

Fire Tower Rules Summary (with 9 quick guides) (v5)

[adds firehawks, updated Shadow of Woods & Ghost Tower]

Setup guide [no events] (2-4 players):

1. Game board in center of the table, weather vane next to it.
2. Assign a corner tower to each player (sit near it).
 - o Place a 3x3 tree grid over unassigned towers.
3. Put **fire gems**, **purple firebreaker tokens**, **firehawks*** nearby.
4. Each player gets a **blue** bucket card [**blue side up**].
5. Remove Firestorm & MutualAid cards & shuffle cards.
 - o Deal 6 cards to each player (5 if purely core game).
 - This is the initial hand limit.
 - Hand limits increase by +1 as towers burn down.
 - Keep them privately in your own hand.
 - Option: add the Firestorm and MutualAid cards.
 - o Place the remaining deck face down near the game board.
6. Roll the die. Set the wind direction. Player closest to wind direction shown on edge of the board is 1st (if 2 are close, player who is counterclockwise of the wind direction is 1st).
7. **Option:** Each player places one **firehawk** in their quadrant.
8. **Goal:** Players try to burn down their opponent's fire towers.
 - o **Shadow of the Wood** & **Ghost Tower** give a 2nd chance.

Game Play guide (clockwise; begin with the First Player):

1. Begin your turn by placing **1 fire gem** in the wind direction.
 - o Anywhere orthogonally adjacent to a **gem** on the wind side.
2. Do one of two actions:
 - o Discard as many cards from your hand as you wish, then draw cards back up to your hand limit - **OR:**
 - o Play **1** card from your hand & take its action [discard card].
 - Draw a card back to the hand limit.
 - If it is **Firestorm**, perform its actions, draw a new card.
 - o Did you burn down a tower (**gem** in corner)? **YES?** Clear **gems** from the tower area and place the 3x3 **tower ablaze tile** there, do a **partial firestorm**, **then...**
 - Check **Shadow** / **Ghost win** condition.
 - Game not over? Increase hand limit by **1** (for all players).
 - Take cards from the burned player (discard to hand limit)
 - They become a **shadow**** or **ghost*****.

Red Card guide [adding fire]

- Place **Fire gems** adjacent to a **gem** anywhere on the board.
 - o Ignore wind direction when placing gems for a **red card**.
- Placing a **gem** in a tower corner square burns a tower down.
 - o **This really is your objective :)**
- **Fire** cannot jump over a **purple firebreak token**.
 - o **Except:** part of an **explosion** or **fire snag** can end up on the other side of diagonal **purple firebreak tokens**.

Blue Card guide [water to remove fire]

- Can remove **gems** from anywhere **EXCEPT** your tower area.
 - o Only your **bucket** can remove **gems** from your 3x3 tower area and it can only be used **one time** (then flip it).

Purple Card guide [firebreaks to protect you]

- **Purple tokens** are **limited**. If they run out, you take one off the board to use (likely from your opponent's quadrant).
- You **cannot** place a **purple firebreak token** orthogonally adjacent to another (placing them diagonally is fine).

Gray Card guide [wind applies at start of turns]

- Wind direction does not change until after your turn ends.
- Wind direction must be towards an active tower or is invalid.
- A **gray wind card** allows you to do **one** of three things:
 - ☐ Set the wind direction as indicated on the card.
 - ☐ Roll the die to get a **new** wind direction.
 - If the die roll is the same as the current direction **reroll**.
 - ☐ Place **1 fire gem** on that side of another **gem**.

*Firehawk guide [optional: add firehawk cards to deck]

- Place new **firehawks** in your quadrant via **firehawk cards**.
- When a **gem** is placed on their square they move it elsewhere.
 - o Its owner places the **gem**, then the **firehawk** is removed.
 - o **All** players then may rearrange **firehawks** in their quadrant.
 - o Owners **keep control** of **firehawks** after tower is burned.

Bucket card guide [blue bucket & red reckless abandon]

- Use once if **fire** is in your tower area (1 time free action).
- Remove up to 3 **gems** in a line (1 must be in tower area).
 - o Flip over the card to **red side** (**reckless abandon**).
 - Now **reckless abandon** is available (for your future turns).
 - Discard **3 blue cards** **or** **3 purple cards**, **then...**
 - Place **2 fire gems** anywhere, each adjacent to a **gem**.
 - Draw back up to the hand limit.

Firestorm guide [partial is just 1-2 after a tower burns]

1. Roll wind die; place a **gem** adjacent on wind side to **all gems** on the board (including **eternal flame** in center).
2. Roll wind die again to set wind direction for gameplay.
3. Players discard cards as they wish, then draw cards to limit.

**Shadow of the Wood guide [no tower, but still can win]

- o Continue playing with no tower, no cards and do **not** place a **gem** at the start of your turn but still control your firehawks. On your turn roll the **blue shadow die** and take actions indicated by the roll (per **Shadow of the Wood** card).
 - To **win** in a 3 player game: you must burn down **both** other towers on your same turn. When you burn down one of them, you get a **bonus die roll** after you finish all actions from your initial die roll.
 - To **win** in a 4 player game: when the 2nd tower is burned down, it becomes a 2nd **shadow** and joins forces (as the **shadow team**). Together they must burn down both other towers on their sequential turns to **win**.

***Ghost Tower guide [3 players: no tower? use the other]

- o When your tower burns down, you take control of the 4th tower (that was unoccupied during the game thus far) and play normally (without a bucket). Your cards are gone, so...
 - Increase the hand limit to **7** (other players draw to **7** too).
 - and then draw new cards to the new hand limit of **7**.
- o Remove any **fire gems** in the 3x3 4th tower area and place the **ghost tower tile** there.
- o The other two active players can **win** by burning **one** tower:
 - Either the **Ghost Tower** or the other opponent's tower.
- o **Ghost Tower player** must burn **both** other towers to **win**.
 - the next tower burned becomes a **shadow** and only needs to burn **one** tower to **win**!

How to play **FIRE TOWER** (story style)

Place the board on the table with the weathervane next to it (aligned North). All players get **6** cards as well as a blue bucket card and a **firehawk** that they place in their quadrant of the board. Roll the die to set an initial wind direction.

Play is clockwise starting with the player whose tower is in the wind direction. If two players are on that side of the board, the one to the left starts the game.

On their turn, each player does two things.

First, they place a **fire gem** anywhere on the board (*hopefully by an opponent*) edge to edge adjacent to another **gem** already on the board with one restriction: **it must be on the WIND DIRECTION side of the gem** already on the board!

Lastly, they play one card, do what it says, then draw a new card into their hand, ending with the hand limit. However, if they don't like the cards in their hand, instead of playing a card, they can simply discard as many cards as they wish (even all of them) and draw new cards up to the hand limit. This ends their turn!

The goal is to burn down the **Fire Towers** of your opponents (while protecting your Fire Tower) by placing a **fire gem** in the back corner square of their tower area. A partial **firestorm** hits when you do!

You play **red** cards to add **fire** to the board... added **fire gems** must be edge to edge adjacent to a **gem** on the board (but you can ignore the wind direction).

You play **blue** cards to remove fire gems (*likely those near your tower*). However, **only** your **bucket** can remove fire inside your tower area (free **1 time** use)

You play **purple** cards to place **purple tokens** on the map to block spreading **fire**. They can be diagonal but not adjacent.

You play **gray** cards to change the wind direction (the only way to change it).

In a 3 player game, the first person whose tower burns can become a **Ghost**.

In a 3-4 player game, the first player(s) burned can become **Shadows**.

Playing as a **GHOST** (3 player game):

During a 3 player game, one corner tower was empty. So when a player has their tower burned down, they are NOT out of the game. They just take over the 4th tower as a **ghost**! All their cards go to the player who burned their tower down (who then discards down to the new hand size of **7**). Then the **ghost** draws **7** new cards and plays in their normal turn order (other players also draw a card to **7** card limit).

Either of the remaining 2 active players with active towers can **win** by burning down just one tower and it can be the **ghost** tower **or** their opponents tower.

As a **ghost**, you **win** by burning **BOTH** other towers. When you burn the first of those two towers, that player becomes a **shadow** (and as a **shadow** still plays during their turn but has no cards).

The new **shadow** also can still **win** the game by burning down just one of the two remaining towers (active or **ghost**)!

Meanwhile, the other player (who is not a **ghost** nor a **shadow**) can **win** the game by burning down the **ghost** tower.

This **ghost** variant is an intriguing way to stir up the game, letting all players continue to play even when in a "normal" game they would have been out of the game when their tower burned down. It also ties in with the **Shadow of the Wood** nicely so that in the final turns of a game you can have all three players: one active, one a **ghost** and one a **shadow**!

You don't need the expansion to play the **ghost** variant.

Likewise, you can play the updated Shadow of the Wood variant (as seen in the next column) without the expansion using the online rules for a D6 die roll for a **shadow** player.

However, the expansion is necessary to play with the added **firehawks**. But you can consider them **optional** and ignore them without any negative impact on game play.

Now, if you aren't afraid of **ghosts**, what about moving **shadows**?

Playing as a **SHADOW** (3-4 players):

A sad part of playing a 3-4 player elimination game is that when YOU are eliminated, you have to just WATCH the rest of the players continue playing the game. **Fire Tower** solves this by adding the ability to become a **shadow**!

Another bonus is that now players do not have to feel "guilty" for trying to burn down their opponent towers because that only converts them into **shadows** and they still can **win** the game!

When your tower burns down, instead of being out of the game, you become a **shadow** and have no tower nor cards but still control your firehawks. On your turn, roll the **shadow die** & do the actions for the die results! Since you have no tower, you won't need to remove **gems** or add **purple tokens** to block the fire! Just try to place more fire gems on the board.

A **shadow** does not place a **fire gem** on the board to start their turn. Instead they roll the **shadow die** and perform the actions for the die result. Their goal to **win** remains burning down the other towers, but now they have no tower to protect so they can focus on simply adding more and more **fire** to the board!

In a **3** player game, the **shadow wins** if they can burn down both other towers on one turn. After burning down one of the other towers, they finish their actions specified by the current die roll. Then they get to roll the **shadow die** again (**like a bonus extra turn**). They **win** if they can burn down the remaining tower during that bonus turn. Otherwise, the player with the final active tower **wins**!

In a **4** player game, the first tower that burns becomes a **shadow**. The next tower that burns joins the **shadow team** that can **win** by burning down both towers in their sequential turns (remember the free **shadow die roll** when a **shadow** burns down a tower)! If they can only burn down one of them, the player with an active tower **wins**! Meanwhile, the two remaining active players are trying to burn down their active opponent's tower to **win**, and the **shadow team** must take care to not let that happen.