

CULTISTORM .v34

COOPERATIVE BOARD GAME FOR 3-5 PLAYER

(The 1/2 player rules is not included)

OVERVIEW

DESCRIPTION AND THE AIM OF THE GAME

Cultistorm is a co-operative board game where players impersonate the investigators of the special department of the Massachusetts State Investigation Bureau and the Miskatonic University, located in the United States of the early 20th century. The starting point of the game is the outbreak of the cultists' storm when multitudes of frightening, disfigured strangers appear in the surroundings of Arkham. The aim of these cultists is to perform dark ceremonies in order to summon the Great Old Ones, their masters from cosmic time and space. Since the arrival of the Old Ones is devastating, we must stop their followers, preferably before they succeed.

The aim of the players is to cooperatively fight back the gathering cultists and to prevent them from reaching the critical mass and summon the Great Old Ones. If that happens, the players must defeat the arriving Old One before he could fully pass through to our world. The investigators use ancient symbols to fight the cultists and their masters. The speciality of the game that the investigators' cards and their unique abilities, which they can develop during the game, provide us with numerous action possibilities, however the players can only use these to support their team members; in their own combats they can only the magical symbols. This complete reliance on the others necessitates strong co-operation, constant communication and thinking together from the players. The investigators win if they seal all the locations before the storm of cultists is over.

(If you would like to immerse yourself in the background story of the game, read the short story "A Window into infinity")

THE BASE GAME AND THE NARRATIVE GAMEPLAY

One of the unique features of Cultistorm is the **narrative gameplay** which gives a real depth to the game by allowing the players to read short stories on meetings with the cultists. These are collected in the Script Book which contains more than a hundred mini short stories; these also influence the later outcome of the game. The narrative gameplay makes the game 30-60 minutes longer, however it adds a unique layer to the game experience.

If you want to play Cultistorm in the narrative game mode, have the narrative cards ready when you set up the game. Every time when you are about to fight a Cultist, draw a narrative card, look for the number belonging to cultist's cast symbol, read the story and follow the instructions.

On certain cultist cards and on all special cultist cast, Great Old One, location and terror card you can see a



icon and a number. In the narrative game play, read out the story of the corresponding number from the Script Book and apply the effect if there is one. It's worth familiarising yourselves with the location stories in the beginning, but read the other stories only when the cards are activated – when you fight the cultists, when a Great Old One appears or a terror card comes into play.

EXPANSION MODULS

THE MAJOR EXPANSIONS

There are three major expansions for **Cultistorm**, these change the basic course of the game, therefore you can use only one at a time.

1. The **“Behind the scenes” overload expansion** which allows one of the players to assume the role of H.P. Lovecraft and thus take over the game. The other players need to fight him together.
2. The **“Storm of cultists” campaign expansion** unfolds a seven-part continuous story. It is played in seven separate sessions with unique and consecutive missions and the use of completely new game mechanisms.
3. The **„Lonely Struggle”** expansion gives the players a deck of cards for the two-player game and a special board for the solo game.

THE MINOR EXPANSIONS

Besides the three major, game changing expansions, there are nine minor expansion modules which give either new elements or new mechanics to the game. Naturally in the Script Book you can find a relevant flash fiction story also for these new elements.

1. **“The Other Worlds”** module attributes a special location card to every Great Old One. These represent the otherworldly dimensions where the Old Ones came from or where they currently are. When these locations open, they swallow the investigators standing there. They have to be rescued by the other players before the locations are sealed off and the trapped investigators are damned forever.
2. **The “Ancient relics”** are powerful objects from other dimensions. To get them the investigators need to open the dimension gates themselves, but with this they risk losing their sanity.
3. **“Dark rituals”** activate the experience points on the investigator action cards which they can spend to learn dark rituals from the ancient tomes. They can use these to unlock further action possibilities during the game.
4. **The “Cultist events”** module brings a cultist even deck into play. At the beginning of each cultist phase, the players need to draw a card from this pack and carry out the events they unveiled. These rarely bode well for the players...
5. In the **“Innocent victims”** module the investigators will have to save innocent civilians, who got caught up in the fight of investigators and cultists, from becoming cultists themselves. Of course this is just one of their many tasks: the investigators also need to defeat the cultists and the Great Old Ones and save the world.
6. The **“Otherworldly diseases”** module unleashes diseases of unknown origin to the world and the investigators need to stop them from spreading and reaching towns and cities.
7. The **“Dangerous puzzle”** adds a six-card special relic to the object deck; the players need to find this to win the game. The pieces of the puzzle are lethal objects in themselves, not to mention the fact that cards unleashing unexpected and horrible events also enter the deck beside them.
8. The **“Research events”** is a module which actually helps the investigators; it makes the game easier or counterbalances the other complicating modules. When an investigator carries out a research, he draws a card and applies its (usually positive) effect.
9. **The “Rorschach test”** expansion was inspired by one of the short stories in our collection, “The Inkblots.” There are more and more otherworldly inkblots appearing throughout the game. They don't influence the game on their appearance, but if the players accumulate a certain number of unresolved inkblots, a Great Old One, whose dreams are depicted by the blots, is immediately summoned.

Beside these expansions, there **are also special cultist casts with unique abilities** in the game with their own unique Great Old Ones, otherworld locations and **cultist creatures**, which are beings stronger than cultists but weaker than the Old Ones who have their own abilities; there are five-five sets from both types. These elements don't only make the game more varied and increase replay ability, they also make the difficulty easily scalable.

THE FIRST, TUTORIAL GAME

We advise that during your first, tutorial game you only use the base game without the narrative game play and with using only the common cultists who have no special abilities. Once you have mastered the game and learnt the basic mechanisms, we advise you to introduce the special casts, cultist creatures and narrative game play little by little. You cannot mix the three major extensions and in the beginning we also suggest to use only one minor extension at a time. When you're really familiar with the game and you're looking for a harder or almost impossible mission, you can use multiple extensions and special cultist casts or creatures in the same game. We hope that you can save the world even then!

THE AIM OF THE GAME: VICTORY AND DEFEAT

The aim of the players is to seal all the five locations, thus preventing the Great Old One to pass through the opening dimension gate into our world. If this condition is fulfilled and there is no Great Old One in play, the investigators win immediately.

The investigators lose the game immediately if any of the following conditions are met:

- If any investigator goes mad as a consequence of the horrible events and dies
- If any Great Old One reaches the location card and the investigators don't manage to defeat it
- If more cultist enters the game than the cultist limit defined by the number of players

The end of the game is also triggered by the two Endgame type terror cards. These can be activated in two ways:

- If you get to the end of the cultist draw pile
- If an Endgame card gets its sixth terror crystal

The effects detailed on the Endgame card take effect immediately and the players have to finish the game in the way specified on the card.

ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS AND ELEMENTS OF THE GAME

THE GAME BOARD

The game board has an unusual shape and function; it defines the place of the location cards and with the terror cards around its points it also draws the terror circle.

THE LOCATION CARDS

We put the location cards on their place on the board; they are the representation of the locations where the players fight cultists. Before you start the game, choose five random location cards and place them on the board. This already adds a variety factor from the very beginning of the game. Every location has a unique possible action or an effect, we find its description on the card. The players can activate and use these actions/effects during the game in the order they wish.

THE CHARACTER BOARD OF PLAYERS

Every investigator has a well-defined character type. In the base game we have healer (psychologist), researcher, fighter, supporter, medium and gambler investigator types, whose unique abilities and special character cards support the prioritised function of the character. On the investigator's character board you can find three consecutive, progressively more powerful unique abilities. These can be developed during the game by the use of the obtained trophies. You also need to develop the character abilities to seal the gates. The board also tells you if the investigator is a melee or ranged fighter.

INSANITY – THE LIFE FORCE OF INVESTIGATORS

Investigators can have up to 4 insanity tokens during their fights. If due to any effect they receive a fifth insanity token, they become incurably insane and die right away. **If any investigator dies, the game is immediately over. The investigators have lost.**

Insanity is marked by red crystals, these are the insanity tokens. There are two types of tokens: a smaller red crystal which can be healed during the game and a bigger and darker crystal marking the so-called ongoing insanity which cannot be healed, or only under very special circumstances. Players keep their insanity crystals on their character board or in front of themselves.

THE INVESTIGATOR ACTION CARDS

Every investigator has their own unique action card deck that contains general cards every investigator has and which are the same for every investigator and special cards marked by a  symbol which provide actions typical to the investigator's character type.

At the top of each action card, in the investigator's hand on the illustration, you find a magical symbol. At the bottom, you can find the supporting action. **When you play a card, you can use only one of these options** (unless the text of the card states otherwise.) Either you use the symbol on the top of the card to fight the cultist you're facing or you use the action in the bottom to support another player. Playing a support action gives you an insanity, except for the investigator's own special cards which can be used without taking an insanity. Certain support actions will give an insanity also to the player we've supported; they can also summon cultists or deepen the terror descending on the investigators.

THE CULTISTS

In the game players fight against cultists. Cultists are, or once have been, human although they can be strikingly deformed. They serve the Great Old Ones and their aim is to open dimension gates to other worlds through their dark intrigues and rituals so that the Great Old Ones can arrive to our world. According to our concepts of ethics the Old Ones are not "evil", they are just so powerful and inhuman that their mere appearance brings insanity and devastation to those who encounter them.

Cultists have their own different rituals. The cultists belonging to the same casts can be identified not only by their name, but also by the similar illustration. There are five general cultist sects in the game and one special cultist sect whose members have unique abilities. The expansions bring two further special sects in the game.

You can find a combination of three magical symbols (out of the five) on every cultist card; investigators need to match these to kill the cultist. Furthermore, most cultist cards also have a prominent, so **called cast symbol** which also activates if the cultist is on the location with the same symbol.

THE TROPHY MARKERS

By defeating cultists, the investigators obtain trophy tokens. Players keep their trophies in front of themselves. If there are no more trophies of a certain type in the reserve, the investigators don't get new trophies from that symbol until some re-enters the reserve.

Trophies can be used for the following actions (see further for the details):

- Sealing city locations which is the basic victory condition
- Activating unique character abilities
- Playing certain type of action cards

THE GREAT OLD ONES

The Great Old Ones are the most terrifying characters of the game and also the most difficult opponents. The most important goal of the investigators is to prevent the Great Old Ones from manifesting; if they don't manage and the Old One does appear, it is very difficult to defeat.

There are two types of Great Old One cards: Old ones of the first and the second wave. The Old Ones of the second wave are marked by a  symbol on their card. The Old Ones of the second wave can only enter the game if a card explicitly says so.

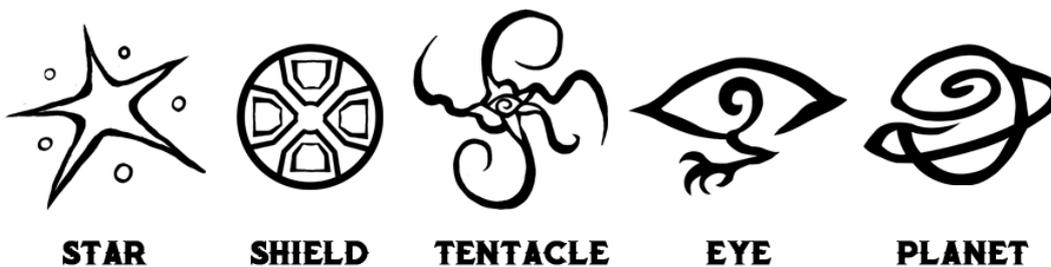
Great Old Ones of the first wave have five symbols, but their appearance doesn't have any special effect, so it is somewhat easier to survive their appearance and defeat them. The appearance of the Great Old Ones of the second wave however unleashes further perils and complications on the investigators, so as long as they are in play, the investigators have to fight in more hostile circumstances.

THE TERROR CIRCLE

The terror circle refers to the terror cards situated around the game board. The terror marker advances on this circle and the players have to place a terror crystal on the card where the marker arrived. When a terror card has as many crystals as is written on the back of the card, the card is turned and its effect is applied immediately. Afterwards, the players have to draw a new card to its place.

As the terror marker goes round and round the game board, it activates terror cards of different difficulty, as well as the special effects of the location cards. It also sets the playing time, triggering the events leading up to the endgame.

THE SYMBOLS OF THE CULTISTORM



THE GAME SETUP

1.) Put the parts of the game board to their corresponding places and join them together!

2.) Choose five random location cards and put them on their designated place on the board!

Place a cultist die on each location card to its designated place.

3.) Assemble the cultist deck!

From the deck of basic cultists choose the cards **corresponding to the number of players**. You can do this by looking at the numbers in the skull in the top right corner.

Shuffle the cultist deck and draw one cultist for each of the locations.

Place the cultist marker on the location card which is marked as the starting location.

4.) Every player chooses an investigator!

Players may choose their own character after deciding together with the other players, but they can also decide to draw a random character.

The players take **their character board and plastic figure**, then choose a colour and put the matching **rubber ring** on the bottom of the figure in order to facilitate the distinction between the figures. Then players take the investigator badge matching their colour and they place it next to their board to remind them of their colour. Finally, they should take the **two target markers** in their own colour.

Each investigator has a unique action card deck; in the base game it is 21 cards per investigator. The players should take their unique action card decks, these are marked by the illustration of the investigator both in the front and the back. Shuffle the deck and place it next to your character board.

5.) Choose the starting equipment!

Shuffle the object deck and give each investigator **two random object cards**. The investigators choose one card they would like to keep as starting equipment and they place the other card at the bottom of the object pack. Since it's a co-operative game, players can discuss who should keep which card.

Place the facedown object deck next to the board for easy access.

If during the preparation you draw an "unexpected event" card (for example: **Summoning Eye**), you ignore its effect, but you don't draw another object in its place. If both cards are of this type, the investigator doesn't get a starting object. Place every remaining object back in the deck, shuffle it and place it face down next to board.

6.) Place the following things next to the board:

- trophy tokens
- insanity tokens
- gate seal cards and tokens
- location activation (altar) markers

7.) Place all the investigator dice (all 8) in an easily accessible place, then place on the board the amount of dice corresponding to the number of the investigators. The unused dice form a reserve from where the players can get further dice during the game although only until the end of the turn (unless stated otherwise on the card.)

8.) Prepare the cards of the Great Old Ones

Sort out the Great Old Ones of the first and second wave. The second wave ones are marked by a  icon in the top right corner. Place both decks next to the board.

9.) Set up the terror circle with the use of the terror cards

Prepare the terror and endgame cards and shuffle the two decks separately. Place the topmost terror card to the bottom of the deck without looking at it. Starting from the “shield” symbol on the board, drawing from the top of the deck, place one face down card to every card place. Place the rest of the terror cards next to board.

Draw one of the “Endgame” cards and place it on the card place above the “eye” symbol. We can put the other endgame cards in the box, we won’t need them during the game.

Place the terror marker on the card above the “eye” symbol and place a terror crystal on the card right away.

10.) Starting locations of the investigators

Starting from the oldest player and going clockwise, every player places their investigator miniature. Begin on the starting location and move on to the next location.

USING SPECIAL CULTIST CASTS

If you would like to make the game more difficult and varied, you can also use special cultist sects as well. There is one such deck in the base game, but the expansions and the promo sets add further sets to the world of Cultistorm.

We suggest that you always use only one special cultist sect during the game because these cultists also have special actions and effects which make fighting them, and thus also the game, more difficult.

MODIFIED SETUP

During the set up, after having assembled the cultist deck according to the 2. point, randomly remove seven cultist cards from the deck and replace them with the cultists of the special cultist sect of your choice. Place the Great Old One belonging to the sect separately next to the board, don’t shuffle it in with the other Old Ones!

If as a consequence of an effect a Great Old One is summoned when a special cultist is in play, it is the Great Old One belonging to the special sect that comes into play. It is also possible that he will be summoned multiple times during a game.

Naturally, more experienced players looking for more challenges can also play with multiple special cultists sects, in this case remove 7 normal cultist cards for each special cast you want to play and replace them with special cultist cards.

THE GAMEPLAY

The game is played in turns and each turn is made up of **six phases**:

1. CULTIST PHASE: first the new cultists enter the game
2. UPDATE PHASE: every investigator draws an action card and we roll the investigator dice
3. TERROR PHASE: we advance the terror marker on the terror circle
4. PREPARATION PHASE: the investigators discuss what they're going to do in their turn, they support one another's preparation for the upcoming fights
5. COMBAT PHASE: the investigators fight in the order of locations against the cultists and/or the Great Old Ones.
6. LOCATION SEALING PHASE: To win the game the investigators need to seal all the locations in play.

Certain cards and expansion can modify the rules of the base game, in this case you should take the rules on the card or in the rule book of the extension in consideration.

1.) CULTIST PHASE: THE APPEARANCE OF NEW CULTISTS

Every turn starts with new cultists appearing on the locations. **Move the cultist marker clockwise on the location cards as many times as there are players.** For each location touched by the moving cultist marker, draw a cultist card and place it on the location face up. The card should be placed on the topmost space of the cultist column.

The cultist marker always shows the location where the new cultist should arrive – regardless of the way this cultist arrived in game.

CULTIST LIMIT IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS

If there are three cultists on any locations when in the cultist phase (or in later phases as a result of any other effect) a fourth cultist arrives, a Great Old One is summoned immediately after the arrival of the fourth cultist. Look for the Great Old One that belongs to the fourth cultist who has triggered its appearance, the name and picture of the Old One can be found on the cultist card. Place the card of the Old One above the fourth (the topmost) cultist.

Place the card of the Great Old One above fourth cultist (the topmost in the column.)

If for whatever reason a Great Old One enters the game, every investigator gets an insanity token right away.

If a Great Old One appeared on a location and until it is in play, no more cultists can appear on that location. If in the cultist phase we move the cultist marker on a location with a Great Old One, we have to move it to the next location right away and that's where the next cultist arrives.

SEALED LOCATIONS

If a location is sealed, no Great Old One can appear there, not even after the fourth cultist. The location can have any number of cultists, they won't summon an Old One. However, they still count in the cultist limit.

We're going to talk more about sealing locations in the description of the preparation phase.

BLOCKED LOCATIONS

If as a result of an investigator action, object or event a cultist cannot appear on a location **in this phase**, move the cultist marker on without adding a cultist. To sum up, there is one less cultist for each location the players had managed to block.

THE CULTIST LIMIT

Number of players	2	3	4	5
CULTIST LIMIT	10	11	12	13

At any given moment there can be only as many cultist on the board as is indicated by the above table. **If at any moment the appearance of a cultist would make the players exceed the cultist limit, the investigators lose immediately.** Great Old Ones and the cultists devoured by them don't count in this limit!

MOVING THE GREAT OLD ONE TOWARDS LOCATIONS

If in the cultist phase there is already a Great Old One in play, move its card one step down towards the location card. The Great Old one devours the cultist who is situated right underneath it; place it under the Old One and the cards of the previously devoured cultist in a way that only the cast symbol icon is showing. This symbol is added to the symbol reserve (the magical power) of the Great Old One.

You can read more about this in the chapter about fighting Great Old Ones.

If by devouring the last cultist, the Old One arrives directly in front of a location card (to the gate), the investigators have to defeat him in that turn, otherwise in the cultist phase of the next turn the Great Old One moves on to the location card, with this he crosses over to our world and the players lose the game.

ROLLING THE CULTIST DICE

After having placed the new cultists (and the Great Old One, if there is any) who appeared in the cultist phase, roll the cultist die for each location and **place the cultist die on its designated place on the location card.**

The symbols you have rolled are added to the symbols of all the cultists and Old Ones who are in that location.

2.) UPDATE PHASE

The update phase begins by the players discarding the cards they have from the previous round and which they don't want to use. Then they replenish their hand from their draw pile until they have 4 cards.

In the first round of the game every player draws 4 cards.

One player **rolls as many investigator die** as there are investigators and places the dice in the middle of the game board.

3.) TERROR PHASE

Advance the terror marker clockwise to the next terror card and place a terror crystal on the card.

You can find an activation mark on the back of terror cards; it ranges from 2 to 6. **When a card has as many crystals as the number marked on its back, the card is immediately activated.** Put the crystals back in the reserve, turn the card face up, read the instructions out loud and carry them out.

Put the topmost card of the terror deck to the bottom of the deck without looking at it and place the next card facedown where the activated terror card had been.

As a result of certain action cards, location actions and other effects the terror marker can move also in the later phase of the game. Follow the same procedure: move the terror marker clockwise to the next card and place a terror crystal on the card.

ACTIVATING LOCATION ACTIONS

Every time the terror marker has completed a full circle on the terror circle and it returns to the card with the “shield” symbol, **the players have to activate a location action.**

The players can decide together and freely which location to activate, there is no mandatory activation order.

Place the altar marker on the location card you wish to activate. From that moment on the action or effect written on the card is active so it becomes available for the investigators during the preparation.

If all the location cards have been activated during the game, the start of a new terror circle won't have this effect anymore.

4.) PREPARATION OF INVESTIGATORS PHASE

The preparation phase is the longest and most important part of the game. The investigators discuss their strategy and prepare together to fight the cultists and/or the Great Old Ones who might already be at the gates of certain locations.

In this phase the players can carry out the following actions in any order. They can also repeat them any number of times. This phase lasts until all of the players say that they can't or don't want to carry out any more actions and they're ready for the combat phase.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS DURING THE PREPARATION PHASE:

- A.) CHOSING AN INVESTIGATOR DIE
- B.) MOVEMENT
- C.) CARRYING OUT A LOCATION ACTION
- D.) RESEARCH
- E.) GIVING/EXCHANGING OBJECTS
- F.) PLAYING SUPPORT CARDS
- G.) CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND OBTAINING THE GATE SEALS
- H.) CHOOSING TARGETS

A.) CHOSING AN INVESTIGATOR DIE

During the preparation phase each investigator can take **one investigator die** from the common reserve. They can do this anytime and they can also discuss their choice with the other players. Any investigator can decide that they don't need a die this turn, they are not obliged to take one, but it doesn't mean that the other players can take more than one die from the reserve.

After having played certain action cards, the investigators who have received die support can reroll or freely modify the die **they have already taken from the reserve** or they can give their die (or one of their dice) to one of the other players. The player who received such a support can get two or even more investigator dice from the common reserve.

There are certain action cards which allow us to add further investigator dice to the common reserve or to the player we support. These extra die can be taken from the reserve next to the playing area. If an extra die enters the game, we roll it right away and following the instructions on the action card add it either to the reserve of the supported player or to the common reserve situated in the middle of the playing area. If there are more dice in play than investigators, it means that an investigator could potentially take more dice from the common reserve, not only the one die they are due.

IMPORTANT: In most cases if a die enters the game as a result of a support action, it leaves the game after the turn. Afterwards there should be only as many investigator dice in play as there are players. The extra die only enter the game temporarily, for one turn (except for the extra die that enters the game as a result of the higher level abilities of the Gambler character.)

The symbols of the investigator die are added to the symbols of the action card in the hand of the player and they can be used when fighting cultists or Great Old Ones.

If you roll a [wild] symbol, you can change the die into any other symbol. If as a result of an effect the [wild] dice can be doubled, it always means two identical copies of the symbol of your choice.

B.) MOVEMENT

During the preparation phase the investigators can **move any time and any number of times** between locations. When an investigator moves to a location, place the investigator figurine on the location where you want to arrive. Movement happens between any two location cards regardless of the positions of the cards on the board.

Multiple investigators can be situated on the same card.

The first movement of each turn is free for every investigator, any further movement gives you one insanity token. *It's not the movement itself that drives you insane, but the constant exposure to the places invaded by cultists.*

IMPORTANT: you can only move in the preparation phase. You cannot move during or after fights!

C.) CARRYING OUT A LOCATION ACTION

Every investigator can use location actions in **any locations** which have already been activated. (See the details of activation location actions under the description of the terror phase.)

To carry out a location action the investigator has to be in that active location.

Location actions can be used multiple times unless the card states otherwise.

D.) RESEARCH

Every researcher who has **at least one** action card with the research icon , can carry out one research action **any time** during the preparation phase. You don't have to research if you don't want to and it has no further obligations. If you need none of the objects you have found, you can decide not to take any. However, if you have drawn **the summoning eye or another event card** their effect must be applied right away.

The player carrying out the research counts how many  icons they have. They can draw up to that many object cards and keep one of them. Put the rest on the discard pile of the objects. *Don't forget: you don't have to draw as many cards as you could because research is not always without dangers.*

Every player can only research once per turn. You have to remember this because after playing the support actions in the preparation phase, you'll draw new cards and it's possible that in the beginning of the preparation phase we have a different number of cards with the  icon than after having carried out a few actions.

If you get to the end of the object draw pile, you can't reshuffle the discard pile automatically! This means that sometimes it's better not to research by drawing a lot of cards because you could exhaust the object deck too quickly. However, there are action effects or abilities which allow the object deck to be reshuffled. **Every investigator can have up to two objects!** If an investigator already has two objects and during their research they find an object they want to keep, they have to discard one of their objects before. If the text on an object card says that a player can only have one copy of that object, there's no way for you to keep the second copy.

E.) GIVING/EXCHANGING OBJECTS

Investigators on the same location can freely give each other objects or exchange them. This is actually one of the main purposes of the movement between different locations during the preparation phase.

Trophies and gate seal cards cannot be given or exchanged in this way – those can be done only by using the appropriate action cards!

F.) PLAYING SUPPORT CARDS

Supporting each other is the most important mechanism of the game and the key to victory.

Players have the opportunity to support each other by using the action cards in their hands. If you want to use a card for support, you **place it face up in front of the supported player**. There are support actions which offer optional support actions, it's up to the supported player and not the supporting player to decide if they want to use them or not.

If you play an action card for support in the preparation phase, you cannot go back on it later!

Each turn every player can play up **to twice as many** action cards as there are players.

In the action deck of investigators there are two types of cards: cards in connection with the investigator's special ability, these ones are marked with the  icon and the general cards which are the same for every investigator.

When a player supports another player, **they receive an insanity token immediately after having played the card.** However, the personal cards marked with the [star] symbol are an exception, playing them doesn't give you an insanity token.

After playing a support card from your hand, draw a new action card from your own draw pack. If you have played a support card with the , you cannot draw a new card. You cannot play a support card the supported player cannot carry out.

Support actions have two **types depending on when you need to execute the action:**

- Unless the card states otherwise, the supported player has to carry **out the action immediately after** the card was played. These are the actions for the preparation phase.
- As for the rest of the cards, the supported player uses them during the combat phase, in their own combat round. These supports have the  symbol.

EXPLANATION OF ACTION CARD SYMBOLS:



Special character cards – playing them doesn't give you any insanity



Using the support action also gives you an insanity token



When you're researching, you can choose from as many object cards as you have this symbol in your hand.



After carrying out the action, a cultist appears on the location with the cultist marker. Move the marker along to the next location.



Timing marker: the action takes effect in the next turn



After carrying out the action, advance the terror marker to the next card and place a terror crystal on it



The player who received the support can use the effect of the card in **their own combat round**



Icon denoting actions involving die manipulation



Icon denoting actions involving trophy manipulation



Icon denoting actions involving card manipulation



After playing this support, the investigator who played it **cannot** draw a new card



Action connected to Great Old Ones (information icon)

G.) CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND OBTAINING THE GATE SEALS

Players can decide to develop their character any time during the preparation phase. You can find three abilities on every character board; you can develop them one after the other and they're more and more powerful. They're connected to the special ability and role of the investigator. You can only develop them in order: first the level 1 ability, then level 2 and finally level 3.

To develop abilities you need trophies: 1 for the level 1 ability and 2 for levels 2 and 3. **To make a level 2 or 3 development the two trophies you use have to be identical.** When you develop the ability, place the trophies on your character board to the indicated place, signalling that the ability has been activated. The trophies you used to activate an ability stay there until the end of the game.

- Beside losing trophies, developing character abilities have other negative effects (you can also find these effects on the player boards):
- When you activate a level 1 ability, advance the terror marker once.
- When you activate a level 2 ability, advance the terror marker once + a cultist appears on the location of the investigator who activated their ability (the cultist marker doesn't move in this case)
- When you activate a level 3 ability, advance the terror marker once + a cultist appears on the location of the investigator who activated their ability (the cultist marker doesn't move on in this case) + the investigator gets an ongoing insanity token.

When an investigator activates a new ability, they can choose one of the available gate seal cards. They're free to choose whichever card they want. An investigator can have multiple gate seals depending on how many ability developments they have done. **Gate seal cards aren't object cards**, so it's not affected by the limitations and effects concerning object cards. **They can't be given to another investigator** during the game.

Getting gate seal cards is a prerequisite to sealing locations. This also means that to win the game at least five character ability needs to be activated – it doesn't matter how many investigators do it or how the activations are distributed. If the players manage to get all the five gate seal cards, developing character abilities won't have this effect anymore.

H.) CHOOSING TARGETS

Investigators can decide any time during the preparation phase which cultist they want to fight on their location. When you have made your decision, place a target marker on that cultist.

Don't forget: investigators won't move during the combat phase, so they can only place target markers on cultists who are in the same location as they are at the end of the preparation phase.

If an investigator has the resources, the support and the opportunity **to fight two cultists** successfully in the same location, they can also use their second target marker.

One cultist can be attacked by multiple investigators in the same turn, if the players are not sure that one of them could take him on alone. (There can be some uncertainties regarding the outcome of the combat

due to certain effects, for example if cultist or investigator die are rerolled during the combat.) In cases like this every investigator should place their own target marker on the cultist card. During the combat the investigators can decide in which order they want to attack the same cultist, but their combat symbols are not added up. If the first investigator manages to kill the cultist, the other investigators won't have anybody to fight.

5.) COMBAT PHASE

After the investigators have prepared for the upcoming fights, they need to take on the cultists and/or Great Old Ones on their locations. During a combat the investigators and the cultists/Old Ones are fighting each other with the help of magical symbols.

Every investigator has to participate in the combat phase.

The fights are resolved one by one, one after the other. You always have to start with the fights on the starting location and move on to the next one clockwise. **If multiple investigators are fighting** on the same location, they can decide who starts.

It's not compulsory to fight cultists, however, **if an investigator can't or doesn't want to fight a cultist, or they try but can't defeat them, the investigator automatically receives an insanity token and you have to advance the terror marker on the terror circle.**

If as a result a terror card is activated, the effect has to be carried out immediately, before the fight of the investigator on the next location is started.

FIGHTING RULES AGAINST THE CULTISTS

During a fight cultists and Great Old Ones are protected by occult symbols. Players have to get through these symbols to be able to defeat them: that is they need to have the same symbols (on the action cards in their hands, investigator die, objects or thanks to their supports and other actions and effects) as their opponent. Every card and effect providing a symbol can be used only once during the combat phase.

If the active investigator has support cards in front of them which they can use in the combat phase, they can use their effects during their fight.

MELEE AND RANGED COMBATS

Ranged fighters (you can see the gun symbol on their character board) can attack any cultist on their location.

Melee fighters (you can see the boxing symbol on their character board) can only attack the cultist closest to them, that is the one in the location card.

You can only attack Great Old Ones in the gate, see further details later.

DIE ROLL DURING THE FIGHT

All the investigator die which weren't given to you during the initial die distribution has **to be rolled the moment you receive it.**

The general rule for rerolls is this: one investigator die can be rerolled once for one insanity. This option can be used any number of times, as long as the investigator can carry out this action without dying.

Don't forget: investigators can't heal themselves or others during the combat phase!

The results of the die are added to the symbols of action cards in the player's hand.

CHANCES IN FIGHTS

Every cultist can have **3, 4 or 5 symbols in a fight**, depending on the following things:

- **3 symbols:** if we roll blank with the cultist die and the cultist cast's symbol is not the same as that of the location, the cultist is only protected by the symbols of their own card. Nothing is added to those symbols.
- **4 symbols:** three on the cultist card + one on the cultist die, however the cultist's cast symbol is not identical to the location symbol – or the cast symbol is identical with that of the location, but you have rolled blank.
- **5 symbols:** 3 on the cultist cards + the cultist symbol is identical to that of the location + we didn't roll blank with the cultist die.

Investigators need to match these symbols with their own in order to defeat the cultists.

If an investigator obtains all the symbols the cultist has, the investigator got through the cultist's occult protection and can kill him.

This can be done with the help of

- their own character abilities,
- the action cards in their hand,
- the action gained by the support they received from the others,
- their own object cards,
- the actions provided by certain locations,
- and the investigator die

DEFEATING A CULTIST

If an investigator manages to kill a cultist during a fight, **they can take a trophy matching the cultist's cast symbol from the reserve**. If there is no such a trophy in the reserve, the investigator doesn't get a trophy after the victory. (In special cultist casts there can be cultists who don't have a cast symbol. After defeating them, the investigators don't receive any trophies.)

After defeating them, put the cultist card in the cultist discard pile and if there are further cultist and/or Great Old One cards above them, **move those towards the location card**.

The active investigator discards all the action cards they have used for the fight and gives back the support cards to the other players so that they can discard them in their own discard pile.

FIGHTING THE AWAKENED GREAT OLD ONE

THE APPEARANCE OF THE GREAT OLD ONE

Great Old Ones can enter the game as a result of multiple events:

- if a **fourth cultist** appears on a location which hasn't been sealed

- as a consequence of a terror card
- as a consequence of game events

If a fourth cultist arrives to a location, find the Great Old One card that belongs to the cast of the cultist (it is also marked on the card) and place it **above** the fourth cultist.

If an Old One arrives for a different reason than surpassing the local cultist limit and if there is no concrete rule specifying his appearance, the Great Old One is summoned on the location of the cultist marker. In cases like this you draw a random card from the Great Old One deck.

If the Old One would arrive to a location which has been sealed, he appears on the next free location, regardless of the number of the cultists there.

When a Great Old One is summoned, every investigator automatically gets one insanity token, regardless of the location of the investigators and the Old One.

At any given moment there can only be one Old One in play. If for some reason one (or more) other Old One would appear, while another one is already in play, the new one is not summoned. **However, every investigator immediately receives one insanity token because of the Old One and the terror marked is moved as many times as there are investigators in play.**

FIGHTING GREAT OLD ONES

On the location where the Great Old One has appeared, no new cultists appear in the cultist phase of the later turns. **Instead of the arrival of cultists, in the cultist phase you have to advance the Great Old One to the next cultist card in the direction of the city location**, thus showing that the awoken Old One has devoured one his followers.

Slid the card of the devoured cultist under the card of the Old One. This symbol is added to the symbols of the Old One. The Old One receives a new symbol for each cultist they have devoured on the way to the location card.

The investigators can only fight the Old One, if there are no more living cultists in front of him and he has reached the gate, so he is directly in front of the city location. If you want, multiple investigators can fight an Old One in one turn, but their powers are not added up. You place your target marker on the Great Old One the same way you would do with a cultist. If multiple investigators are fighting the Old One, they attack him one by one, in the order of their choice.

When you attack a Great Old One, it immediately gives you an insanity. You get it at the beginning of your own combat phase, so you can only actually fight the Old One if you have survived that insanity.

The combat goes the same way as with cultists. The Great Old One's power is made up of:

- the symbols on the Great Old One card,
- all the symbols of the cultists he has devoured,
- the symbol of the location that the Great Old One gets automatically,
- the symbol of the cultist die on the location

This means that in the best case scenario (for the investigators) the Old One has 6, in the worst 11 symbols.

The investigator fighting the Old One can use:

- their special abilities (if they have any)
- the actions in their hand
- the combat actions they got from the support others had given them
- their own objects
- the actions provided by the locations (if there is any)
- and the investigator die

As you can see, it's not impossible to defeat a Great Old one, but it is a very difficult and perilous task – you should try everything to avoid an encounter with them.

As soon as a Great Old One appears, the investigators cannot win until they have defeated him.

DEFEATING AN OLD ONE

If the investigator fighting the Great Old One has all the symbols of the Old One, they manage to send him back to the otherworldly dimension he had come from.

Put the Old One's card back among the Old One cards (This means that the card is not removed from the game, it's possible that the same Old One returns at a later point. **This city location is automatically sealed.** After defeating the Old One, place a gate seal marker on the location and put the trophies from there back to the common reserve. **If a location was sealed this way, you don't need the matching gate seal card.**

DEFEAT

If you don't manage to defeat the Great Old One in the turn in which he arrived in front of the location card, he steps over to our world in the cultist phase of the next turn. If this happens, the investigators immediately lose the game.

There are actions and effects which could make the investigators gain one more round against the Old One – it's a good idea to use these opportunities.

6. THE LOCATION SEALING PHASE

To win the game the investigators need to seal all the locations in play.

Sealing a location has two conditions:

- 1.) The investigators need to collect as many trophy markers as there are players. These are marked on the board and they are linked to the locations.

An investigator can only place a trophy on a location from their own reserve, if they're on this location.

There is no limit to how many trophies you can place on a location card in one go during the preparation, the combat or the sealing phase.

- 2.) The investigators need to have the gate seal belonging to the symbol of the location. They can get these by developing character abilities (see in the previous part)

It is the investigator with the matching gate seal card who has to seal the gate. To seal a gate the investigator needs to be on that location.

If at the moment of sealing there are no cultists on that location, there is no other price or negative effect. If, however, there are any cultists on the location, the investigator carrying out the action, gets as many insanity tokens as there are cultists on the location. The insanity tokens cannot be shared even if there are more investigators on the location.

If a Great Old One has appeared on this location, it cannot be sealed until the Old One is in play.

If an investigator dies while trying to seal the gate, the players lose the game even if it was the last location. **You can heal insanity only after/if the investigator has survived the sealing.**

The trophies you place on a location cannot be taken back. After sealing the location, place the seal card on the location and put the trophies back in the common reserve.

If the investigators manage to defeat a Great Old One somewhere, **that location gets automatically sealed.** You can find further details at the part about fighting Old Ones.

END OF THE GAME

The end of the game is triggered by the activation of “End Game” type terror cards.

These cards can be activated in two ways:

- the sixth terror crystal is placed on an endgame card,
- the cultist deck runs out.

Whichever effect triggers the end game, turn the Endgame card up, read the text and carry out the instructions. Endgame cards activate immediate events and effects. They always summon a second wave Old One too.

In case there is already a Great Old One in play when the Endgame card is activated, contrary to general rules, the first Old One stays in the game and the second one who was summoned during the endgame also comes into play. The investigators have to defeat both of them.

If the Endgame card is activated because the cultist deck has run out or it runs out after you have drawn the Endgame card, **reshuffle the cultist deck** and continue the game!

The investigators win the game, if they manage to seal all the locations and defeat every Great Old One in play.

The investigators lose if:

- any investigator goes insane and dies,
- if any Great Old One reaches a location card and the investigators don't manage to defeat him,
- if the number of cultists exceeds the cultist limit,
- if the investigators don't manage to seal all the locations before they defeated every Old One after the activation of the Endgame card.