

# Apophis

by Erik Dresner

**Players:** 1 – 4 (co-op)

**Playing Time:** 8 – 15 min

13 April 2036. The asteroid 99942 Apophis nears its imminent impact with Earth. All previous efforts to prevent the collision have failed. In a last ditch effort, a team of scientists have gathered to construct enough rockets to destroy or alter the path of the asteroid before it becomes the cause of Earth's next mass extinction...

## Equipment Needed

- 1 Rainbow stash of Looney Pyramids
- Deck of playing cards
- Timer (kitchen timer, stopwatch, etc.)
- 5 “deflection” counters (basic rules only)

## Objective

Either destroy or sufficiently alter the course of Apophis before time runs out.

Timer	Difficulty
15 min	Beginner
12 min	Easy
10 min	Medium
8 min	Hard

## Setup

1. Place a nested set of black Icehouse pieces on the middle of the table. This represents Apophis.
2. Set aside the deflection counters.
3. Remove 1 card of each suit from the deck and place them on the table. Place the pyramids, representing specific rocket sections, on the appropriate cards.
4. Shuffle the remainder of the cards and deal 3 to each player (4 if only 1-2 players)
5. Lastly, set the timer to the desired game length for the desired difficulty.
6. Select the start player then start the timer. The game has begun!

Pyramids	Suit	Effect Description
Green	Clubs	Deflecting Warhead (Basic) / Fail Safe (Advanced)
Red	Hearts	Nuclear Warhead
Blue	Diamonds	Guidance System
Yellow	Spades	Booster Fuel

## Game Play

During their turn, a player may choose to do one of the following: Draw, Build, Launch or Scrap. Remember, this is a co-op game; players are encouraged to discuss their decisions! However, the final decision is always up to the active player. Players may not show their hands, but they are free to discuss them.

## Player Actions

- **Draw 2 Cards** - If this action causes a player's hand to exceed 5 cards, that player must immediately discard down to 5. Whenever a player attempts to draw a card with the draw deck empty, the team must spend at least 10 seconds shuffling the deck. Though anyone can shuffle the deck, the active player may not complete his or her turn until the 10 seconds are up. (If only 1 card was drawn before forcing a shuffle, the player would then draw the second card.)
- **Build a Rocket Section** - A player may discard cards to build 1 rocket section per turn. Each rocket section's cost is dependent on its size. For example, to build a large Deflecting Warhead, the player will need to discard 3 clubs. To build a small Guidance System, the player will need to discard 1 diamond. (Note: all cards are worth 1. For example, the 2 of hearts, 10 of hearts and jack of hearts all have the same value: 1 heart.)
  - Rocket sections are limited--there is only one of each size and color available in the supply!
  - There is no restriction to a rocket's height. However, sections may only be placed on other sections of equal or greater size. For example, a medium section may be placed on a large or another medium section, but never a small.
- **Initiate Launch Sequence** - To initiate a launch sequence, the active player may play up to 1 card of each suit from his or her hand in front of the rocket. If the player plays all four suits, the rocket is Launched (see below). If the player plays three or less suits, play continues. If a Launch Sequence is incomplete, other players cannot build additional sections to the rocket. However, on their turn they may add to the launch sequence. (Example: Player 1 initiates the launch sequence by placing a Heart in front of the rocket. On his turn, Player 2 adds to the sequence with a Diamond and a Spade. Player 3 has no clubs in his hand nor wishes to Scrap the rocket, so he draws 2 cards. Player 4 places a club and the rocket launches.)
- **Scrap** - Return all rocket sections to the supply. If a launch sequence was initiated, discard those cards as well. The next player may start a new rocket.

## Launching

When the fourth card of a launch sequence is played, the rocket immediately launches. For the sake of launches, large pyramids count as 3 points, medium 2 and small 1. Check the success of the rocket in the following order:

1. **Check Booster Fuel.** At least 25% of the rocket's points must be Booster Fuel (yellow sections). (Example: a rocket has 1 large sections, 2 medium and 1 small for 8 points. At least 2 of those points must be Booster Fuel. Example 2: a rocket has 2 large sections, 1 medium and 2 small for 10 points. At least 3 of those must be Booster Fuel for a successful launch.)
2. **Roll Accuracy.** Will the rocket actually hit Apophis? Roll the six-sided die and add its value to the value of Apophis plus the value of Guidance Systems. (Apophis's value is determined by the largest pyramid showing.) If the value is 7 or greater, the rocket will hit. If not, the rocket fails. Example: Apophis has a value of three and the rocket has 1 point of Guidance systems. The player rolls a 2.  $3+1+2=6$ , 1 short of a successful launch. The rocket fails.)
3. **Check Damage** (*Skip if no Nuclear Warheads on rocket*). Will the Nuclear Warheads affect Apophis? Roll the six-sided die and add its value to the number of points of Nuclear Warheads on the rocket. If the number is 7 or greater, remove the top pyramid from Apophis and add a Deflection counter. If Apophis is damaged 3 times during the game, it is destroyed and the team wins! Example - the player has 2 points of nuclear warheads on the rocket and rolls a 5. The rocket damages Apophis! He removes the large Apophis pyramid revealing the medium one underneath. Though the team is closer to victory, Apophis is now smaller and harder to hit!
4. **Check Deflection** (*Skip if no Deflecting Warheads on rocket*). Will the Deflecting Warheads alter Apophis's course? Roll the six-sided die and add its value to the number of points of Deflecting Warheads on the rocket. If the number is 7 or greater, add a Deflection counter for altering Apophis's course. Whenever Apophis has 5 deflection counters, its course is altered and will steer clear of Earth (you win!).

After a launch, regardless of success or failure, return all pyramids from the rocket to their supply.

## End Game

The team wins if they either destroy Apophis or deflect it enough to steer clear of Earth (5 or more deflection counters). If at any moment time runs out, Apophis smashes into the earth and wipes out 95% of all species on Earth, including humans. Hopefully, the next sentient species to evolve will do a better job at the next threat of extinction.

## Advanced Rules

Advanced Apophis plays much like regular Apophis except for three key differences:

1. **There are no more deflections.** In order to win, Apophis must be completely destroyed.
2. **When the rocket launches, players roll a die and add it to the total number of Fuel points.** If the total is 8 or higher, the rocket explodes and the launch is a failure.
3. **Green pyramids no longer deflect Apophis.** (The *Roll for Deflection* phase of the launch is skipped.) They are now Fail Safes. For every 2 points of Fail Safes on a rocket, the players may reroll one die during the launch.

Recommended game time is 10 minutes. Like basic Apophis, the difficulty level can be altered by increasing or decreasing game time.