

FUTHARK

Reveal the secrets of the runes

1-4 players 15 minutes

Thoughtful Dane © Frederik Jensen 2026

Components

16 rune cards
38 word cards

Setup

Shuffle the 16 rune cards and lay them out in a four by four grid. Eight cards face up: The four corners and the four in the centre. The other eight cards face down.

Shuffle the word cards and give four to each player. Place the remaining word cards in a face down draw pile within reach of all players.

Object of the game

Slide, swap and flip the rune cards so they form the words on your word cards. Play until one player draws the last card from the word pile, then count collected cards. The player with the most cards wins.

Collecting words

Runes form words left-to-right, right-to-left, up-down and down-up.

When you see a word on one of your word cards in the rune cards on the table, shout: "By Odin, I see it!" Show the word and your card to the other players. If they agree, collect the word card in your scoring

pile and draw a new word card so you at all times have four word cards in your hand.

The wildcard rune can be used instead of any other rune when forming words with three or four runes. Words with two runes cannot use the wildcard rune.

You can collect word cards in another player's turn.

When you form a word with four runes, collect all cards from your hand and place in your scoring pile then draw four new cards.

On your turn

Players take turns reordering the rune cards on the table using one of three moves:

Slide. Slide all rune cards in a row or column one up/down/left/right. The card that is pushed out enters in the empty space.

Flip. Turn one face down rune card face up and turn one face up rune card face down.

Swap. Swap the position of two rune cards that are next to each other.

A player may not reverse the move of the previous player.

Solo

Lay out the cards in a four by four grid as above.

Draw four words cards and place them face up next to the array of runes. Place the remaining word cards in a draw pile next to the array.

Alter the array using slide, swap and flip as above. Collect word cards and draw new word cards as above.

Each time you take a move where you do not collect a word card, discard one word card from the draw pile without looking at it.

The game ends when you must discard a word card and there is no cards left in the draw pile.

Count how many word cards you collected then see your rank:

12-15	Novice
16-19	Apprentice
20-23	Journeyman
24+	Legendary Rune Master