Elephante

Rulebook

Welcome to Elephante

Every family has one.

The aunt who smiles sweetly, waits for the perfect moment, then walks off with Grandpa's new slippers. The cousin guarding a scented candle like it's solid gold. The uncle who swears, every single year, that stealing it back is allowed.

White Elephant has always been a little bit of chaos. **Elephante** *(el-eh-FAHN-tay) puts a price on it. Now every gift has a price tag, every steal costs you, and Santa is watching who's naughty and who's nice.*

Bring a gift. Bring your best poker face. And whatever you do, don't get attached.

The gifts are wrapped. The rules are settled. Let the swapping begin.

What's a White Elephant gift exchange?

Everyone brings one wrapped gift. Players take turns opening gifts or stealing ones already opened. Nobody knows what they're taking home until the very end.

Goal: end the party holding the gift you want most.

6–20 Players **60–90 Min** **Ages 14+**

How It Works

How Elephante plays

Draw numbers to set the turn order. On your turn, do one thing: buy a wrapped gift, open one for everyone to bid on, steal one, or take a chance on a Naughty or Nice card. Win a second gift and you're a Greedy Gift Grubber: keep your favorite, then pick who gets stuck with the other. After the last player's turn, everyone holds exactly one gift, and the game is over.

Two ways to play

- **Auction** (main game): every gift has a price.
- **Traditional** (bonus game, page 13): the classic swap, with the house rules settled before the party.

Words to know

- **Auctioneer:** runs the bidding and settles ties (page 7).
- **Bank:** where the leftover Cookie Dough is kept, and where payments go.
- **Cookie Dough:** the play money. 1 bill = $1.
- **Turn Order card:** your number. #1 goes first.
- **Greedy Gift Grubber:** anyone holding two gifts (page 10).
- **Naughty or Nice:** cards that help or hurt you (page 11).
- **Merry Mayhem:** a silly dare, picked by number (back cover).

What's Inside



20 **Turn Order cards**
Numbered 1–20



12 **Naughty or Nice cards**
8 Nice, 4 Naughty



63 **Cookie Dough bills**
1 bill = $1



1 **Drawstring sack**
For drawing Turn Order cards



1 **Rulebook**
You're reading it

The tag on each card back shows its deck: **Turn Order** or **Naughty or Nice**.

You'll also need: one wrapped gift per player.

Plan the Party

Send the invite before the party, and everyone shows up knowing the game and the rules.

Date _____

Time _____

Place _____

Gift limit $ _____ *(0 = no limit)*

Auctioneer _____

Gag gifts: Yes No

Game: Auction Traditional

Traditional house rules *(defaults in bold)*

Steal limit:	2 **3** No limit
Steal-backs:	Yes **No**
#1 final swap:	**Yes** No
Open gifts:	**Right away** At the end
Shake gifts:	Yes **No**
Revenge steals:	Yes **No**

Circle your picks. Snap a photo. Send it.

Free fillable invite: type it in, save it, and email it. Download it at

elephantegame.com

Setup

Both games

1. **Wrap a gift.**
   Each player brings one wrapped gift. Pile them in the middle.
2. **Draw your number.**
   Sort the cards by the tag on the back. Take one Turn Order card per player, starting at 1 (12 players = cards 1–12). Shuffle them and put them in the sack. Each player draws one. #1 goes first.
3. **Pick your game.**
   Use the one circled on the invite. **Playing Traditional? You're done. Skip to page 13.**

Auctioneer not playing (Host only or First and done)? They don't draw a number or get money.

Auction only

4. **Deal $3 to each player.**
   The rest of the Cookie Dough is the bank. The Auctioneer keeps it.
5. **Shuffle the Naughty or Nice cards.**
   Place them face down as the draw deck, with room beside it for used cards.
6. **Confirm the Auctioneer**
   from the invite, and choose how they play (next page).



Gift pile



Turn Order sack



Draw deck



Used cards



Bank

AUCTION

The Auctioneer

The Auctioneer runs the show. They:

- **Call the bidding:** "Going once… going twice… SOLD!"
- **Settle ties.** A tie is two players yelling the same bid at the same time. The Auctioneer decides who was first.
- **Keep the bank.**

Choose how your Auctioneer plays

1. **Host only.**
   Runs the game but doesn't play, doesn't draw a number or get money, and doesn't bring a gift. Best for big groups.
2. **Plays, loses ties.**
   Plays normally. If the Auctioneer ties with another player, the other player wins.
3. **Plays, turn player judges.**
   Plays normally. If the Auctioneer is in a tie, the player whose turn it is decides who yelled first. On the Auctioneer's own turn, they lose the tie.
4. **First and done.**
   Takes a wrapped gift and opens it before anyone goes. No one can steal, trade, or move it. Doesn't draw a number or get money. Then runs the bidding for the rest of the game.

✦ **Quick Tip**

Pick a loud Auctioneer. A good "SOLD!" makes the game.

AUCTION

Your Turn

1 Pick one

#1 starts. Then #2, #3, and so on.



Buy blind ($1)

Take a wrapped gift.
No bidding. It's yours.



Open free

Open a gift.
The room bids.



Steal ($2)

Pay the owner. Take their gift.
Do their dare.



Naughty or Nice ($1)

Draw a card. Then
open a gift.

2 Holding two gifts?

Yes



Greedy Gift Grubber!

Keep one. Regift the other to any player without a gift.

No

3 Turn over. Next number goes.

Last turn done? Everyone holds one gift. Game over! (page 12)

Anything the rules don't cover? The Auctioneer decides.
Keep the party moving.

AUCTION

Bidding & Stealing

Option 1: Buy blind ($1)

Pay $1 to the bank and take a wrapped gift. Open it. No one bids on it.

Option 2: Open free

Open a wrapped gift for everyone to see. Then the bidding starts:

- Anyone can bid, including you. Yell it out: "$1!"
- First to yell an amount holds the bid. Anyone else must go higher.
- Minimum bid is $1. You can't bid more than you have.
- When the yelling stops: "Going once… going twice… SOLD!" The winner pays the bank and takes the gift.
- **No bids?** You keep it, free.

Option 3: Steal ($2)

On your turn, if you have $2, you can steal any opened gift, even one bought blind. Pay the owner $2 and take it. They pick a Merry Mayhem number (back cover), and you perform it. Then they buy a wrapped gift blind for $1 and open it. They just got $2, so they can always afford it.

Option 4: Naughty or Nice ($1)

Pay $1 to the bank and draw a card (page 11). Then open a gift for auction, just like Option 2. Cards can only be bought on your turn.

Where the money goes: everything goes to the bank, except steals. The player you rob keeps your $2.

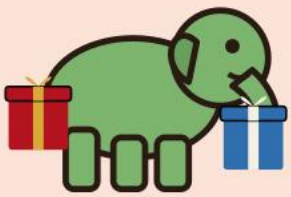
Out of money? You can always Open free. And if someone steals from you, you're $2 richer.

✦ **Quick Tip**

Why only $3? Every dollar should hurt, and nobody wants to miss dessert.

AUCTION

Greedy Gift Grubber



The moment anyone holds two gifts, they're a Greedy Gift Grubber. **Keep one. Regift the other to any player without a gift.** You choose who.

There's always someone without a gift.

- **It can happen anytime:** winning a bid, buying blind, stealing, or a card.
- **Protected gift?** You can still regift it yourself. Can't Be Stolen only stops other players.
- **Return to Sender** must be played right after the steal, before anyone buys a gift or regifts.

✦ **Quick Tip**

Holding a gift is power. Win a second one and you decide who gets your leftovers. Be greedy. It pays.

✦ **Quick Tip**

Make some noise. Chant "Greedy Gift Grubber!" until the Grubber gives a gift away. The longer they stall, the louder it gets.

AUCTION

Naughty or Nice

- **Draw:** on your turn, choose Option 4. Pay $1 to the bank, draw the top card, then open a gift for auction, unless the card says otherwise.
- **Every card says when to play it:** Play Now, Play Anytime, or When a Gift Opens.
- **Saving a card?** Your turn isn't over. Open a gift for auction.
- **Can't use a Play Now card?** Discard it.
- **Card canceled?** It doesn't happen. Play goes on as if it was never played.
- **Used cards** go face up beside the deck. **Deck empty?** No more cards. Option 4 is closed.

Play Now: do it right away

Trade	Swap gifts with any player. No refusing.
Discount Steal	Instead of opening, steal any gift for $1. It works like a steal.
Blind Luck	Open a gift. No one can bid. It's yours.
Lose It	Pay $1 to the bank.
Secret Santa	Give $1 to any player.
Elephant Walk	Everyone passes their gift to the left.
Spotlight	The player on your left picks your Merry Mayhem. Do it now.

Play Anytime: keep it secret, use it whenever

Santa's Bonus	Worth $2. Spend it like cash. Spend $1? The bank gives $1 change, if it has it.
Can't Be Stolen	Your gift can't be taken by anyone, any way.
Return to Sender	Cancel a steal on you. The thief keeps their money and opens a gift for auction instead.
Ho Ho No!	Cancel any card just played.

When a Gift Opens: before bidding starts

Freeze Out	One player can't bid on this gift.

Green = Nice. Red = Naughty. **Keep your cards secret.**

Example & Game End

Five players: **Joe** (#1), **Aunt Libby** (#2), **Sam** (#3), **Mia** (#4), and **Ray** (#5). Everyone starts with $3.

1. **Joe opens free.**
   A waffle maker! Aunt Libby yells "$1!" Sam yells "$2!" SOLD to Sam. Joe has no gift yet, and that's fine.
2. **Aunt Libby steals the waffle maker.**
   She pays Sam $2. Sam picks Merry Mayhem #3, and Aunt Libby does a reindeer dance. Sam buys a wrapped gift blind for $1: fuzzy socks.
3. **Sam buys blind for $1.**
   A candle. Now Sam holds two gifts. Greedy Gift Grubber! Sam keeps the candle and regifts the socks to Joe.
4. **Mia draws a card for $1.**
   Freeze Out. She opens a lava lamp and plays Freeze Out on Aunt Libby. Ray bids $1. SOLD to Ray.
5. **Ray opens free.**
   A singing fish. Nobody bids, so Ray keeps it. Two gifts! Ray keeps the lava lamp and regifts the fish to Mia.

Game over. One gift each: Joe: fuzzy socks · Aunt Libby: waffle maker · Sam: candle · Mia: singing fish · Ray: lava lamp

Game End

After the last player's turn, and any Greedy Gift Grubber regift, the game is over.

- **Everyone holds exactly one gift.** That's what you take home.
- **Money and cards don't count.** Leftover Cookie Dough and unused Naughty or Nice cards are worth nothing. Spend them while you can!
- **Who wins?** No score to keep. If you love what you're holding, you won. If not, start plotting to be next year's Greedy Gift Grubber.

Merry Christmas!

BONUS GAME

Traditional

1. **#1 opens a gift**
   and shows everyone.
2. **Each next player**
   either **opens** a wrapped gift or **steals** an opened gift that isn't frozen.
3. **Robbed?**
   Open a wrapped gift or steal a different gift. You can't steal back the gift just taken from you.
4. **The turn ends**
   when someone opens a wrapped gift. Then the next number goes.
5. **Frozen:**
   after a gift is stolen 3 times, it stays put. Track steals however you like.

These are the defaults: the rules most groups play by. *The host can change them on the invite (page 5).*

Anything the rules don't cover? **The host decides.**

✦ **Quick Tip**

The best gifts get stolen early. Wait for your moment.





Frozen!

Ending & House Rules

Ending

After the last player's turn:

- **#1 final swap** (house rule, on by default): #1 had nothing to steal on their first turn, so they get one last chance. #1 may swap with any gift that isn't frozen.
- Everyone holds one gift. That's what you take home.
- Then the game is over.

House rules

Circle them on the invite. Defaults are in **bold**.

Rule	Choices
Steal limit	2 · **3** · No limit
Steal-backs	Yes · **No**
#1 final swap	**Yes** · No. Turn it off for a faster finish.
Open gifts	**Right away** · At the end
Shake gifts	Yes · **No**
Revenge steals	Yes · **No**. If yes, the player robbed picks a Merry Mayhem (back cover) and the thief does it.

Settle It Fast

Can I bid on the gift I opened?
Yes.

Two people yelled the same bid at once?
The Auctioneer decides who was first.

I'm out of money. Am I out?
No. You can always Open free. And if someone steals from you, you get $2.

Can a gift bought blind be stolen?
Yes. Any opened gift can be stolen for $2.

Can I steal back a gift that was just taken from me?
In Auction, yes, on your turn, for $2. In Traditional, no (unless your house rules say yes).

Can I steal the Auctioneer's gift (First and done)?
No. It can't be stolen, traded, or moved.

Can't Be Stolen during an Elephant Walk?
That player is skipped. Their gift stays put, and the gift heading their way goes to the next player.

Drew Trade but have no gift to swap?
You can't swap nothing. Discard it, then open a gift for auction.

Can the same Merry Mayhem be picked twice?
Sure. Numbers can repeat.

Traditional: can #1 swap for a frozen gift?
No. Frozen gifts stay put.

Merry Mayhem

Pick a dare. They do it. **Numbers can repeat.**

Who picks: the player you robbed, or the player on your left if you drew Spotlight.

1. **Walk like an elephant around the gift pile.**
2. **Sing Jingle Bells: "Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way! Oh, what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh!"**
3. **Reindeer dance for 10 seconds.**
4. **Thank the giver in an elf voice.**
5. **Tell a Christmas joke.**
6. **Try to name Santa's reindeer in 10 seconds.**
7. **Do a standing snow angel.**
8. **In your best Santa voice: "Ho ho ho! You've been naughty, so this one's mine!"**
9. **Compliment the gift giver.**
10. **Model your gift (or an imaginary one) like it's on a fashion runway.**
11. **Shout "Bah humbug!" and stomp back to your seat like Scrooge.**
12. **Tiptoe like an elf around the room.**

Merry Christmas! Wrapped with love. Swapped with chaos.