

Queer Coding

*A game of communication
by Talen Lee*

credits

Game, Rulebook, Art: Talen Lee

Resources: This game was made with *GIMP*, FoxitPDF reader, Scribus, and the Snacker Comic and Pacifico fonts, and this manual was made in Word

special Thanks

To Æryn, for helping me crack the difficulty

To Dani, Caelyn, Cass and all the other queer folk in my life who reminded me that sometimes it's important to not be subtle about your values



We all sort out what it means to us, individually. We're all uncertain about how we're seen, about how we perceive or understand ourselves.

And so we sit, and we talk, and we care about things with one another. We use videogames and movies and albums and all sorts of things to express ourselves, and come to grips with who we are.

Some of us even use games.

Access

Queer Coding is a game of communication. Players need to be able to see the backs of one another's cards, while you can't see the back of your own. This means players might need to hold their cards up, and out, for a protracted length of time, and communicate with one another meaningfully. This may be hard if anyone has a hearing difficulty or needs to sign or signal. Since it's a game about communicating, you need to be kind, all the time. Bear these things in mind when you ask someone to play. Since this game could be used as an introduction or starter at a convention or in a new environment, you need to bear in mind how you talk to people who you may not know well.

Shorter version: don't be a jerk. Don't ever be a jerk.

And always: **Remember to respect the players and their needs.**

Components

In your copy of Queer Coding, you should have the following:

- 25 Playing cards, 5 each of groups A, B, C, D and E, with the letters Q, U, E, E, and R on their backs, numbered 1-5
- 2 Face cards, with a message on them, to make the game look nice on a shelf

How To Play

Setup

Work out how many players you have, then give each player a set of five cards of the same group – an A group, B group, C group and so on. Everyone needs to have five cards, each of which has the Q, U, E, E and R cards. Players shuffle their cards, with the letters facing outwards, and then lift them up so they can't see the card backs.

Each player introduces themselves, and then, the game begins, starting with the oldest player (or whatever, you can start with whoever, it's fine).

As long as you're playing the game, you can't tell one player exactly what order the letters in their hand are. This is the core challenge of the game: Helping everyone work themselves out, bit by bit.

Play

The first player looks at all the cards of the players around them, and then gives an instruction each other player can follow about how to rearrange a single card. They do, then each other player follows that instruction.

Queer Coding is a game that really is about *communicating*. So if you can communicate an instruction for moving a card that includes some players but excludes others, that's permissible.

Players can only give instructions in a non-specific way: They can't say 'You, move this card here.' They can however say, 'each player who

Players can also ask spend their turn pointing at one of their cards on *either* end of their hand and ask *is this in the right spot?* The other players can then confirm or deny it – but only confirm or deny. If you confirm a card is in the right place, that player can put it down on the table in front of them, with

its letter side showing. They get to treat the cards in their hand as if they're 'between' those letters.

When everyone has the word QUEER spelled out on the back of their cards, then, everyone wins the game. You can spend your turn telling the other players that *they're* ready to win, and if two players do that – when all the cards are ready – you can all win the game.

Making it easier:

Truths mode

If you want to use this game as a way to get to know some folks, you can instead play the game so that at the start of your turn, you tell people something about yourself.

Important Note, this is *not* about making anyone feel uncomfortable, or getting anyone to confess awkward secrets. It's about telling people simple things that can help them play the game and make you more aware of one another.

In Truths mode, you can *only* give instructions based on things the table have been told – such as, for example, you could tell everyone with 'he' pronouns to move the card in the middle of their hand to the side of their writing hand.

Locks

A player can choose to give up their turn to tell another player, individually, any cards they're holding that are in the right spot, and 'lock' them. The player can set those cards down, on the table, face-up, in the correct order, so they can slot their remaining cards in the missing spaces. This makes the game more approachable and faster.

Winning

Queer Coding is a cooperative game. Players all win at the same time, together, if everyone has set down in front of them the letters of the word QUEER.

But The Es

Yep! The Es are numbered, so if you want to play it 'hard mode' you can make sure people have to get the Es in the right order. This is not necessary, but we put the numbers there *just for the people who want the extra challenge*.

Thank You!

This is only a little game, and maybe it only gives you a little fun. But you've given me your attention and you've given me your time. So, thank you.

- Talen Lee

