

## Gardeners, by Max Seidman!

- *First four-player test*
- *Six weeks old! Very new!*

**Rules start:** 7:45

**Rules end:** 8:07

**Game start:** 8:10

**Game end:** 9:00 [50 minutes; 10 minutes per moon]

### Graphics:

- x

### Gameplay Mechanics:

- **During rules:**
- Town HP system seems cool
- I like that the onus is on everyone to provide for the town
- Wandering through the land seems a little arbitrary and weird
- I wish the resource-increasing for the color blobs were easier to articulate [extra resources move to the blob pieces, etc]
- It's strange from a thematic standpoint that you can only befriend one person at a time and each companion is sort of "owned" by a particular player, but the mechanics seem super cool, just a big ludonarrative disjoint for me
- Craft track seems very cool and interesting
- **During gameplay:**
- I don't think turns need to happen one at a time, I think it can be simultaneous; can't see any real downsides since mail is collected at EoT and it'll speed the game way, way up
- I feel like the board is too large to be able to fully take care of the town; it's just way too tight on resources and with all the empty space it's too difficult to make all of the things you need to serve the town AND build an engine
- **End of game:**
- The general gameplay mechanics are cool, but it doesn't really feel like much of an engine-builder; very little way to express a strategy that you want to employ. I can tell that each character board has different setups to sort of headstart specific strategies, but I can't really recognize what they are or what I would do with them or how to maximize their benefits [part of that is graphic design but a larger part is the resource starvation]
- It's really tough to parse out what to focus on re: crafts vs lands vs friendship, because the costs for the town are so steep. I feel like I'm too starved for resources to do most of the things I want to do, and the resource tiles I was dealt only helped me because I picked up a companion that wanted me to have lots of purple
- I wish you could *maintain* friendships with multiple companions; thinking about if I were to play this game for all four seasons, I would never want to get rid of Raven and their marriage bonus power because my entire plan is amassing lots of purple and they turn purple into anything. I want to be able to have hearts with multiple characters, which I can mix and match how I build over time.

- Additionally, if there were a system where I had a heart on EACH companion, why not make it so multiple hearts are on the companions? Each of us can build friendships with multiple companions, since we're all socializing with the town. More ludonarrative harmony and allows for new design avenues, but takes up more space on/next to cards [tarot-size, maybe]; if nothing else, I'm bummed about the fact that I can only build one relationship at a time
- I want the board to be smaller [see above note]
- I wish players could help cover each other's weaknesses, like someone paying extra Green if someone can't cover it

**Misc:**

- x

**Responses to Others' Feedback:**

- **Tony:**
- I think that the point Tony made about the land board being its own engine still holds true with a smaller board
- I agree that the second level of each craft track being empty feels weak
- I agree that being able to pay for other people's costs is ideal!
- **Jay:**
- I really like the idea of it being easier to befriend your neighbors but you CAN befriend anybody; I also agree that since it's a co-op game the idea of hoarding a power for yourself feels weird/negative
- I like the idea that we have specific tile decks for our characters, and agree that incorporating more game mechanics and tree powers into tiles you place is cool

**Homework:**

- Check out the Stardew Valley board game! I haven't played it yet but I bet it'll be a great source of inspiration for this style of game