

Cosmic Critters

A Family Card Game with Blind Bidding & Pattern Matching
2-6 players, 30 minutes

Matt Worden, January 2013
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Overview

Become the best salesperson at the Cosmic Critters Pets Emporium, offering out-of-this-world pets. Score the most points by offering the best match for what each customer is looking for.

Components

The game comes with 72 cards:

- 36 Critters
- 24 Customers
- 12 Player Offers

Setup

Give each player 2 Player Offers of the same color. Any Player Offers not assigned to a player can go back in the box – they will not be used in the game.

Separate the Critters and Customers into their own decks. Shuffle the Critters, deal 4 to each player and set the remaining deck to one side of the playing area. Players should keep their hands of Critters secret from the other players.

Shuffle the Customers and set the deck down on the opposite side of the playing area from the Critters. Flip the top 3 Customers face up and put them in the middle of the playing area with room around each card to place Offers.

Pick a player to take the first turn. (Suggestion: the person that most recently got a new pet goes first.)

Taking a Turn

On your turn, you do the following things, in order:

1. Close a Sale or two
2. Make an Offer or two
3. Draw a new Critter or two
4. Pass Play to the Left

Close a Sale or Two ...

If you already have two Offers on Customers, you must close at least one sale. You may close both sales, in whatever order you choose, if you wish. If you only have one Offer out on the table, you may choose to close that sale or leave it on the table.

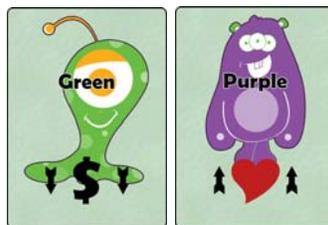
To close a sale, choose a Customer that has one of your Offers on it and reveal all Offers on that Customer. (Each player gets his/her Offer card back.)

The player that most closely matches the Customer's wants wins the sale. The winner collects all of the Critters that had been offered. Players should keep all of their collected Critters in a face up pile in front of them until scores are counted at the end of the game.

Matching a Customer's wants is done in this priority order:

1. Match both the species and color
2. Match just the species
3. Match just the color
4. Wrong species and color

If there is more than one player that has the highest priority match, then either cost or likeability is compared based on what the customer is looking for.



In the picture above, the Customer on the left is looking for the least expensive Critter. The Offer that had the highest priority match and the lowest cost wins the sale.

The Customer on the right is looking for the most likeable Critter. The Offer that had the highest priority match and the highest likeability ("heart") rating wins the sale.

If there is a tie between the best Offers ... the current player wins the sale, even if that player's Offer was not one of the best.

After the sale is closed, the Customer is returned to the bottom of the Customer deck and a new Customer drawn from the top of the deck and placed in the middle of the play area.

Make an Offer or Two ...

To make an Offer, you place 1 Critter from your hand face down next to a Customer and then place 1 of your Offer cards on top of it.

You must make at least 1 Offer on your turn. You may choose to make a second Offer if you have your other Offer card available.

Draw a New Critter or Two ...

Draw 1 new Critter from the top of the Critter deck into your hand. If you made a second Offer during your turn, draw a second new Critter into your hand.

Once the Critter deck runs out, players do not gain any new Critters and must play with the Critters left in their hands.

Pass Play to the Left ...

When you are done drawing new Critters, the player to your left takes the next turn. This continues around the table until the end of the game.

The End of the Game

The game ends when it becomes a player's turn and that player does not have any more Critters left in his/her hand.

Close all remaining sales immediately.

Players total up the cost value of all Critters they collected. The player with the highest total wins the game.

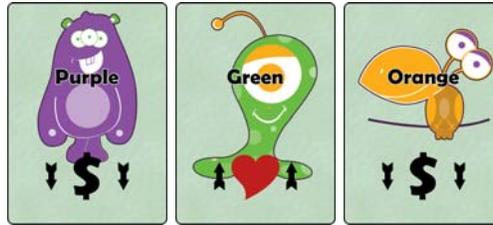
Acknowledgements

Thanks to Dan Higgins for the cute Critter illustrations used in this prototype.

Thanks to Britt, Anna and Seth, for everything in life ... and for playtesting the early versions of this game.

Play Example

The following Customers are showing ...



Our player decides to just put an offer on the leftmost Customer. When it gets back to being our player's turn, there are 3 Offers on that Critter when he chooses to close that sale.

The following Critters are offered, with our player's Offer on the left.



Since none of the Critters match the species and color exactly that our Customer is looking for, the next best thing is having the correct species in a different color ... that leaves the 2 leftmost Offers as the best options. Since the Customer's final criteria is the least expensive, our player's Offer at only \$1 wins the sale.

Therefore, our player collects all 3 Critters and will score 4 points from them at the end of the game.