cards. 5 empty boxes and 2 Heisenbergs are revealed, so Stephen's claim of at least 6 empty boxes was right and Marie was wrong. She must quit the game and decides that right now is the perfect time to get some milk.

The Next Round

Shuffle all the box cards again for the next round. Deal 1 box card less than in the previous round to each player who's still in the game and place the marker next to the clipboard again.

The player who was right when you checked the claim in the previous round starts the next round.

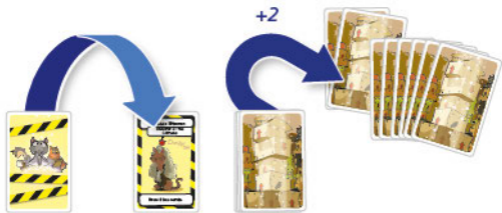
The End of the Game

The number of rounds you play depends on the number of players. Continue playing until only 1 player is left. That player wins the game!

The Physicats

Your Physicat has a unique special ability that you can use once during the whole game on your own turn. You choose at which point during your turn you use it. Keep your physicat in front of you, face down, until you use its special ability. That's when you reveal it.

Once you've used your Physicat's ability, place it next to the physicat by the clipboard, face up. Over the course of the game, you will create a row of face-up Physicats.



Example: This is a new game. It's Johannes's turn. He reveals his Physicat, Sir Isaac Mewton, to use his special ability, "Draw 2 box cards." Johannes draws 2 box cards from the deck and takes them into his hand. Then he places his Physicat in the row of face-up Physicats and proceeds to make a new claim.

Exceptions: Richard Feyncat, Maria Goeppert-Meower, and Cecilia Pounce-Gaposchkin stay in front of you until the end of the round you play them in, just like proof cards. You only place them in the row of face-up Physicats when the current round ends (or when you must discard them due to another special ability).

If you have been eliminated from the game without using your Physicat's ability, you must place it in the row of face-up Physicats immediately after you leave the game.

Note: You can only use your Physicat on your own turn, i.e., when you are either making a new claim or doubting the current claim. If someone else doubts your claim, you can't use your Physicat as a reaction, because it's not your turn. While you're checking a claim, no one can use their physicats.

Example: Emmy claims that there must be at least 6 alive cats in play this round. As a proof, she reveals 1 alive cat from her hand, so now there are 2 alive cats face-up on the table in total. Then Emmy's turn ends, and Lise is up. Lise reveals her Physicat, Marie Purrie, and uses her special ability: "Remove all proofs for alive cats." She puts the 2 face-up alive cats on the discard pile and places her Physicat in the row of face-up Physicats. Then she doubts Emmy's claim, ending her turn. Everyone reveals their hands of cards: Including the Heisenbergs, there are only 4 alive cats in play. Since Emmy doesn't have another turn,



she doesn't get the chance to use the special ability of her Physicat, Cecilia Pounce-Gaposchkin ("+2 alive cats"). This means that Lise is right, and Emmy has to quit the game. She reveals her Physicat and places it in the row of face-up Physicats.

An Overview of the Physicats



Cecilia Pounce-Gaposchkin

+2 alive cats

Place this card in front of you like a proof. For this round, it counts as 2 additional, face-up, alive cats.



Maria Goeppert-Meower

+1 empty box

Place this card in front of you like a proof. For this round, it counts as 1 additional, face-up, empty box.



Marie Purrie

Remove all proofs for alive cats.

Discard all face-up alive cats by placing them on the discard pile. If Cecilia Pounce-Gaposchkin is face-up on the table like a proof, move her to the row of face-up Physicats. Any cards you've removed in this manner do not count for this round anymore. The total number of box cards in play for this round changes accordingly.



Michael Fejdæ

Remove all proofs for dead cats.

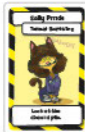
Discard all face-up dead cats by placing them on the discard pile. They do not count for this round anymore. The total number of box cards in play for this round changes accordingly.



Richard Feyncat

Heisenbergs don't count.

Place this card in front of you like a proof. When it's time to check a claim this round, don't count the Heisenbergs.



Sally Prride

Look at the discard pile.

You may look at the box cards in the face-down discard pile.



Sir Isaac Mewton

Draw 2 box cards.

Draw 2 box cards from the draw deck and add them to your hand. The total of box cards in play this round increases by 2.



Albert Felinestain

Swap out your entire hand of cards.

Discard your hand of cards to the discard pile. Then draw the same number of new box cards from the draw deck.



Stephen Pawking

Skip 1 turn.

Your turn is skipped and you don't take any actions. The turn passes immediately to the player on your left. If they doubt the claim, you're skipped over for that, too.



Neil deGrasse Tabby

Use an ability from the row of face-up Physicats. Swap this card for one from the row of face-up Physicats and use that card's ability immediately.

The Two- or Three-Player Game

If you are playing with 2 or 3 players, the rules apply as described above, but with the following change:

During Setup, split the 6 lives evenly amongst all the players: If there are 2 players, you each get 3 lives; With 3 players, you each get 2 lives.

When you were wrong when checking a claim, you are not eliminated from the game immediately. Instead, you lose 1 of your lives and put it back in the game box. You are only eliminated when you hand in your last life.

