

Artifacts Inc – Solo Variant

I created a simple solo variant which replicates a 2 player game. The ghost has some advantages to make the game challenging and some disadvantages to make handling it quick and simple. There are also easy ways of adjusting the level of difficulty which I'll mention at the end.

You go first. After your turn you roll for the ghost player who, with the exception of the buy step in the last round, always takes these actions in the following order:

1. Will go diving if one die exactly matches the value of the underwater card when 6 or less or if two dice exactly add up to the underwater card when 7 or more. The ghost will run out of breath and stop diving when the underwater card reaches 13 or more. This is the only step in which the value of the ghost's dice matters. Otherwise, you are going to ignore the value of the dice in the steps below.
2. Set aside one die to make a purchase at the end of the round.
3. If able to sell to the museum, sell the most valuable item (gems most valuable, fossils the least). If not able to sell anything, use the die to grab the most valuable available item. In either case, the value of the die is irrelevant. This is one of the advantages enjoyed by the ghost. The ghost will only sell to the museum and the only time it will consider selling to a Private Collector is right before using the last die on the last turn so it can generate money to buy something more expensive with the last die.
4. Keep repeating step 3, either using a die to grab the most valuable remaining item or selling items to the museum until it gets to the final die. If the ghost runs out of items to grab, which can happen after it has grabbed the second fossil during its turn, the ghost will use the die to do guide work for one dollar.
5. Use the final die to buy an item, if able. If not able then repeat step 4 one final time.

The ghost will always buy the following items when it is able, in the following order:

- A. Adventurer Row D card for 3 dollars.
- B. Mountain or Jungle Expedition. Will buy the most expensive one it is able to afford, regardless of whether or not the particular expedition is visible in the layout. So if the ghost has at least 4 dollars and 1 scroll, it will buy the Mountain Expedition. If the Mountain Expedition isn't visible, then it can search through the draw pile and grab it. Same thing with the Jungle Expedition when the ghost has exactly 3 dollars and 1 or more scrolls.
- C. Archeologist Row E card for 5 dollars or, if can't afford it, upgrade the starting Adventurers card for 2 dollars.
- D. The Mountain or Jungle Expedition which wasn't purchased in B above. Again, let the ghost dig through the draw pile if needed.

E. The Archeologist or Adventurers card which wasn't purchased in C. If the human player is devious enough to grab both Archeologists, then the ghost skips to Buy F.

F. An available College, Explorer Society or Traveling Exhibit which provides the ghost with the most victory points, taking into account items the ghost grabbed while diving. These cards will be purchased anytime the ghost accumulates 7 dollars, even during steps 3/4 (provided the ghost has already completed the previous buys in Steps A-E.) Allow the ghost to purchase more than one item if it again has accumulated 7 or more dollars. If only 8 dollar items are available, the ghost will purchase the one providing the most victory points, ignoring the card text. If, with the last die, the ghost can reach 20 points (or it is the last turn of the game because the player reached 20) but has less than 7 dollars, it will buy or upgrade a card which provides it with the most victory points, again ignoring the card text.

By the end of the game the ghost will have typically acquired the following cards:

- An upgraded adventurer from its starting hand
- Row D Adventurer
- Row E Archeologist
- Jungle Expedition
- Mountain Expedition
- \$7/8 valued cards from Row C
- Pottery, etc from diving

At the end of the game tabulate museum majority bonuses as usual and see who won.

Other than the 7 dollar cards which provide bonuses for items obtained while diving, you can ignore the text on the cards the ghost acquires. The ghost will not receive any bonuses based on the placement of cards. Note the ghost will also never choose to upgrade any cards, other than the starting adventurers card or to finish out the game. This is one of the disadvantages you will need to exploit by placing your own cards intelligently.

To increase the difficulty, you could begin the game by upgrading some or all 4 of the starting ghost cards to Level 2 and begin the ghost with up to 4 points and have it roll 4 dice if desired. If you do start the ghost with four dice then you will buy an Adventurer with Buy A, do Buy B as normal, buy an Archeologist with Buy C, do Buy D as normal, skip over Buy E and go straight to Buy F.