

It started that lonely, dark night when Eunice showed up with a deck of Uno cards, shuffling them like a professional. We were all transfixed by the movement as she dealt everyone a hand. Later, drunk with happiness and stuffed with popcorn, Margret won. We demanded a rematch, and that's why, years later, we still meet, hoping to beat her. Paula came close once, Eunice, too. This time, it's between myself and Margret. I slap a yellow four down. She leans forward and matches my card when several wilds fall from her sleeve.

"You cheat!"

"Took you six years, Veronica."



If there's one game I detest most in this world, it's Uno. Yet, somehow, my family owns a couple dozen different versions of this game. From limited editions to those with special rules. One is called Uno Flip, and I think I hate that one the most because you no sooner get yourself down to a single card when someone plays a flip, and you have to turn your cards around. There are numbers and colors on both sides of those cards!

My kids have fond memories of playing Uno with beloved cousins when we'd spend a long weekend in the bush back on The Island. They made up "cousin rules", which sounded complicated and painful. Yet there were never any arguments or complaints.

There's a whole long drawn out story of why I detest this game, but the super short version is in order to escape the torture of playing for hours, I regularly cheated, and I never stuffed a single card up my sleeve. I simply became adept at stacking a few cards together and putting them down at once. The person playing against me never noticed because they were too busy cooking up devious ways to make the game miserable.

The problem is, I've told my kids the story of why I hate the Uno so much, and what I did to escape being tortured into playing it for hours. Thus, when they sucker me into a game, they double check that I'm not putting extra cards down.

Lest Uno be your most beloved game of all time, fear not, there is one version of Uno I don't hate. Uno Dice. It moves pretty quickly and no one can lump you with an entire deck of cards.

The Reluctant Author

