Arkham Horror
The Card Game

Learn to Play

Beyond Time and Space...

Assuming that I was sane and awake, my experience on that night was such as has befallen no man before. It was, moreover, a frightful confirmation of all I had sought to dismiss as myth and dream.

–H. P. Lovecraft, The Shadow Out of Time

Game Overview

Arkham Horror: The Card Game is a cooperative Living Card Game® (LCG®) in which one to four investigators work together to unravel arcane mysteries and conspiracies, while simultaneously overcoming the personal demons that haunt their past.

Each player takes on the role of a single investigator and builds a deck around that investigator's abilities. A series of interrelated scenarios creates a narrative campaign through which a broader mystery is unraveled. In each of these scenarios, the investigators move through and explore a number of menacing locations, look for clues that enable them to advance the story, and attempt to evade or defeat the treacherous forces of the Mythos.

As progress is made in the campaign, each investigator gains experience and insight, which allows the character to develop in a variety of ways by adding powerful new high-level cards to his or her deck. But beware: as one's exposure to the arcane world increases, so too does the risk of insanity. The investigators must protect themselves against this tightening grip of madness, all the while attempting to survive and solve the mystery.

Using This Book

This Learn to Play book is written as an introduction to *Arkham Horror: The Card Game* for new players. It should be used as a guide while learning and playing the first game. We recommend that new players learn the basics of the game using the introductory scenario and the pre-constructed decks described in "Investigator Starter Decks," on page 4. The end of this book also contains an introduction to campaign play and rules for customizing original decks. A quick reference of keywords, icons, and important game symbols can be found on the back cover of this book.

The complete rules of play can be found in the Rules Reference book, which also addresses more advanced topics such as the interpretation of card text, the resolution of timing conflicts, and a detailed phase sequence. We recommend that new players become familiar with the game using this Learn to Play book and only look up details in the Rules Reference as they occur in play.

A Living Card Game

Arkham Horror: The Card Game is a one-to-four-player cooperative game. One to two players can play using just the contents of this core set, and up to four players can play the game using a second copy of the core set. In addition, *Arkham Horror: The Card Game* is a Living Card Game® (LCG®), and the experience of the game may be customized and enhanced through the purchase of regularly released expansions. Expansions may introduce new investigators, additional scenarios or campaigns, and new player cards that can add variety and depth to investigator decks. While playing through an entire campaign creates the best experience, each of the scenarios in a campaign may instead be played as a standalone adventure. Unlike collectible card games, all LCG expansions have a fixed distribution; there is no randomization to their contents.

Components

Examples of the components in the game are presented here for identification purposes. A complete card anatomy can be found on pages 28–31 of the Rules Reference.

44 Chaos Tokens

27 Damage Tokens (1s and 3s)

30 Resource Tokens

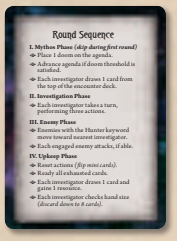
30 Clue/Doom Tokens (double-sided)

18 Horror Tokens (1s and 3s)

5 Investigator Cards

5 Investigator Mini Cards

119 Player Cards



Player Reference Card

Asset Card

Skill Card

Event Card

Weakness Card

110 Scenario Cards

Agenda Card

Act Card

Scenario Reference Card

Location Card (double-sided)

Enemy Card

Treachery Card

First Game Setup

To set up the first game, perform the following steps in order. The game is best learned with one or two players.

1. **Choose investigator(s).** Each player chooses an investigator and places that investigator's card in his or her play area. For the first game, it is recommended that one player use Roland Banks (card 1). If there is a second player, it is recommended that that player use Wendy Adams (card 5).
2. **Choose one of those investigators to be the lead investigator for this game, and give that player the Campaign Guide.**
   - *The lead investigator is the player who will break ties and make decisions for the group whenever there is a conflict.*
3. **Assemble and shuffle the player decks.** The cards used in each of the recommended investigators' starter decks are detailed in the "Investigator Starter Decks" sidebar.

Investigator Starter Decks

Roland Banks starter deck (card identification numbers in parentheses):

- *Roland's .38 Special (6)*
- *Cover Up (7)*
- *.45 Automatic (16)*
- *Physical Training (17)*
- *Beat Cop (18)*
- *First Aid (19)*
- *Machete (20)*
- *Guard Dog (21)*
- *Evidence! (22)*
- *Dodge (23)*
- *Dynamite Blast (24)*
- *Vicious Blow (25)*
- *Magnifying Glass (30)*
- *Old Book of Lore (31)*
- *Research Librarian (32)*
- *Dr. Milan Christopher (33)*
- *Hyperawareness (34)*
- *Medical Texts (35)*
- *Mind over Matter (36)*
- *Working a Hunch (37)*
- *Barricade (38)*
- *Deduction (39)*
- *2 copies of Knife (86)*
- *2 copies of Flashlight (87)*
- *2 copies of Emergency Cache (88)*
- *2 copies of Guts (89)*
- *2 copies of Manual Dexterity (92)*
- *Paranoia (97)*

Wendy Adams starter deck (card identification numbers in parentheses):

- *Wendy's Amulet (14)*
- *Abandoned and Alone (15)*
- *Switchblade (44)*
- *Burglary (45)*
- *Pickpocketing (46)*
- *.41 Derringer (47)*
- *Leo De Luca (48)*
- *Hard Knocks (49)*
- *Elusive (50)*
- *Backstab (51)*
- *Sneak Attack (52)*
- *Opportunist (53)*
- *Leather Coat (72)*
- *Scavenging (73)*
- *Baseball Bat (74)*
- *Rabbit's Foot (75)*
- *Stray Cat (76)*
- *Dig Deep (77)*
- *Cunning Distraction (78)*
- *"Look what I found!" (79)*
- *Lucky! (80)*
- *Survival Instinct (81)*
- *2 copies of Knife (86)*
- *2 copies of Flashlight (87)*
- *2 copies of Emergency Cache (88)*
- *2 copies of Overpower (91)*
- *2 copies of Unexpected Courage (93)*
- *Amnesia (96)*

- *Some cards have an upgraded version with one or more white pips in the upper left-hand corner of the card. When building these starter decks, **do not** include these upgraded versions.*

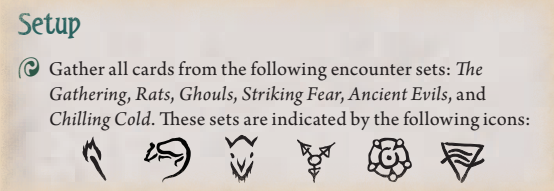
4. **Assemble token pool.** Place the damage, horror, clue/doom, and resource tokens within easy reach of all investigators.
   - *The token pool serves as a repository for all tokens that are not being used at a given moment.*
5. **Assemble the chaos bag.** Place the 16 chaos tokens indicated below into an opaque container such as a bag, bowl, or cup. This container is referred to as the "chaos bag." Return the other chaos tokens to the game box.
   +1, 0, 0, –1, –1, –1, –2, –2, –3, –4, ☠, ☠, ⚠, ◆, ✦, ★
   - *Throughout the game, the investigators are asked to randomly reveal tokens from the chaos bag to modify their chances of success or failure in a variety of situations.*
6. **Take starting resources.** Each investigator takes 5 resources from the token pool and places them near his or her investigator card. This is the investigator's resource pool.
   - *Resources are spent by an investigator to play cards from his or her hand.*
7. **Draw opening hands.** Each investigator draws 5 cards from his or her deck. If a weakness card is drawn at any point during this step, set it aside instead of adding it to your hand, draw an additional card, and then shuffle the weakness back into your deck.
   - *Each player may take a single mulligan at this time, if desired, by setting aside up to 5 of the cards just drawn, drawing an equivalent number of cards, and shuffling the set-aside cards back into his or her deck. Taking a mulligan is recommended if a player does not receive a decent starting hand. For instance, drawing no assets would be a good reason to take a mulligan.*

Scenario Setup

The following steps refer to scenario-specific information for the first scenario in the *Night of the Zealot* campaign.

8. **Read the scenario introduction for "The Gathering."** The introduction for this scenario is the italicized flavor text on page 2 of the *Night of the Zealot* Campaign Guide, under "Part I: The Gathering."
   - *The scenario introduction provides a narrative hook for the tale that is about to unfold. Pay attention to such narrative passages, both in the Campaign Guide and in card flavor text, as important details may be revealed that inform or add context for decisions made later in the scenario.*

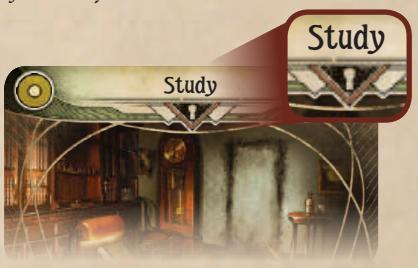
9. **Find the scenario cards for "The Gathering."** The encounter sets used in this scenario are (card identification numbers in parentheses): *The Gathering* (cards 104–119), *Rats* (card 159), *Ghouls* (cards 160–162), *Striking Fear* (cards 163–165), *Ancient Evils* (card 166), and *Chilling Cold* (cards 167–168). The cards in each encounter set have a symbol identifying them as part of that encounter set. In the Campaign Guide, this information is presented in the following manner:



- *When gathering encounter cards, gather all copies of each card in the listed encounter sets. Use the encounter set numbers (#/#) at the bottom of each encounter card to aid you.*

10. **Set agenda deck.** Assemble the agenda deck (in sequential order so that "agenda 1a" is on top, "agenda 2a" is next, etc.) using the agenda cards from the encounter sets found during step 9. Read the story text on agenda 1a.
    - *The agenda deck represents the progress made by the dark forces of the Mythos. Generally, the investigators do **not** want the agenda deck to advance.*
11. **Set act deck.** Assemble the act deck (in sequential order so that "act 1a" is on top, "act 2a" is next, etc.) using the act cards from the encounter sets found during step 9. Read the story text on act 1a.
    - *The act deck represents progress made by the investigators toward solving the mystery or achieving their objectives in a scenario. Generally, the investigators **want** the act deck to advance.*

12. **Place the scenario reference card for "The Gathering" (card 104a) next to the agenda deck.** Use the "easy/standard" side for this tutorial.
    - *This card is referenced each time a , , or token is selected from the chaos bag to indicate how that token affects the game state.*
13. **Put the Study into play (card 111).** When a location is put into play, it always enters play with its **UNREVEALED** side faceup. The unrevealed side of a location can be identified by the presence of a keyhole symbol below its title (pictured below).
    - *Read the flavor text on the unrevealed side of the Study at this time.*



14. **Set every other location aside, out of play.** These cards are the Hallway, Attic, Cellar, and Parlor (cards 112–115).
    - *When the players are instructed to "set aside" encounter or player cards, those cards are not used right away but should be kept close at hand, as they may be needed at a later point during the scenario.*
15. **Each investigator begins play in the Study.** Place each investigator's mini card next to the Study to represent that each investigator is in the Study.
    - *When an investigator enters (or begins play at) a location, flip that location to its **REVEALED** side. The revealed side of a location can be identified by the presence of shroud and clue values. When a location is revealed, place clues on it equal to its clue value, which, for the Study, is 2 clues per investigator.*

16. **Set the Ghoul Priest (card 116) and Lita Chantler (card 117) cards aside, out of play.**
17. **Assemble the encounter deck.** Take the remainder of the cards found during step 9 (i.e., the cards that were not already used for another purpose in steps 10–16), and shuffle them together to create the encounter deck.
    - *Throughout the game, investigators will draw encounter cards from this deck representing perils, monsters, madnesses, and other afflictions they must overcome in order to succeed.*

A diagram of a suggested play area is presented on the following page.

The game is now ready to begin.

Wendy's Assets

Investigator Card

Wendy's Deck

Wendy's Discard Pile

Wendy's Play Area

Wendy's Threat Area
(Engaged enemies, curses, injuries, and other afflictions go here.)

Wendy's Resource Pool

Scenario Reference

Act Deck

Agenda Deck

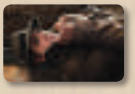
Encounter Area

Encounter Deck

Encounter Discard Pile

Wendy's Mini Card

Location (Study)



Roland's Mini Card

Token Pool

Roland's Threat Area
(Engaged enemies, curses, injuries, and other afflictions go here.)

Roland's Resource Pool

Roland's Play Area

Roland's Assets

Investigator Card

Roland's Deck

Roland's Discard Pile

Key Concepts

This section introduces a number of foundational concepts important to learning and playing the game.

The Golden Rule

If the text on a card directly contradicts the text of the rules (either in this document or in the Rules Reference), the text on the card takes precedence. If it is possible to observe both the card text and the text of the rules, both are observed.

Choices and Conflicts

If the players are required to make a choice among two or more equally valid options (*for example, an enemy must move toward "the nearest investigator," and there are two valid options*), the lead investigator chooses among those options.

If the players are unsure how to resolve a rules or timing conflict, resolve the conflict in the manner the players perceive as the worst possible at that moment with regard to winning the scenario, and continue with the game. This is known as "The Grim Rule," and using this rule helps to keep the game moving without forcing the players to look up every conflict they discover.

Winning and Losing

As the players advance through a scenario, they will eventually reach a resolution. Some of these resolutions are favorable (and can be considered "wins"); others are less favorable and leave the investigators in a more dire situation.

The act deck represents the progress of the investigators through a scenario. The players' primary objective is to gather clues and use them to advance through the act deck until a (hopefully favorable) resolution is reached.

The agenda deck represents the objectives and progress of the malicious forces pitted against the investigators in the scenario. Should the agenda deck reach its conclusion, a (usually darker) resolution will occur.

When any encounter card triggers a resolution—denoted by the text "(→**R#**)"—the players have completed the scenario and should refer to the resolution text that matches that number in the Campaign Guide to discover what happens next.

Should all investigators be eliminated during a scenario, the "if no resolution was reached" conclusion in the Campaign Guide is used.

"In Player Order"

The phrase "in player order" is used to dictate the order in which players resolve or execute a game step. When players are instructed to do something "in player order," the lead investigator does so first, followed by each other player, one player at a time, in clockwise order around the table.

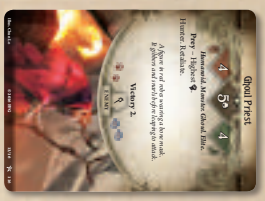
Per Investigator

The symbol next to a value multiplies that value by the number of investigators who started the scenario. The number of clues that are placed on a location and the number of clues necessary to advance the current act are often denoted with this symbol.

Ready and Exhausted

Cards enter play in a ready position (upright, so that the ability text can be read from left to right). In order to use some card abilities, the card must exhaust, which is indicated by rotating the card 90 degrees (sideways). A card in the exhausted position is not able to exhaust again until it is ready (made so by a game step or card ability).

Ready



Exhausted

Locations

Locations represent the various places the investigators travel to during a scenario while looking for clues. Each location has two sides: a revealed side and an unrevealed side. The revealed side of a location has a shroud value and a clue value. The unrevealed side does not show this information, and it has a keyhole symbol below its title.

A location enters play with its unrevealed side faceup. When an investigator enters a location for the first time, it is revealed (turned to its revealed side), and a number of clues equal to that location's clue value are placed on that location (from the token pool). This may occur during setup if the investigators begin play at a location, or if the setup rules instruct the players to reveal a location.

Unrevealed

Revealed

Skills and Skill Tests

Each investigator possesses four skills: willpower (), intellect (), combat (), and agility (). The higher an investigator's value for a particular skill, the better that investigator is at performing tasks with that skill.

A number of situations require an investigator to make a **skill test**. A skill test pits the investigator's value in a specified skill against a difficulty value determined by the ability or game step that initiated the test. To perform a skill test, a player reveals a random chaos token from the chaos bag, which modifies his or her skill value. If the modified skill value equals or exceeds the test's difficulty, the investigator succeeds at the test. The consequences of succeeding at or failing a test are provided by the card or action that initiated the test.

Modifying Skill Value for Skill Tests

Before drawing a chaos token for a skill test, the investigator *may* boost his or her skill value. There are two ways to do this:

First, the investigator may commit eligible cards from his or her hand to the test. An eligible card bears one or more icons matching the skill type of the test being performed. A wild icon (?) matches all skill types. Each matching icon committed to a test increases the investigator's skill value by 1 for that test. The investigator performing the test may commit any number of cards from his or her hand to the test. Each *other* investigator at the same location as that investigator may commit 1 card from his or her hand to help.

Skill Icons

Do not pay a card's resource cost when committing it to a skill test.

In addition, the investigator may activate (free trigger) abilities to modify his or her skill for a test.

Chaos Token Effects

Each chaos token has a symbol or numerical modifier that influences the outcome of the skill test. The effect of each chaos token is described below.

, , , —Refer to the scenario reference card and resolve the corresponding effect.

—Refer to your investigator card and resolve your investigator's ability.

—Indicates an automatic failure of the skill test.

If the revealed chaos token (or the effect referenced by a chaos token) has a numerical modifier, that modifier is applied to the investigator's skill value for this test.

Concluding a Skill Test

If the investigator's modified skill value is equal to or higher than the difficulty value of the skill test, the investigator succeeds at the test. Otherwise, the investigator fails. The ability or game step that initiated the skill test provides instructions for the consequences of succeeding and/or failing.

Some skill cards have an ability that resolves upon the completion of a skill test, if the card is committed to that test.

Upon completion of a skill test, discard all investigator cards committed to that test, and return the revealed chaos token to the chaos bag.

Skill Test Example

*Wendy Adams draws the encounter card Grasping Hands, which reads: "**Revelation** – Test (3). For each point you fail by, take 1 damage."*

Wendy's agility value is 4, and the difficulty of this test is 3. Wendy is low on health, so it's important that she succeed at this test! Wendy has no cards in hand with icons that can be committed to this test. Her partner, Roland, is at her location and decides to commit one card to the skill test, which has 1 icon. This gives Wendy a +1 bonus to her agility skill for this test.

Wendy now pulls a chaos token at random from the chaos bag, and reveals a "–2." This modifier is applied to Wendy's agility value for this test. Her value is now: 4 (from base value) +1 (from the card Roland committed) –2 (from the chaos token), for a total of 3. Since Wendy's modified skill value of 3 is equal to the skill test's difficulty of 3, she succeeds at this test!

As Wendy has succeeded, she now applies the results of the skill test. The Grasping Hands card has no effect (as she did not fail the skill test). Roland's committed card is now discarded, and the chaos token is returned to the chaos bag.

Weakness Cards

A weakness card is a card in an investigator's deck that has an ill effect when drawn. These cards are identified by the label "Weakness" or "Basic Weakness" beneath the card's title or artwork. When one of these cards is drawn, the investigator who drew the card must resolve its "**Revelation** –" ability immediately. (See "Weakness" on page 21 of the Rules Reference for more details on weakness cards.)

Round Sequence

Arkham Horror: The Card Game is played over a series of rounds. During a round, the investigators encounter the terrifying forces of the Mythos, move through and explore mysterious locations, fend off dangerous enemies, and finally, collect their bearings in anticipation of the next round. Each round is divided into the following four phases:

1. Mythos phase (skip on the first round of the game)
2. Investigation phase
3. Enemy phase
4. Upkeep phase

Important Note: During the first round of the game, skip the mythos phase. Proceed to the investigation phase. The mythos phase is described on page 13.

Once all four phases are complete, the round is over, and play proceeds to the mythos phase of the next round. Each phase is described in detail below.

The Investigation Phase

In the investigation phase, the investigators take center stage. What they choose to do depends on the circumstances and the investigator in question.

During this phase, each investigator takes a separate turn. The investigators, as a group, choose which investigator takes the first turn. When an investigator's turn ends, choose an investigator to take the next turn, and so on, until each investigator has taken his or her turn.

Each investigator has three actions during his or her turn that may be used to perform a variety of tasks. An investigator may perform any of the following, as many times as he or she would like, and in any order, providing the investigator has an action available to pay for that task. On his or her turn, an investigator may use an action to:

- **Draw** 1 card.
- Gain 1 **Resource**.
- **Activate** an ➤➤ (action trigger) ability.
- **Engage** an enemy at his or her current location.
- **Investigate** his or her current location.
- **Move** to a new connecting location.
- **Play** an asset or event card from his or her hand.
- Attempt to **Evade** an enemy engaged with him or her.
- **Fight** an enemy at his or her current location.

If an investigator is engaged with one or more ready enemies, performing any action other than to **Evade**, to **Fight**, or to Activate an ability with either a **Parley** or **Resign** designator in its text causes each of those enemies to attack the investigator. (See "The Enemy Phase" on page 12.) This type of attack is called an **attack of opportunity**.

An investigator may end his or her turn early if there are no other actions he or she wishes to perform. To indicate that an investigator's turn is over, flip his or her mini card facedown, to its black and white side. Unused actions are lost and cannot be saved for future turns. After each investigator has completed his or her turn, play proceeds to the enemy phase.

Tutorial Tip

At the beginning of the game, the investigators are trapped in the Study. How should they proceed?

In this situation, some actions are better than others. If an investigator has asset cards in hand that seem as if they might be useful, that investigator should consider using the Play action to play one or two of those cards—this will ensure that the investigator is prepared when an unexpected challenge or enemy comes his or her way. There are also clues in the Study; the investigators should consider using the Investigate action in an attempt to find these clues so they can advance the act deck. Alternatively, the Draw action and the Resource action could be useful in helping an investigator build up cards and resources for later in the game.

Each of the actions is described in detail in the following sections:

Draw

The investigator using this action draws one card from the top of his or her deck.

Resource

The investigator using this action gains one resource from the token pool.

Activate

The investigator using this action resolves an ➤➤ (action trigger) ability on a card under his or her control, on an encounter card at his or her location, or on the current act or agenda card.

Engage

The investigator using this action engages one enemy that is at his or her location. To engage an enemy, the investigator places that enemy in his or her threat area.

Strategy Tip: This action may be used to engage either an enemy that is not currently engaged or an enemy that is currently engaged with another investigator at the same location.

Investigate

The investigator using this action investigates his or her current location in an attempt to find clues. That investigator makes an intellect ( ) test against the shroud value of that location:

Shroud Value

If the skill test is successful, the investigator has succeeded and discovers one clue from the location. When an investigator discovers a clue from a location, that player takes one clue that was on the location and places it on his or her investigator card.

If the test is failed, no clues are discovered.

Advancing the Act Deck

The act deck represents progress the investigators can make in a scenario. Generally, the investigators can advance the act deck by spending, as a group, an appropriate number of clues. Spent clues are returned from the investigators' cards to the general token pool. Advancing the act in this way does not cost an action and may be done during any investigator's turn. The number of clues required to advance to the next act can be found at the bottom of the current act card's text box.

If the current act has a boldface "**Objective** —" instruction, that instruction overrides the procedure for advancing the act deck described above.

To advance the act deck, flip the current act over to its "b" side, follow the instructions on the back, and set it aside, out of play. The next card in the act deck becomes the new current act. When advancing the act deck, any clues the investigators have gained (but are not spending) remain in their play area.

Evade

The investigator using this action attempts to evade one enemy he or she is engaged with. That investigator makes an agility ( ) test against that enemy's evade value:

Enemy Evade Value

If the skill test is successful, the investigator successfully evades the enemy. The enemy is exhausted, and the engagement is broken. Move the enemy from the investigator's threat area to the investigator's current location to mark that it is no longer engaged with that investigator.

If the agility test fails, the enemy is not evaded and remains engaged with the investigator.

Strategy Tip: Evading enemies can be crucial to success. Exhausted enemies do not automatically engage investigators, do not perform attacks of opportunity, and do not attack during the enemy phase. If you are unarmed or need to get away from a deadly enemy, consider evading it instead of performing a futile attack.

Move

The investigator using this action moves to a connecting location. Move that investigator's mini card to any other location that is marked as a connection on the investigator's current location (see below). A location's connections are indicated by the icons at the bottom of the location card, which each match an identical icon in the title area of each connecting location.

If the connecting location is unrevealed, the location is turned to its revealed side when an investigator moves to it. Remember to place the indicated number of clues on the location when this occurs (see "Locations" on page 7).

An investigator may travel from the Hallway to the Cellar.

Play

When an investigator uses this action, that investigator selects an asset or event card in his or her hand, pays its resource cost, and plays it. A card's resource cost and cardtype are found in its upper left corner.

The .45 Automatic is an asset that costs 4 resources.

To pay a resource cost, the investigator playing the card must move a number of resources equal to the cost from his or her resource pool to the general token pool.

The rules for playing each cardtype are as follows:

- If the played card is an **event card**, its effects are resolved and it is then placed in its owner's discard pile.
- If the played card is an **asset card**, it is placed in the play area of the investigator playing the card and remains in play until an ability or game effect causes it to leave play.
- **Skill cards are not played**. For their abilities and icons to be used, these cards must be committed to a skill test from a player's hand (see page 8).

Cards with the fast keyword do not cost an action to play.

Slots

Slots restrict the number of cards of a specific category an investigator can have in play at one time. If an asset has one or more slot symbols, it may only enter play if its controller has those slots available.

The slots available to an investigator are:

- **1 ally slot, 1 body slot, 1 accessory slot, 2 hand slots, and 2 arcane slots.**

The icons below indicate that an asset counts against an investigator's capacity for the indicated slot(s). If an asset has no slot symbols on it, it does not take up any slots.

1 accessory slot

1 body slot

1 ally slot

1 hand slot

2 hand slots

1 arcane slot

2 arcane slots

If an investigator wishes to play or gain control of an asset that requires a slot already held by a different asset, the investigator must choose and discard an asset or assets under his or her control to make room for the newly acquired asset.

Fight

The investigator using this action attacks one enemy that is at his or her location. That investigator makes a combat ( ) test against the enemy's fight value:

Enemy Fight Value

Enemy Health

If the combat test is successful, the attack succeeds and the investigator **deals 1 damage** to the attacked enemy. Some weapons, spells, or other special attacks may modify the amount of damage dealt. Place a number of damage tokens equal to the amount of damage dealt on the enemy. If an enemy has as much (or more) damage on it as it has health, the enemy is defeated and placed in the encounter discard pile. If the bottom of the enemy's text box indicates that it provides victory points, place the card in a shared victory pile instead of discarding it.

If the combat test fails, no damage is dealt to the attacked enemy. However, if an investigator fails a combat test against an enemy engaged with another investigator, the damage value of the failed attack is instead dealt to the investigator engaged with that enemy.

A Cooperative Game

There are a large number of possible choices during the investigation phase. The investigators are encouraged to work together and plan out what they hope to accomplish each round. The order in which the investigators take their turns, and the actions each investigator performs during his or her turn, can mean the difference between success and failure.

While the investigators may plan their turns as a group, each individual player has final authority over the actions his or her investigator performs. For further guidelines on investigator communication, see the "Table Talk" sidebar on the following page.

Table Talk

Arkham Horror: The Card Game seeks to establish a roleplaying experience in which each player takes on the role of a specific character: his or her investigator. The nature of the game encourages players to work together and communicate, but players are also encouraged to stay "in character" as much as possible while doing so. The game's areas of hidden information (the cards in a player's hand and deck) exist to maintain the feeling that each investigator is a unique individual in the game world, and makes his or her decisions without complete and perfect knowledge of what everyone else knows or is thinking. A good means of maintaining this illusion is to not name, read off, or allude to individual cards that are hidden information (i.e., in a player's hand or deck).

For example: Wendy wants her partner, Roland, to take an investigation action, and she desires to communicate that she can help. Instead of saying something like "Take an investigation action; I can play Perception" or "Investigate our location; I can contribute two icons," Wendy stays in character by saying, "You should investigate. I can help!"

The Enemy Phase

In the enemy phase, the enemies come after the investigators, and if they are able to do so, they attack!

Resolve the following steps, in order. If there are no enemies in play, proceed to the upkeep phase.

1. **Hunter enemies move.** Some enemies have the hunter keyword. Each such enemy moves once, to a connecting location, in the direction of the nearest investigator. Exhausted hunter enemies and hunter enemies at a location with one or more investigators do not move.

   If a hunter enemy moves to a location with one or more investigators, that enemy immediately engages one of those investigators. (See "Enemy Engagement" sidebar, on page 13.)

2. **Enemy attacks.** Each ready, engaged enemy makes an attack against the investigator with which it is engaged. The investigators resolve enemy attacks in player order.

   When an enemy attacks, deal both its damage and its horror, simultaneously, to the engaged investigator. (See "Damage and Horror" sidebar, in the next column.)

The amount of damage and horror dealt by an enemy's attack can be found at the bottom of the enemy's text box:

Damage — *The Flesh-Eater's attack deals 1 damage and 2 horror to the engaged investigator.* — *Horror*

After an enemy attacks during the enemy phase, exhaust it to indicate that it has attacked. (During attacks of opportunity, enemies do not exhaust.)

Damage and Horror

An investigator may be dealt damage and/or horror during a scenario. Damage depletes an investigator's health, and horror depletes an investigator's sanity.

Health Value — *Health Value*

When an investigator is dealt damage, place damage on the investigator card and/or on any of that investigator's asset cards that have health, up to the amount of damage each card can hold. A card that has no health value cannot be dealt damage.

When an investigator is dealt horror, place horror on the investigator card and/or on any of that investigator's asset cards that have sanity, up to the amount of horror each card can hold. A card that has no sanity value cannot be dealt horror.

If a card has an amount of damage that equals or exceeds its health, or an amount of horror that equals or exceeds its sanity, the card is defeated. A defeated asset card is discarded. A defeated investigator is eliminated. (See "Elimination" on page 10 in the Rules Reference.)

The Upkeep Phase

In the upkeep phase, the heroes and villains find their bearings and prepare for the next round.

Resolve the following steps, in order:

1. Each investigator turns his or her mini card faceup.
2. Ready all exhausted cards. Each unengaged enemy that readies at the same location as an investigator engages at this time. (See "Enemy Engagement" sidebar, in the next column.)
3. Each investigator draws 1 card and gains 1 resource.
4. Each investigator with **more than 8 cards in his or her hand** chooses and discards cards from hand until only 8 cards remain.

After the above steps are complete, the game round is over. Proceed to the mythos phase of the next game round.

The Mythos Phase

In the mythos phase, the arcane forces pitted in opposition to the investigators seek to advance their fell agenda.

The mythos phase comprises three steps, described below.

1. Place one doom token on the current agenda.
2. Compare the total number of doom tokens in play (on the current agenda and on other cards in play) to the doom threshold of the current agenda. If the number of doom tokens in play is equal to or greater than the doom threshold of the current agenda, advance the agenda deck. This is done by discarding all doom tokens from play, turning the current agenda card over, following the instructions on its reverse side, and removing that agenda from play. After following those instructions, the front side of the next card in the agenda deck becomes the active agenda card. (**Important Note**: Unless a card specifies that it can advance the agenda, this is the only time the agenda can advance.)

Doom Token

There are 3 doom in play.
Therefore, the agenda advances.

Enemy Engagement

While an enemy card is in play, either it is engaged with an investigator (and placed in that player's threat area), or it is at a location (and placed at that location). Each enemy in an investigator's threat area is considered to be at the same location as that investigator. Should the investigator move, the enemy remains engaged with the investigator and also moves to the new location.

Any time a ready non-engaged enemy is at the same location as an investigator, it engages that investigator and is placed in that investigator's threat area. If multiple investigators are at the same location as a ready enemy, the lead investigator chooses which of those investigators the enemy engages. Some enemies also have a "**Prey** –" instruction, which dictates whom it engages if there is a conflict. (See "Prey" on page 17 of the Rules Reference.)

An enemy will immediately engage if:

- It spawns (in a ready state) at the same location as an investigator.
- It moves (in a ready state) to the same location as an investigator.
- An investigator moves to the same location as a ready enemy.
- An exhausted enemy is readied at the same location as an investigator.

3. In player order, each investigator draws the top card of the encounter deck. Instructions for resolving each type of encounter card are presented below.

Treachery Card

Enemy Card

Treachery—When a treachery card is drawn, its ability is resolved, and the card is placed in the encounter discard pile.

Enemy—When an enemy card is drawn, that enemy spawns engaged with the investigator who drew the card, unless it has a "**Spawn** –" instruction. If the enemy has a spawn instruction, it spawns at the location indicated by that instruction.

What's Next?

After the mythos phase is resolved, play proceeds to the investigator phase as usual. Continue resolving game rounds until players have reached the scenario's resolution (see "Winning and Losing," on page 7).

After you've completed the game, you may wish to continue the campaign. To do so, read "Expanded Campaign Rules," on pages 3 and 4 of the Campaign Guide. Then proceed to the scenario "The Midnight Masks," using the setup rules found on page 27 of the Rules Reference.

Some players may wish to practice using different investigators before proceeding with the campaign. To do so, use the "Custom Deckbuilding" rules below or use the starter decks listed on page 15 to replay the first scenario, "The Gathering."

A quick reference of keywords, icons, and important game symbols can be found on the back cover of this book. Additionally, the Rules Reference book thoroughly covers the finer points of the game. Be sure to use these references frequently while mastering the game.

Custom Deckbuilding

The *Arkham Horror: The Card Game* core set is designed to be a complete game experience with significant replayability. After learning the basics of the game, players may wish to explore building original decks.

Why Build a Custom Deck?

Deckbuilding is a process by which a player may customize his or her deck to take on the scenarios using original strategies and ideas. This allows a player to experience the game in new ways; instead of adapting his or her play to the strategy of a starter deck, each player may construct a deck that functions as he or she desires. When a player constructs an original deck, that player doesn't just participate in the game: he or she actively shapes how it is played.

Deck Customization Rules

The following are the deck customization rules for *Arkham Horror: The Card Game* investigator decks. Note that for more deckbuilding options, players may want to obtain other expansion sets containing new cards.

- A player must choose exactly 1 investigator card.
- A player's investigator deck must include the exact number of standard player cards indicated on the back of his or her investigator card as the "Deck Size." For each of the investigators in the core set, this number is 30. Weaknesses, investigator-specific cards, and scenario cards that are added to a player's deck do not count toward this number.
- Each standard player card in a player's deck must be chosen in observance with the "Deckbuilding Options" available on the back of his or her investigator card.
- A player's deck cannot include more than 2 copies (by title) of any given player card.
- Any other "Deckbuilding Requirements" on the back of a player's investigator card must be observed.
- At the beginning of a campaign, an investigator may only include level 0 cards in his or her deck (see "Card Levels," on page 15).

Random Weakness

Most investigators have a deckbuilding requirement that instructs the player to add a random basic weakness to his or her deck.

A basic weakness is identified by this symbol:

To select a random basic weakness, take a set of the ten basic weaknesses in this core set, shuffle those weaknesses together, and draw one at random to add to the investigator's deck. Some *Arkham Horror: The Card Game* products add additional basic weakness cards to a player's collection. Simply add these cards to the ten cards found in the core set when selecting random basic weaknesses in the future.

For example: Stephanie owns two copies of the core set, one copy of the first deluxe campaign expansion, and one copy of the first Mythos pack. To create a single set of basic weaknesses, she takes all of the basic weaknesses in one core set, in one copy of the first deluxe campaign box, and in one copy of the first Mythos pack, and shuffles them together. Her basic weakness is drawn at random from this pool.

The weakness selected via the process described above is added to the player's deck at the end of the deckbuilding process, after all other cards in the player's deck have been selected. In campaign mode, the selected weakness remains a part of the investigator's deck for the entire campaign, unless it is removed by a card ability. New weaknesses are not automatically added at the beginning of subsequent campaign scenarios, but card abilities or scenario instructions may instruct an investigator to gain additional weaknesses.

Card Levels

A card's level is indicated by the presence of white pips beneath its cost. The card's level is equal to the number of such symbols on the card.

3 white pips indicate that this is a level 3 card.

In campaign play, an investigator may be rewarded with experience points upon the completion of a scenario. These points may be spent to purchase higher-level cards to use in his or her deck during that campaign. (See "Campaign Play" on page 5 in the Rules Reference.)

Starter Decks

These decklists are intended as a starting point for a player who does not yet desire to use the deck customization rules to construct an original deck.

With the contents of a single core set, players are able to build two of these starter decks at the same time, in the following combinations: Roland and Agnes, Roland and Wendy, Daisy and Skids, Daisy and Wendy, or Agnes and Skids. By purchasing a second copy of the core set for *Arkham Horror: The Card Game*, you will be able to build any four of these starter decks simultaneously.

The card identification number(s) for each card or group of cards are in parentheses.

Each starter deck should include a random basic weakness from the pool of basic weaknesses (96–103).

Roland Banks starter deck: Roland Banks (1), Roland's .38 Special (6), Cover-up (7), 1 copy of each level 0 Guardian card (16–25), 1 copy of each level 0 Seeker card (30–39), 2 copies of Knife (86), 2 copies of Flashlight (87), 2 copies of Emergency Cache (88), 2 copies of Guts (89), and 2 copies of Manual Dexterity (92).

Daisy Walker starter deck: Daisy Walker (2), Daisy's Tote Bag (8), The Necronomicon (9), 1 copy of each level 0 Seeker card (30–39), 1 copy of each level 0 Mystic card (58–67), 2 copies of Knife (86), 2 copies of Flashlight (87), 2 copies of Emergency Cache (88), 2 copies of Perception (90), and 2 copies of Manual Dexterity (92).

"Skids" O'Toole starter deck: "Skids" O'Toole (3), On the Lam (10), Hospital Debts (11), 1 copy of each level 0 Rogue card (44–53), 1 copy of each level 0 Guardian card (16–25), 2 copies of Knife (86), 2 copies of Flashlight (87), 2 copies of Emergency Cache (88), 2 copies of Guts (89), and 2 copies of Overpower (91).

Agnes Baker starter deck: Agnes Baker (4), Heirloom of Hyperborea (12), Dark Memory (13), 1 copy of each level 0 Mystic card (58–67), 1 copy of each level 0 Survivor card (72–81), 2 copies of Knife (86), 2 copies of Flashlight (87), 2 copies of Emergency Cache (88), 2 copies of Perception (90), and 2 copies of Unexpected Courage (93).

Wendy Adams starter deck: Wendy Adams (5), Wendy's Amulet (14), Abandoned and Alone (15), 1 copy of each level 0 Survivor card (72–81), 1 copy of each level 0 Rogue card (44–53), 2 copies of Knife (86), 2 copies of Flashlight (87), 2 copies of Emergency Cache (88), 2 copies of Overpower (91), and 2 copies of Unexpected Courage (93).

Credits

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Special thanks to our playtesters—your contributions are too numerous to count, and we could not have made this game without you: Aaron J. Wong, Alan Newman, Alex Filewood, Ali Eddy, Andrea Dell'Agnese, Brad "Rapid Rat Recall" Andres, Brian Schwebach, Caleb Grace, Chris Gerber, Christopher Hosch, Craig "Late to the Party" Bergman, Damon Stone, Daniel Schaefer, Dominic Greene, Erik Dahlman, Gareth Dean, Ian Martin, Jeff Farrell, Jeremy Fredin, Jeremy "Vicious Blow" Zwirn, Julia Faeta, Kathleen Miller, Katrina Ostrander, Lukas Litzinger, Luke "Mining for Clues" Eddy, Mark Anderson, Mark Larson, Matt Pachefsky, Mercedes "Machete" Opheim, Mike "Autofail" Strunk, Mizuho Dahlman, Patrice Mundinar, Patrick Brennan, Paweł Smoczyk, Rick Meyer, Rose Malloy, Sam Bailey, Samuel Langenegger, Sunyi Dean, Teague "They Killed Me Again" Murphy, Zach "I Have Amnesia" Varberg

Phase Sequence

1. Mythos phase (skip during the first round of the game)
2. Investigation phase
3. Enemy phase
4. Upkeep phase

Keywords

A keyword is an attribute that conveys specific rules to its card. The following section serves as a quick reminder of how each keyword functions. For complete rules on a keyword, see the Rules Reference.

Aloof: An aloof enemy does not engage investigators of its own accord. (An investigator may use an action or a card ability to engage it.) An investigator cannot attack an aloof enemy unless he or she is engaged with it.

Fast: A player may play a fast card without spending an action.

Hunter: Each hunter enemy moves one location toward the nearest investigator at the beginning of the enemy phase.

Massive: A massive enemy is engaged with each investigator at its location.

Peril: When an investigator draws a card with the peril keyword, that investigator cannot confer with or receive assistance from other players while resolving the card's revelation ability and/or spawning it.

Retaliate: If an investigator fails a skill test while attacking an enemy that has the retaliate keyword, the enemy (if it is ready) performs its attack (damage and horror) against the investigator.

Surge: After an investigator draws and resolves an encounter card that has the surge keyword, that investigator must draw and resolve an additional card.

Uses (X): The uses keyword creates and defines a particular token type to be placed on a card when that card enters play. The value following the keyword indicates a number of resource tokens to be placed on the card to represent the specified token type. These tokens are used in conjunction with the rest of the card's ability.

Instructions

Spawn: Indicates where an enemy spawns when drawn.

Prey: Indicates which investigator an enemy will engage (or move toward if it has the hunter keyword) if there are multiple valid options.

Timing Triggers

Action Trigger (): Costs an action to use this ability.

Free Trigger ( ): Does not cost an action to use this ability.

Reaction Trigger (): May be used once each time the specified timing point occurs. Does not cost an action.

Symbols and Icons

Per Investigator

Character Classes

Guardian

Seeker

Mystic

Rogue

Survivor

Skills

Willpower

Intellect

Combat

Agility

Wild

Chaos Tokens

Reference the ability on the investigator performing the skill test.

The investigator automatically fails the test as if he or she had a skill value of 0.

Reference the revealed token's ability on the scenario reference card.