

The Bakery at the Edge of Winter

120-minute plan · 4 players · Make time and supplies count

The great oven fades before the winter fair. Four dry fuel bundles must cover the shelter and whichever meal you choose.

Content notice: Cold weather and scarce resources. Oven actions are fictional game procedures, not appliance or fire guidance.

GM overview

Put four fuel counters and the fair clock on the table. Shelter heat costs two bundles and is a precondition for both meal plans. Sorting identifies only safe tagged spare fuel; damp sacks are scenery, not an unlimited drying exploit. The fair plan spends both remaining bundles in separate short batches at the great oven; the shelter plan spends one and keeps a reserve but produces fewer loaves. An optional warming delivery consumes a spare bundle, making the two-batch fair impossible with this inventory. Every productive action spends clock. At one remaining tick, the fair bell ends the two-batch opportunity; the shelter supper still works if its resources remain. No outcome takes back allocated shelter heat.

What is really happening

Sani sent dry fuel to the mill shelter after a roof failure. Damp sacks replaced it by mistake. Four tagged dry bundles remain: two are needed for shelter heat, and two can produce two short great-oven batches. The small shelter stove can instead bake a smaller supper with one spare bundle.

Opening agreement and read-aloud

Agree on subjects to soften or skip. Each player names an ordinary skill and a reason to help. Evidence does not require a successful roll; uncertainty changes time, cost or obligations.

Unbaked loaves frost along Ed's windowsill. Nia splits a wet sack and sighs. Across the mill yard, warm soup steams beneath a temporary roof.

Time and preparation

120 minutes: The fair or the shared stove

Opening agreement: 10 minutes

Verify the redirected delivery: 25 minutes

Compare the fair and shelter allocations: 40 minutes

Carry out the chosen meal and spare delivery: 35 minutes

Closure and debrief: 10 minutes

Sorting costs a turn. The extended route permits the warming cart and a supper, using all four bundles; it cannot also promise two fair batches.

Starting information: Four tagged bundles

Starting state: Work turns before the fair opens = 8; Tagged dry fuel bundles = 4; Safe spare fuel identified = false; Shelter heat reserved = false; Great-oven batches = 0; Extra warming delivery = false; Fair opening bell has rung = false

With 4 players: share the roles of mapper, evidence keeper, speaker and timekeeper.

If the group gets stuck

If the fair bell rings, the stove remains usable while a turn and spare bundle remain. If the last fuel is spent or a route closes, share ready food and cancel the full fair meal. Never recover by confiscating the shelter allocation.

Bakery lane

Read aloud: Ed counts two empty baskets and one hungry square.

GM: Give the allocation card immediately. The fair needs two batches; one batch alone can be shared but does not meet the advertised opening meal.

Choice: Serve both fair baskets

Ask: Bring both completed batches to the opening?

Requires: Great-oven batches at least 2 and Shelter heat reserved is true and Fair opening bell has rung is false.

Result: Two baskets reach the fair before its opening bell.

Closure: Two baskets and a warm shelter

Fuel shed

Read aloud: The dry shelf has exactly four tied bundles.

GM: Sorting reveals the mistaken replacement. There is no hidden fifth bundle. Never offer unsafe painted wood as an acceptable shortcut.

Choice: Sort the tagged dry stock

Ask: Set the wet sacks aside and count the safe bundles?

Requires: Available. Spend 1 Work turns before the fair opens. Safe spare fuel identified: true. Reveal Delivery stamps, Four tagged bundles

Result: Nia confirms the four usable bundles and the mistaken replacement.

Mill yard

Read aloud: Tor has chalked two circles for the shelter's fuel.

GM: The warming delivery is an optional benefit. Explicitly announce that it uses one of the bundles that could make a fair batch.

Choice: Send an extra warming cart

Ask: Spend one spare bundle and give up a possible fair batch?

Requires: Shelter heat reserved is true. Spend 1 Work turns before the fair opens; Spend 1 Tagged dry fuel bundles. Extra warming delivery: true

Result: A warm cart reaches the far sleeping room. One fewer bundle remains for bread.

Shelter kitchen

Read aloud: Sani sets a smaller bread pan beside the soup pot.

GM: Reserving shelter heat is the first moral and mechanical commitment. The stove plan bakes a smaller meal and conserves one fuel bundle if no optional delivery was made.

Choice: Reserve the shelter's heat

Ask: Commit two bundles to keeping the shelter warm?

Requires: Available. Spend 1 Work turns before the fair opens; Spend 2 Tagged dry fuel bundles. Shelter heat reserved: true

Result: Tor carries two bundles to the marked shelter pile.

Choice: Bake a smaller shelter supper

Ask: Use one spare bundle for bread beside the soup?

Requires: Shelter heat reserved is true and Safe spare fuel identified is true. Spend 1 Work turns before the fair opens; Spend 1 Tagged dry fuel bundles

Result: The small pan comes out beside the soup pot.

Closure: A smaller table by the stove

Great oven

Read aloud: The glow brightens when the first basket arrives.

GM: Each short batch uses one bundle and one turn. The fair ending requires two batches, allocated shelter heat, and an opening bell that has not rung.

Choice: Bake one short great-oven batch

Ask: Spend a dry bundle and a work turn on one fair basket?

Requires: Safe spare fuel identified is true and Shelter heat reserved is true and Fair opening bell has rung is false and Great-oven batches at most 1. Spend 1 Work turns before the fair opens; Spend 1 Tagged dry fuel bundles. Great-oven batches: +1. Reveal Two chalked baking slots

Result: One basket fills. Mark one of the two chalk slots.

Dry-stock loft

Read aloud: Four matching delivery tags hang above the dry bundles.

GM: The loft offers a second way to verify the safe stock if the sorting floor is blocked. A one-turn tag check supplies the same stock knowledge, never an extra bundle.

Choice: Check the dry-stock tags

Ask: Spend a work turn verifying the four tagged bundles from the loft?

Requires: Available. Spend 1 Work turns before the fair opens. Safe spare fuel identified: true. Reveal Delivery stamps

Result: The loft tags confirm the four usable bundles and the mistaken damp replacement.

Connections and changing routes

Bakery lane - Fuel shed: Carry the fuel tally. Available.

Bakery lane - Great oven: Enter the bakery. Available.

Fuel shed - Mill yard: Walk the mill ramp. Available.

Mill yard - Shelter kitchen: Pass the blanket line. Available.

Fuel shed - Shelter kitchen: Use the delivery hatch. Available.

Shelter kitchen - Great oven: Carry dough along the covered way. Shelter heat reserved is true.

Fuel shed - Dry-stock loft: Climb the stock stair. Available.

Ed - Fair baker

Goal: Bring two baskets to the opening

Offers: Prepared dough and two short baking slots.

Will not accept: Will accept a smaller supper before taking shelter heat.

Voice: "Tell me which meal we can honestly promise."

Nia - Fuel sorter

Goal: Use the four safe bundles carefully

Offers: Dry tagged offcuts and a truthful inventory.

Will not accept: No wet or painted wood shortcut.

Voice: "Count the tags, not the sacks."

Sani - Baker at the shelter

Goal: Keep everyone warm

Offers: A small stove that shares heat with soup.

Will not accept: Two bundles remain allocated to the shelter.

Voice: "Bread can be smaller. Their warmth cannot."

Tor - Mill shelter steward

Goal: Keep temporary sleeping rooms warm

Offers: A covered dough route after the shelter's fuel is reserved.

Will not accept: The reserved shelter pile cannot fund another fair batch.

Voice: "These two are already promised to the rooms."

Discovery card: Four tagged bundles

Give only when revealed in play.

Four dry bundles. Shelter heat: two. Each great-oven batch: one. Small-stove supper: one. Extra warming delivery: one. Place four counters on the choices before carrying anything.

Player task: Choose a complete allocation and notice incompatible extras.

GM answer: Shelter2 + great2 uses everything. Shelter2 + supper1 retains one. Extra delivery rules out two great batches.

Discovery card: Delivery stamps

Give only when revealed in play.

Dry delivery: redirected to mill shelter after roof damage. Replacement: damp sacks. High shelf: four tagged untreated bundles. No other dry delivery is due before the fair.

Player task: Explain the shortage and mark which stock is actually usable.

GM answer: The shortage is an emergency allocation plus a mistaken replacement, not theft.

Discovery card: Two chalked baking slots

Give only when revealed in play.

Basket one [] Basket two []. The fair needs both before the opening bell. One basket can still be shared. The shelter stove makes a smaller supper while the soup stays warm.

Player task: Track actual completed batches and compare the alternate meal.

GM answer: Two batch actions before fairClosed support the fair. The stove route uses fewer resources and yields less bread.

State sheet

Work turns before the fair opens: 8 (clock, minimum 0, maximum 8)

Tagged dry fuel bundles: 4 (resource, minimum 0, maximum 4)

Safe spare fuel identified: false (knowledge)

Shelter heat reserved: false (flag)

Great-oven batches: 0 (resource, minimum 0, maximum 2)

Extra warming delivery: false (flag)

Fair opening bell has rung: false (flag)

Event: The fair opening bell

Trigger: Work turns before the fair opens at most 1

The fair opens. Two new opening baskets are no longer possible; offer the smaller supper or share what is already ready.

Fair opening bell has rung: true

At any place: Recount the remaining stock

Read the allocation before choosing a smaller meal?

Requires: Available. Reveal Four tagged bundles

Everyone can see exactly which bundles remain.

At any place: Close the fair baking and share what is ready

Cancel the promised fair baskets and protect the shelter's existing supplies?

Requires: Available.

Ed takes down the full-bread promise and helps share available food.

Ending: Two baskets and a warm shelter

Requires: Great-oven batches at least 2 and Shelter heat reserved is true and Fair opening bell has rung is false
Both fair baskets arrive while the shelter keeps its allocated heat. No dry reserve remains, so tomorrow's fuel delivery must be checked.

Next: Who will verify tomorrow's delivery labels?

Ending: A smaller table by the stove

Requires: Shelter heat reserved is true

The fair becomes a smaller supper beside the shelter stove. Fewer loaves are made, and any unused dry bundle remains a valuable reserve.

Next: Which stall can help serve the smaller meal?

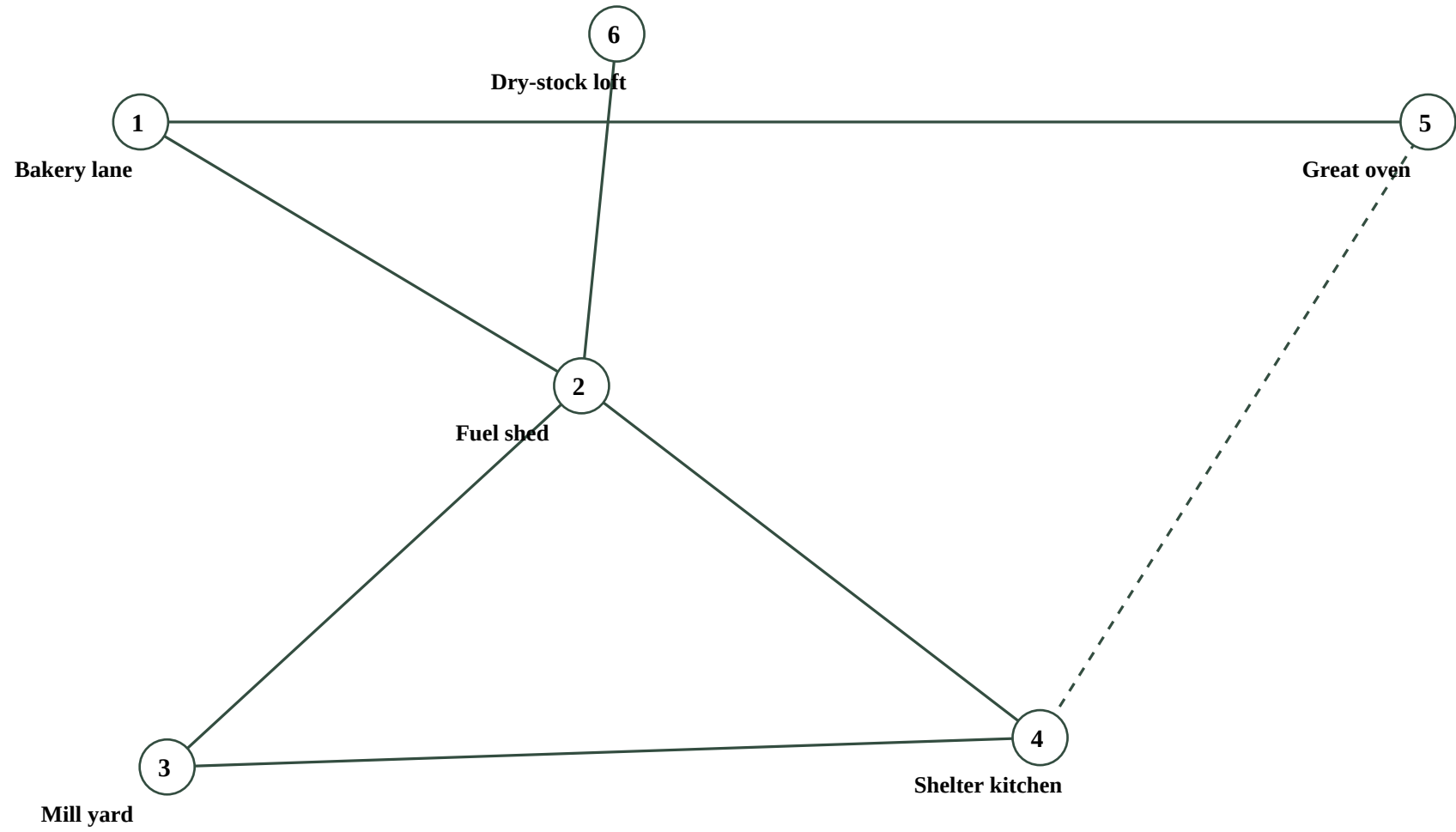
Ending: An honest smaller promise

Requires: Available

The full fair bake is cancelled. Ready food is shared and the shelter keeps all supplies already reserved; unfinished dough waits for another oven window.

Next: What can the town contribute without taking from the shelter?

The Bakery at the Edge of Winter - GM decision map



Dashed paths need conditions. Read Connections and changing routes for costs and direction.