

## **Shovel Wars**

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**Description of suffering:** Shoveling snow is hard, lonely work. Clearing a driveway on your lonesome can extend periods of time while leaving yourself exhausted. Shovel Wars turns this menial chore into a fun multiplayer experience, adding a competitive element to make shoveling with friends more appealing, and even fun!

**Gameplay Rules:** The game is played with two players, and designed for shoveling driveways. Gameplay starts with one player at the end of the driveway, and one player at the beginning (facing each other across the length of the driveway). The halfway point of the driveway is marked across with a line in the snow. Players shovel in lanes, working on the same lane at the same time. The first player to hit the halfway point of the current lane gets a point, and gets to throw snowballs at the other player until he/she finishes his/her half of the strip. After a lane is completely shoveled, players move onto the next lane, switching which side they start on.

A player may “challenge” an opponent if he/she believes the opponent’s half is not completely shoveled. The challenging player can try to fill a shovel with snow from that half of the driveway, and if he/she succeeds, can throw the snow in the shovel at the opponent. The challenging player steals one point if a shovel is filled.

Repeat the process of shoveling lanes and optionally challenging players. The player with the most points once the entire driveway is shoveled wins, and gets to choose his/her shovel for the next time the game is played.

**Notes Pertaining to the Reading:** This game draws from the idea of a Life-management game presented in McGonigal’s book. Shovel wars helps players with the completion of a real life chore. Our ARG accomplishes this by employing fix #7: whole-hearted participation; by making it a competition between two players rather than a task that should eventually get completed by one, there is an incentive to put all of your effort into finishing the task at hand.

**Testing and Revising:** We find that different shovel types favor different “lane” sizes, and can have unintended consequences on the balance of gameplay. Ideally, shovels would be the same type and size, but for consistency lanes would have to be the width of the larger shovel. To remedy this imbalance, and because people who shovel together will often shovel again, we added the rule that the winner will have his/her choice of shovel in the next iteration of the game. If this continues to appear imbalanced, we may add a rule that the winner of each lane then gets to choose a shovel.

Additionally, the conditions for a successful “challenge” feel somewhat easy to meet. However, challenges remain very fun, and inspire more diligent shoveling (and safer driveway conditions).

We added the rule that players switch sides after each lane to account for imbalance in the case of inclined driveways.