



Free Game # 26 from Invisible City Productions, Inc.

**A number-stacking game for two players.**  
**by Sharon J. Cichelli**

**Object:**

To use all of your corals in building a reef.

**You Need:**

- Two decks of poker cards, ideally with identical backs.
- Alternately, you could use a bag of number tiles, like the ones available in the children's section of Wal-Mart or a teachers' supply store.

**Setting Up:**

Take four nines from the deck and lay them out face-up as seeds for four stacks.

Shuffle the deck and deal eight cards to each player. Place the remaining cards in the middle of the table as a deck to draw from.

**Play:**

Your cards or tiles are your corals. Take turns placing corals from your hand onto the stacks in the middle, according to the following rules:

- Place any number of corals on top of one stack such that the sum of the corals you place equals the number that had been on the top coral at the beginning of your turn. Your corals can be placed in any order.
- Aces count as ones. Tens count as zeroes when they are placed and as tens when they are the top coral. When you place a ten, you must place it

last, as the top coral. [If you are using number tiles instead of cards, use the zero tiles as tens.]

- Jacks count as -1. Queens count as -2. Kings count as -3. When you place a face card, it may not be the top coral. [If you are using tiles, you can ignore this rule and play with only positive numbers.]
- When you have no valid moves, draw one coral from the deck. If the new coral enables you to play, do so, on the same turn. If the new coral does not create a new opportunity, your turn is over.
- Nines can be placed on the table as a seed for a new reef or used normally.

## Winning:

The first one out of corals wins.

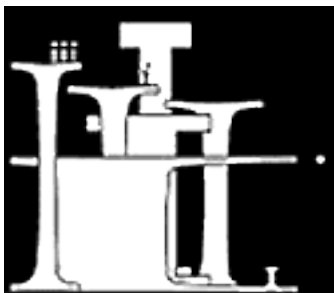
## Variants:

Games are quick, so you can agree on a target score and play until you've won that many rounds.

## Origin and Credits:

First, I'd like to divert any arguments at the outset: I looked it up in my *Oxford English Dictionary*, and the organisms that make up a coral reef are called corals, themselves.

That said, the only real credit is that, if you live with one long enough, you become one. So my thanks to Jon for getting me interested in game design. Jon wrote up these rules from my notes (and made the spiffy banner, eh?), and I am quite grateful to him for that. Also for buying those silly number tiles at Wal-Mart.



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