



OVERVIEW

Zombies Want Fluffy™ is an exciting two-player head-to-head board game where Gothic horror meets Fluffy, the adorable family dog. Fluffy has had a lot to drink and is looking to “visit” a tree on his way home late one night. And he’s found his mark -- a beautiful, secluded tree right there in the back corner of the cemetery. Unbeknownst to poor Fluffy, the cemetery is filled with man-eating, er..., dog-eating zombies who just woke up for a midnight snack. Fluffy is gonna be that snack if the shambling menaces having anything to say about it. Each game takes 20 to 60 minutes to play (a wide spread depending on the players’ collective tendency toward “analysis paralysis”).

GOAL

Navigate Fluffy through the graveyard, visit the map square with the tree on it, and then hustle Fluffy out of the graveyard at high speed before he becomes *Zombie Chow!*

SETUP

Construct the game per the separate game construction rules supplied. Then choose one player to play Fluffy and one player to play the zombies. If you cannot decide on a method, the most cheerful player plays Fluffy and the most sadistic player plays the zombies. If one player is cheerfully sadistic, hand him a bowl of snack food and run for your life.

At the start of the game separate out the four zombie cards (George, Romero, Campbell, and Raimi) from the other cards. Shuffle the rest of the cards and deal five cards face down to each player. Then cut the remainder of the deck into five piles of approximately equal height. Shuffle the four zombies face down and then put a zombie face down on top of each of the piles but the first. Then put the fourth pile on top of the fifth, the third on top of the fourth, the second on top of the third, and the first on top of the second.

Now, take the Fluffy the dog character and put it on the map just inside the graveyard, on the lower rightmost square (the pink rose) with his nose pointing to the top of the map (north). Set the zombie figures aside for

now. You are ready to play.

DRAWING AND DISCARDING CARDS

Both players start the game with 5 cards in hand, and neither player can have more than 5 cards in his hand at any one time. At the start of each of Fluffy's turns he *may* discard one card, and then he draws as many cards (0 to 5) as are required to bring his hand size up to 5.

The zombie player does not do this, but instead collects new cards in a different fashion. Every time the Fluffy player plays (not discards) a card other than one of the four cards that pictures a zombie on its face, the zombie player has a right to take that card and put it face up on the table as part of his hand if he has less than 5 cards currently (counting both face up and face down cards). The zombie player has all the way up until the very next movement card is played (or the end of Fluffy's turn, whichever comes first) to decide to snag the card. The zombie player does not get cards that the Fluffy player discards. Whenever the zombie player plays or discards a card, that card is put face up into a discard pile as do any cards which Fluffy plays which the zombie player doesn't claim as his own.

Fluffy keeps his hand to himself (face down) at all times, but all cards in the zombie player's hand are face up at all times for both players to see except the 5 cards that were dealt to the zombie player at the start of the game, which remain face down until they are used.

RUNNING OUT OF CARDS

When the draw pile runs out of cards do not reshuffle them. The game continues until the end of any turn in which Fluffy has no cards in his hand. At that point, the game ends in one of two ways.

- 1) **Bladder Explosion:** If Fluffy has not tagged the tree this game then he just can't take the pressure any more and he keels over exhausted, stops running a moment too long, and becomes Zombie Chow, losing the game in a grisly fashion.
- 2) **Dawn's Early Light:** If Fluffy has tagged the tree then the game ends in a victory for the Fluff-meister. The sun rises in the east, and the zombies retreat back to their graves.

MOVING WITH MOVEMENT CARDS

The small deck of business card-sized cards that are included in this game are movement cards. Players take turns. During each one of his turns he may end up playing several movement cards before his opponent gets his next turn. Fluffy must play one to five of the movement cards in his hand before he declares the end of his turn,

and the zombie player may play from zero to three of his movement cards during the zombies' turn. The zombies' turn is skipped whenever there are no zombies on the board -- Fluffy's player merely takes a sequence of consecutive turns.

Movement cards only move characters on your team (Fluffy's cards do not move zombies, and vice versa). There are four basic movements: forward, left, right, and backward, as well as other types of movement cards which give you choices between two of the preceding types of movement (such as "Move Left or Right"). When you play a card to move your character, rotate the character in the appropriate direction *relative to the character's current facing, not the player's facing*.

Fluffy's Facing = the direction of his nose

Zombie's Facing = the direction of his outstretched arms

Move Forward = move the character one space forward (i.e., in the direction of his current facing)

Move Left = rotate the character 90 degrees left from his current facing, then execute a Move Forward for him

Move Right = rotate the character 90 degrees right from his current facing, then execute a Move Forward for him

Move Backwards = rotate the character 180 degrees from his current facing, then execute a Move Forward for him

Movement is always orthogonal (up, down, left, or right) and never diagonal. For example, if you play a Move Right and Fluffy's nose is facing the right hand edge of the map, he'll rotate 90 degrees to face the bottom of the map.

ZOMBIE MOVEMENT

Each time the zombie player plays a card that allows him to move, the card *must* be applied to all zombies. If a card allows a player to choose between two forms of movement (forward or backward, for example), then the zombie player may make a separate choice for each zombie he applies the card to. The zombie player also chooses the order in which each zombie moves (they don't move simultaneously), but every zombie carries out each movement card's effects before the next one is played. Two zombies can never share the same space.

BOUNCING

Your character can always rotate, but whenever he attempts to move to a new space the following special board features stop your character from moving to his new space. All these features make Fluffy, the zombies, or both

Bounce (see “Bouncing” below).

- 1) **Walls:** these prevent a character from Moving Forward through the wall.
- 2) **Gate:** The gate is at the bottom of Fluffy’s start space, treat this as a wall for zombies. Fluffy also treats the Gate as a wall unless he has visited the tree this game; once he has visited the tree, Fluffy ignores the Gate and can pass in a southward direction through it to win the game.
- 3) **Bugs:** any attempt to pass north or south over a bug treats the bug like an east-to-west wall running along the bug’s edge of the board space in question.
- 4) **Zombies:** If a zombie is in a given space, no other zombie may enter that space. Any zombie attempting to enter the space of another zombie Bounces off the non-moving zombie.

Characters trying to move in an illegal direction through certain obstacles end up “Bouncing” off them. When a character Bounces, he does not continue moving in the direction he is facing. The player owning the character *must* rotate the playing piece either left or right in 90 degree increments (his choice as to which in all cases). The character is rotated until it is pointed in a direction where he won’t Bounce if he were to assigned a “Move Forward”. This rotation must stop as soon as the player points his character in a direction where he won’t Bounce on a “Move Forward”, and the rotation is ignored altogether in the astronomically rare instance where a character has no legal non-Bouncing direction he can face.

So, for example, if a zombie bounces off the bottom center of the map by hitting a gate, then the zombie can be pointed to face the left or right edge of the map, but can’t be rotated 180 degrees around to face the top of the map, since a legal direction is found first to the left or the right. As another example, if a zombie is heading toward the bottom of the map along the left-hand edge of the map, then the zombie can “Bounce” to face either the right edge of the map or the top of the map; here the zombie can do a 180 degree turn (to his right) or a 90 degree turn (to his left) at that time, because those are the first non-Bouncing facings. Always handle any Bounce immediately before moving the next character.

MAGICAL PINK FLOWER

On Fluffy’s starting space there is a beautiful pink flower. The flower was planted in memory of a lost loved one, and it radiates magic of both life and love. The zombies cannot tolerate the flower, and if any zombie enters that space for any reason, at the end of the zombie player’s turn (after all movement and after attempting to capture Fluffy), the offending zombie is destroyed and removed from the board for the rest of the game. The pink flower space does *not* cause zombies to Bounce or otherwise hinder zombie movement. Note that tiny yellow flowers and dirt patches on the map are for decoration only and do not affect movement.

ZOMBIE CARDS

There are four zombie cards (George, Romero, Campbell, and Raimi) in the draw pile of movement cards. Whenever Fluffy Draws one he immediately shows it to the zombie player, removes the card from the game (don't put it in the discard pile or give it to the zombie player), and draws a replacement movement card. The zombie player then puts one zombie figure on the board at the site of the named grave provided that there is not a zombie on that space already. If there is a zombie on the space already, set the card aside temporarily instead of removing it from play, and put a zombie on that space as soon as possible, but only at the start of one of Fluffy's turns and only if there is no other zombie on the space. The zombie comes into play facing the bottom of the map (south). If Fluffy is on the space the zombie just showed up at, then Fluffy loses the game if Fluffy can't leave that space by the end of his own turn.

SPRINTING

Once one or more zombies are on the board, Fluffy can start Sprinting. If, at the end of his turn, Fluffy has played all the cards in his hand, Fluffy *may* move one additional space forward (in the direction he is currently facing), just as if he'd just played a "Move Forward" card.

SHAMBLING

At the start of the zombie player's turn, all zombies on the board Shamble. Here's how "Shambling" works. First, if Fluffy is on the same left-to-right row as a zombie, rotate the zombie's facing until he is facing Fluffy. Next if a zombie is in the same top-to-bottom column as Fluffy with *no bug in between*, then rotate the zombie's facing until he is facing Fluffy. Now, whatever direction zombies are facing, all zombies attempt to move one space forward, as if the zombie player had just played a "Move Forward" card and applied it to all of his characters. Shambling is not optional, but the zombie player may choose which order to Shamble his zombies forward.

CAPTURING FLUFFY

During Fluffy's turn Fluffy may temporarily enter a space with a zombie on it (running between the zombie's legs), however Fluffy is captured by the zombie (and *eaten!*) if he ends his turn on a zombie. If a zombie ends its turn or any individual move during the zombies' turn on a space with a Fluffy then Fluffy loses the game.

WINNING THE GAME

Fluffy can leave the map, by exiting through the gate due south of his starting space and landing on the partial space south of the gate, but only after he has visited the tree. Leaving the map in this fashion by landing on that partial space is ideally how Fluffy wins the game (the other method being to run out of cards and see "Dawn's Early Light"). If Fluffy has entered the tree space at any point during the game and then subsequently

leaves the graveyard before he becomes Zombie Chow, then Fluffy wins and runs home to safety. The zombie player wins instantly any time he captures Fluffy.

MATCH PLAY

Ideally, play *Zombies Want Fluffy* in pairs of games, swapping sides each time. To help break ties, match play uses a special scoring system for each game played. Only Fluffy scores points, and Fluffy gets points as follows:

- 1 point if Fluffy successfully tags the tree (once per game)
- 1 point for every zombie on the board (or destroyed by the pink flower) at the end of the game
- 1 point for Fluffy winning the game by seeing the “Dawn’s Early Light”
- 3 points for Fluffy winning the game the old fashioned way, by escaping the cemetery

So, if Fluffy tags the tree and then escapes the cemetery while two zombies are on the board, and after one has been removed from play by the pink flower, then Fluffy’s player earns 7 points. Note that in match play, Fluffy can even score points as noted above even if he loses that game.

NOTES ON GAME PLAY

Zombies Want Fluffy is fairly unique in that Fluffy is playing an almost completely turn-to-turn tactical game, while the zombies are playing a long-term strategic game. The first part of the game gives the dog enough unanswered moves that he *might* be able to get 50% of the way across the board (and he may even tag the tree) before the zombies start showing up. Opening game play has very different outcomes if Fluffy refills his hand after playing each card, as compared to him playing out his entire hand before refilling it. Players may want to agree upon a maximum amount of time the Fluffy player gets to play out his opening zombie-free set of moves. Quickly thereafter, the zombie player will start getting zombies at a fairly regular rate which will put a lot of pressure on Fluffy to make no mistakes for the rest of the game. Any player whose concentration slips for an instant will have trouble winning with Fluffy. Any player with poor spatial relations skills will not fare well playing the zombies.

DESIGNER’S NOTES

To handicap the Fluffy player, have the zombie player keep all cards in his hand face down at all times, or make Fluffy play with his hand face up, or both. You can also alter the size of Fluffy’s hand if Fluffy loses too often for your tastes. In the designer’s experience, the game is balanced *if* the player controlling Fluffy plays an error free game, however that’s substantially more difficult than it may look at first glance, so try it out a few times before tinkering with the play balance.

Fluffy can also be handicapped by allowing the zombie to apply each of his movement cards to any or all (but at least one) of his zombies, so that the card doesn't have to be applied to all zombies.

I am a fan of Richard Garfield's game *Robo Rally*TM. *Zombies Want Fluffy*TM is inspired by Garfield's work, but the former is a race game, and this is more of a chase game. *Zombies Want Fluffy* also introduces a couple of new challenging skills: players each share some or all of the cards used to make moves, Fluffy has greater information and the zombies have strength in numbers, and the zombie player has to learn how to plan for the movements of multiple characters simultaneously with the same cards. The bouncing mechanic is arguably an improvement over *Robo Rally* because players can't get their characters stuck randomly in the corner somewhere for extended periods of time. The sprinting and shambling mechanics also add some additional strategic elements that players must try to plan for if they want to master *Zombies Want Fluffy*. I hope you enjoy the game.

LEGAL AND CREDITS

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