

HOW TO PLAY

Tesla

Master of Lightning



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**A card game for
two to six players**

A deck-building and trick-taking game dedicated to the memory of the genius of the ages, Nicola Tesla, pioneer in the science of electrical power.

OBJECTIVE:

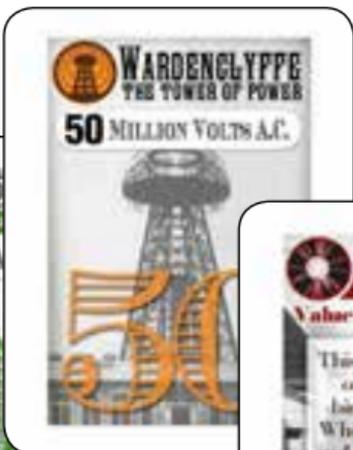
Players bid to win tricks that contain “prize cards” that they will add to their own collection of cards to be used in future trick-taking rounds. Many of the cards are also worth “voltage points,” and the player with the highest voltage total when the common deck runs out will win.

COMPONENTS:

The deck consists of 144 cards of four types:

1. **Voltage Cards** in four suits: New York, Colorado, Niagara, and Wardenclyffe, with values between 10 and 60 Million Volts for the purpose of bidding on tricks. These values do not count in your final score.
2. **Scoring Cards** are either **Positive** or **Negative** in value. These cards are worth their face value when bidding on tricks, as well as counting towards your final score.
3. **“Value for your Voltage” Cards** have no bidding value during the game but give a score value to your Voltage cards at the end

The Voltage Cards are used primarily for bidding.



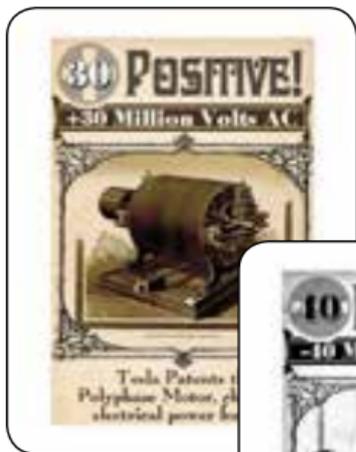
Sample of a "Value for your Voltage" card.



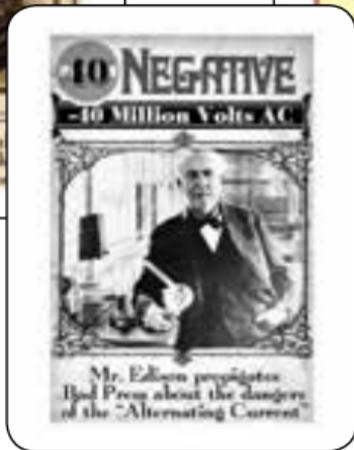
of the game.

4. **Power Cards** grant the players special actions (described on the cards themselves). They provide minor chaotic elements during the game, some positive and some not-so-positive.

NOTE: For less than five players, it's recommended (but not required) to remove the red-bordered Scoring Cards and Power Cards, and the entire New York suit including the "Value for your Voltage" cards.



Positive and Negative cards are the most important.



Power Cards provide a wide variety of events throughout the game - usually favorable.

ALSO: For beginning players, the “Power Cards” can be removed from the deck until the flow of the game is familiar.

SETUP:

One player should be selected to be the Dealer. This office will be passed along from player to player as the game continues. (Some kind of marker can be used throughout the game to keep track of which player is the current dealer.)

The deck should be thoroughly shuffled, and 12 cards dealt to each player. Review these cards and choose nine to keep (usually high-value cards), returning the three rejected cards to the Dealer.

The Dealer then shuffles all the rejects together and places them face-down at the bottom of the deck and places the deck face-down in the center of the table. This deck of cards is called the “Common Deck.”

The nine cards you kept will be your “Input Deck” which will grow as the game progresses. Shuffle them, and place them face-down to your left. (See the diagram on the next page.)

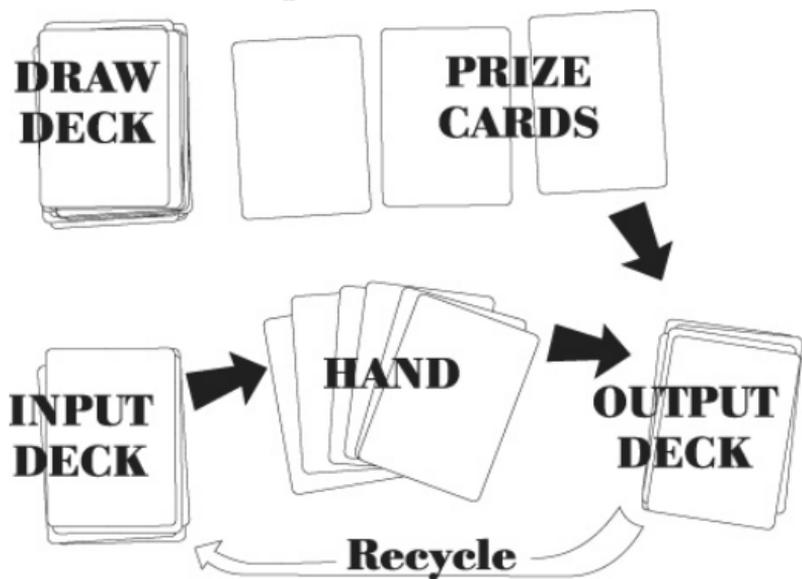
You will be discarding to your own “Output Deck” on your right, so leave some room on the table for that, as shown in the diagram.

PLAYING THE GAME

Now the game begins, played as a series of rounds, each with six steps as follow:

Step 1: All players draw a hand of SIX from their Input Deck. If, at the beginning of any round, there are not enough cards in your Input Deck to complete a given task, draw all the cards you can from your Input Deck, then shuffle your Output Deck and place it face-down on your left to start a fresh Input Deck. (This action is called “Recycle” in the diagram.) Now you can draw the rest of the cards you need from this refreshed Input Deck to carry on the game.

Step 2: The Dealer asks “Are there any Power Cards to play before the round



continues?” Some players may have drawn Power Cards that say “Play before any tricks are played.” The player to the left of the Dealer goes first, resolving all his or her Power Cards in whatever order desired. This process continues around the table leftward until all such Power Cards have been played out. (Not all Power Cards are played now!)

Step 3: The Dealer announces the “three-card trick.” The Dealer draws three cards from top of the Common Deck and places them face up on the table side-by-side. These are the “prize cards” for this trick that all players are attempting to win for their own use (or maybe to avoid winning if they’re not desirable card values).

Each player chooses any three cards from their hand to bid on this trick. (This may include Power Cards not already played.) Hold your bid cards face-down in front of you until all players have done likewise. The Dealer then calls for all cards to be revealed, and all players show their cards

simultaneously. The highest total bid wins the three prize cards.

(Cards with no “Voltage” have a value of ZERO when played as part of a trick. Some Power Cards will affect the outcome of the trick, so the winner should not be declared until these effects have been resolved.)

The three cards that you played in this trick go into your own Output Deck, regardless of whether you won or lost the trick. Then the prize cards go into the winner’s Output Deck.

Step 4: The “two-card trick.” The Dealer draws two prize cards from the Common Deck and places them face-up for all to see, and then each player chooses two cards to bid for the trick. Again, the Dealer calls for the reveal, and the highest total wins. Cards are put into the Output Decks as before.

Step 5: The “one-card trick” is played out in a similar fashion, with one prize card being drawn from the Common Deck, the last card in each player’s hand being revealed,

and the highest valued bid wins. All your cards go back into your Output Deck, and the winner gets the Prize Card, too.

IN CASE OF A TIE, if more than one player's cards reveal an equal value for a trick, these players draw a card from the top of the Common Deck and add the value of this card to their bid total to resolve the tie. (Draw in order leftward from the Dealer, who would draw last.) This may be done multiple times until a clear winner is determined.

These tie-breaker cards are also added to the players' own Output Decks when the trick is resolved, and the winner gets the prize cards as usual. If one of the drawn cards is a Power Card, the effect of the Power Card is ignored and the value is considered zero for the bid total.

Step 6 ends the round by passing the Dealer marker to the next player leftward.

As you win cards, the number of cards in your own Input and Output Decks will

grow. If you enjoy a bit of luck and play wisely, your collection will include cards to increase your final score.

There will be some circumstances when you have too few cards in your hand to play the round normally, and occasionally more than enough cards. Unless a Power Card allows it, you may NEVER play more cards than the Trick normally requires. You may choose to play fewer cards, however, on any trick you wish. In fact, there may be a case when you do not play any cards on a trick. In this case, your bid value is considered to be ZERO. (In some cases, you might win a trick with a bid value of zero!)

Watch for cards which will score Positive Voltage at the end of the game, and avoid cards which will score Negative Voltage. Also, as you win cards in any of the suits (New York, Colorado, Niagara, or Wardencllyffe), watch for the “Value for your Voltage” cards that will turn these into 5-Million Volts each at the end of the game.

Play low - or even negative - for tricks that contain undesirable cards, and play carefully when Power Cards are at stake, as these may appear in your hand over and over as the game goes on.

Continue to play these “Trick-Taking Rounds”, repeating the same steps:

1. Draw a hand of SIX from your own Input Deck
2. Play all pre-trick Power Cards
3. Play the “Three-Card Trick”
4. Play the “Two-Card Trick”
5. Play the “One-Card Trick”
6. Pass the Dealer Marker to the left

AND THE WINNER IS...

The game is over when the Common Deck runs out. This means that the number of prize cards in the final trick may be less than normal. That's OK, but still play your bidding cards as if there were the normal

number of Prize Cards at stake (one, two, or three, depending on which trick is being played).

Calculate the value of the cards in both of your Input and Output decks combined, adding the “Positive” cards and subtracting the “Negative” cards. If you have any “Value for your Voltage” Cards, add in 5 Million Volts for each suit card in the matching suits. **The player with the highest total voltage wins.**

“Value for your Voltage Cards” are cumulative, so if you have (for example) two “Value for your Voltage” cards for the Colorado suit, each Colorado card will have a value of 10 Million Volts instead of 5.

If there is a tie score at the end of the game, (which is rare, but possible) the player with the highest total voltage without scoring Voltage Cards wins.

Also note that if the final trick is a tie and there are not enough cards in the Common Deck to resolve a tie, the players should draw from their own Input Decks instead.

We have produced a detailed HOW-TO VIDEO on YouTube to show how the game is played.



Thanks to the Ionia Game Group and specifically to Ryan Ford for playtesting and suggestions. We invite anyone to send us comments and suggestions through our website.



NEW VENTURE

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Turn-Order Reference:

1. Draw a hand of SIX from your own Input Deck (shuffle and recycle your Output Deck if necessary)
2. Play all pre-trick Power Cards (in turn leftward from the Dealer)
3. Play the “Three-Card Trick”
4. Play the “Two-Card Trick”
5. Play the “One-Card Trick”
6. Pass the Dealer Marker to the left



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