

Manual Version 1.1

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Unless otherwise credited, all artwork is by Andre Monserrat

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Playtesters and contributors: Bob Reeves, Sari Krosinsky, Jeff Lucarelli, Ryan and Laura Houlette, Nathan Adams, Garrett Taylor, the LeFebvre family, Leonard Balsera, Terran Lane, Ara Kooser, Lesley Judd, Robert Williams, Monica Hafer, Mischa Krilov, Alfredo Monserrat, Deborah Reese, Dave Glowacki, Cory Williamson, and Becky and Arvind Raichur.

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WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

House of Whack's spiritual roots can be traced back to the games Talisman, Cosmic Encounter, Mystery Mansion, Chill: Black Morn Manor and Magic: the Gathering.

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www.houseofwhack.net

www.dreampunk.com

Oh, dear, you've done it now. You've opened up the box. Next thing you know, you'll have the rooms spread across the table while you roll the dice and get fingerprints on the cards. I tried to keep you safe, but apparently the thin coating of shrink wrap was not enough. Nothing I can do about it now, I suppose, except give you a little guidance.

First of all, you've got the wrong book. You want the shrewdly-named Quick Start Guide. That will tell you how to play the game. This manual is dedicated to quibbling over subtle distinctions in game mechanics. No need to burden yourself any further with this tome. Looks like you have plenty of troubles of your own. Of course, nothing is stopping you from reading onwards. You're free to do as you like. You paid for the game, after all. Or stole it.

WELCOME TO HOUSE OF WHACK

There are many ways one can write a rule manual for a game. It can be filled with whimsical flavor text to hint at some underlying mythology or back story. It can be a purely clinical exercise, a straightforward dispensing of play mechanics. I have done both and everything in between as, over the course of the game's development, this is perhaps the tenth time I've written this manual. So, before I begin the dispensing of play mechanics, I've decided to do something different.

I'm going to tell you the truth.

First I shall give you the news and, depending on the type of person you are, it will be either good news or bad news. The copy of House of Whack you have now is completely unique. If your friend buys a copy, he or she will find similar components, but they will generally discover a very different game.

Before your mind fills with comprehensive lists of all possible cards and a desire to "catch them all," you need to know that House of Whack is not a collectible game. There are no "rare" cards, just cards different than yours. You are welcome to buy more than one set and combine the two. That approach will certainly provide you with at least twice as much amusement. But you will not be granted any special advantages because you happen to have more money to spend than another player.

Your House of Whack may hold secrets that other Houses do not. And I don't mean this in a poetic sort of way. There may be some bizarre combination of rooms and cards that inspires you to play the game in a whole new way. It's possible. Maybe all of your Guests are coincidentally really good at killing things and you'll think that *that* is the point of the game. That's possible too.

From this point on it will serve you well to keep the title of the game in mind, for it is not just a way to differentiate this game from other games on a shelf, but it is a description of the game experience. It is both a welcome and a warning.

You could have bought another game, something safer perhaps. But you didn't. You bought House of Whack.

AN APOLOGY ABOUT GAME COMPONENTS

There aren't enough dice. I'm sorry. They wouldn't all fit inside the box. Eventually you will reach for another red die and there won't be one. You will need to obtain a few extras.

You need your own tokens to keep track of miscellaneous things. Your score, for example. Now and again a card will tell you to place a token in a room. Use whatever you have at your disposal: beads, pennies, rare jewels, or perhaps custom tokens downloaded from www.houseofwhack.net. It could happen.

The playing pieces are also somewhat generic. I'd love for you to open the box and find magically animated talking figurines of your Guests. In the meantime there are paper miniatures of specific Guests which you may download for free from the web site.



A GROSS OVERSIMPLIFICATION OF GAME PLAY

Each player takes on the role of a Guest with powers that grant advantages or modify game play. Everyone will start in a single room and the House will expand out from that room as it is explored. There will be dice rolling and card drawing aplenty. Players will encounter Minions and Traps which must be avoided or defeated. Allies and Residents may help the players along the way. Players will also find Props of various types which they can keep or turn in for points. Points are measured in Gold Hearts. The player with the most Gold Hearts at the end of the game is the winner.

Along the way players may cooperate or interfere with each other by playing Drama cards or using the powers of other cards in their possession. Players may also attack each other outright. How you use the assets at your disposal is up to you.

HOUSE RULES

There are cards in the game called “House Rules”, yes, but I want to talk to you about House Rules in general, as a *concept*. Most people need clearly defined rules to play a game. I respect that and so I wrote this manual. But this is a game after all and I want you to have fun. So above all, remember this “rule”:

If, by your misunderstanding, ignorance or dislike of a particular rule or game mechanic, you have a more enjoyable time playing House of Whack, then that’s how you should play the game.

This manual explains how I and a group of other people have successfully played the game. But chances are I’m not playing it with you. There’s nothing I can do to make you play it *my* way. I didn’t make a dark bargain with wicked unspeakable forces who granted me the ability to peer out of that orange eye on the House of Whack box and see if you are following the rules to the letter. No, the box did not just wink at you.

So whenever something is ambiguous, you are faced with a weird contradiction, or something just isn’t fun, a dialogue with all the players should ensue. Discuss what to do about the situation and try to reach an agreement. Or become rules lawyers and debate in raised voices before withdrawing into textbook passive-aggressive postures complete with sullen gazes and backhanded remarks. But I digress.

The point is to choose your own path. While I may post errata and clarifications on the web site (www.houseofwhack.net), I am not interested in official rulings and semantic quibbling. The very thought wearies me.

Back to the actual House Rule cards themselves. Once you are familiar with the game, there are several ways to use them. You could decide you like some of them so much that they become permanent rules. Some may be so repugnant that you remove them from the game entirely, perhaps burning them. Maybe



you start each game by drawing three at random and those are the starting House Rules. Maybe you shuffle a few (or even all of them) into the Whack deck for a few surprises later on. It's up to you. I've even included a few blank cards to sate your demented desires. Once you've played the game you will understand that I make such statements with affection and even glee.

ABOUT THE META GAME

While playing this game, you may find yourself wondering “Am I really meant to *do* that? In real life?” In answer, I direct your attention to the title of the game. House of Whack is full of “meta” elements: interactions taking place outside of the game world. Where possible, I have highlighted these instructions in yellow.

The meta game is not for everyone. Before play begins the players should decide if the meta instructions should be heeded or not. If players agree to use the meta elements, it should be decided what penalties, if any, accrue if a player “chickens out” and decides not to participate in a particular event.

ABOUT THE OTHER META GAME

If you are observant, you will discover keys that will link you to other parts of the game. The choice to explore that web is yours. Know that it has its own rewards and frustrations. I will say no more.



GUEST CARDS

I designed the Guest cards so that a single character may potentially take on four different roles, increasing the variability and (hopefully) the enjoyment of your gaming experience. So, in one game, you may play a particular Guest, but in the next game they might show up as an Ally.

Rotate the card so that the Guest's current status Ally (blue), Resident (orange) or Minion (green) is right side up.



Players randomly draw their Guest at the start of the game. You should go around the table and have each player introduce their Guest, describing their special Powers and talking smack about how severely they will defeat the other players.

STATS

Your Guest card depicts three hearts with a number inside each one. These stats indicate your original Strength (red), Spirit (blue) and Life (green). Use a die of corresponding color to keep track of each stat as they will likely go up (woohoo!) and down (uh oh!) as you play.

STRENGTH

- 1.1 The red heart/die represents your Strength, the sum of your physical might. Strength is primarily useful for smashing things and winning Conflicts through force.
- 1.2 Your **Original Strength** is the number printed on the red heart on your Guest card. Sometimes a card will tell you to restore your Strength to its original or starting value. This is what it is talking about.
- 1.3 Certain events may raise or lower your Strength. The current number on the red die reflects your **Base Strength**. If you are instructed to gain or lose Strength, adjust the die accordingly. Strength may not go below 1, but there is no upper limit to how much Strength you can have.
- 1.4 Some Allies and Props increase your Strength (indicated by a bonus in a red heart). Don't record this bonus on the die. Instead, these increases are considered part of your **Total Strength**: your Base Strength plus any modifiers granted by Allies or Props.



SPIRIT

- 2.1 The blue heart/die represents your Spirit, the amalgam of your intelligence, willpower and sanity. Some Minions will attack you via Spirit and you'll fight them using this statistic.
- 2.2 Your **Original Spirit**, **Base Spirit**, and **Total Spirit** work just like Strength, as explained in the section above.

CRUSHED SPIRIT

- 2.3 Unlike Strength, your Base Spirit *can* be reduced to zero (but not below). If it goes to zero, your Spirit has been crushed. The House has overwhelmed your mind and you lose all resolve. Turn your Guest upside down to remind yourself of your crushed Spirit.
- 2.4 While your Spirit is crushed, the faces of your Allies grow strange and Props in your possession indeed seem possessed. You'd best rid yourself of them. So, at the start of your turn (during the Housekeeping phase), you must drop at least one Ally or Prop in your current room.
- 2.5 You may not pick up any new Allies or Props while your Spirit is crushed.
- 2.6 If you make your way to Start, you may skip your next turn and restore your Spirit to its original value.
- 2.7 **If, while your Spirit is crushed, you can manage to not speak to anyone else or to communicate only in raving nonsense, you may increase your Base Spirit by one point when your Spirit is restored.**
- 2.8 If, in your spirit-crushed wanderings, you are able to raise your base Spirit to at least 1, then your Spirit is no longer crushed and you can proceed as usual.

LIFE

- 3.1 The green heart/die is your Life force, the amount of damage you can take before dying. Life is not used to determine the outcome of Conflicts, but if you do lose a Conflict, you may lose Life as well.
- 3.2 You only need to worry about your Original Life and your Base Life as there is nothing that gives you a bonus to Life. Things either give you Life points or take them away.

DEATH

- 3.3 If your Life is reduced to zero, you are dead. Sorry about that. Drop all of your Props and Allies in your current room. Discard any other cards you have (Drama, defeated Minions, etc.). Remove your playing piece from the House. Lose all Gold Hearts you have collected. Ouch!
- 3.4 **If you turn your death into a big production, dropping to the floor, re-enacting the event to the delight of the other players and so forth, when**

you re-enter the game you may add one extra Life point to the original Life shown on your new Guest card.

- 3.5 On your next turn, you may re-enter the House anew. Put your playing piece on Start, draw your Drama cards, and give it another go.

DRAMA CARDS

- 4.1 At the start of each game, shuffle the deck of Drama cards and deal three to each player, face down. They may look at these cards, but should keep them secret. Set the remaining Drama cards off to the side.
- 4.2 When something refers to a player's "hand," it means only the unplayed Drama cards they are holding and nothing else (such as Props, Allies, defeated Minions, etc.).
- 4.3 During the Draw phase of your turn, you draw cards to replenish your hand so that you have a number of cards equal to the hand limit.
- 4.4 By default, there is a hand limit of 3 cards.
- 4.5 You may have any number of cards in your hand, but when you get to the Discard phase of your own turn, you have to discard your cards down to the hand limit.
- 4.6 During the Discard phase, you may discard any number of Drama cards, even if you are not required to by the hand limit.
- 4.7 If the Drama deck is depleted, shuffle the discard pile to form a new Drama deck.
- 4.8 Drama cards may not be arbitrarily traded or given to other players.

ARCANA

- 4.9 Arcana are Drama cards which allow you to perform all manner of devious activities, as well as giving you certain advantages or hindering other players. Arcana are typically "one shot" effects that get discarded as soon as you play them.
- 4.10 You can play Arcana cards at any time, during any player's turn. Read the Arcana card itself to learn more about the best time to play it.
- 4.11 Arcana cards also have modifiers in the upper corner. There are Strength (red), Spirit (blue) and Wild (purple) modifiers. Typically these modifiers are used to affect Conflicts. See the Conflict section.
- 4.12 In a Conflict, Wild Arcana can be played to modify either Strength *or* Spirit.
- 4.13 Wild Arcana modifiers can be used to affect *any* die roll made by any player at any time. Play a Wild Arcana to increase your movement roll, for instance.
- 4.14 Arcana cards can be used for either their described effect or for their modifier, **but never both**. Play the card vertically to indicate you are using the special effect or horizontally to indicate that you are playing it for the modifier.

CARD TIMING

- 4.15 Since Arcana can be played at any time, you might run into a situation where several players wish to play cards at once. How do you decide whose card takes effect first?
- 4.16 As long as there are no cards played simultaneously, the card effects take place in the order played. The first card played must be *completely resolved* before moving on to the effects of cards played afterwards.

For example: A player plays Envy and decides to take a Drama card from another player. The targeted player may not simply empty their hand by playing all of their Arcana in an attempt to foil Envy. The original player gets to pick a Drama card and *then* the targeted player may play a card.

Exceptions: Cards which negate or otherwise directly interfere with an Arcana card take effect right away.

- 4.17 When an Arcana is played, other players should be given a few moments to react to it before any other cards are played. A player may not simply throw down a sequence of Arcana cards all at once.
- 4.18 To settle disputes if cards are played nearly simultaneously, use these guidelines:
- If a player plays an Arcana on their own turn, that card takes precedence over cards played by other players.
 - If players play cards during another player's turn, then the player with the most Gold Hearts takes precedence. If there is still a tie, then roll for it.
- 4.19 Above all, use common sense.

TURN SEQUENCE

- 5.1 Each turn is divided into phases: Housekeeping, Draw, Action, and Discard.

HOUSEKEEPING PHASE

- 5.2 You only have to worry about the Housekeeping phase if you are affected by a card that tells you to do something “during you Housekeeping phase.” There is nothing you can do by default during this phase. Cards that require special attention during Housekeeping will have a  icon to remind you.
- 5.3 If you are suffering from the effects of a Trap, for example, you would now deduct 1 turn from the turns remaining before the Trap goes away.
- 5.4 **Important:** A player's Housekeeping phase still occurs even if they must miss their turn. They do Housekeeping and then miss the rest of the turn phases.

DRAW PHASE

- 5.5 Normally you can hold 3 Drama cards in your hand. If you find yourself with less than 3 (or whatever your hand limit might be), you now draw Drama cards to fill your hand to the limit.

ACTION PHASE

- 5.6 Now you take action! You are allowed two Actions per turn which you may take in any order.
- 5.7 Some possible Actions include: movement, drawing a Whack card, attempting to remove a locked door, attacking or trading with another player, redeeming cards, playing an Arcana (if it requires an Action), and interacting with a Room (if it requires an Action).
- 5.8 *If there are no player tokens in the room AND you have already resolved a Conflict with or evaded any Minions in the room during this turn*, you may use one of your Actions to draw a Whack Card. **Immediately place one of your player tokens in the room.** Once you have dealt with the card, you are free to continue your turn.
- 5.9  Your Guest's Power and that of Props and Allies will show an Action icon if an Action is required to activate the Power.
- 5.10 Some Actions are designated as "Free," indicating they do not require a player to spend any Actions. Free Actions include picking up or dropping any number of Props or Allies.
- 5.11 If you happen to meet one of your fellow players in the same room, you may use an Action to trade Props or Allies with them (but not Drama cards). Alternately, you may spend an Action and attack them.
- 5.12 Players may only spend Actions (including Free Actions) on their own turn.

DISCARD PHASE

- 5.13 During the earlier phases of your turn and during any other player's turn, you may hold any number of Drama cards, regardless of the hand limit. But once you reach this phase, you must discard Drama cards down to the hand limit (3 cards, by default) if you are holding too many.
- 5.14 You also have the option of discarding cards even if you are at the hand limit or below. This will allow you to draw new cards during your next draw phase.
- 5.15 Your turn ends and play proceeds clockwise to the next player.
- 5.16 The turn sequence and list of possible Actions is printed on the Whack Track board.

MOVEMENT

- 6.1 You can use any number of Actions for movement.
- 6.2 Movement is optional.
- 6.3 Spend an Action and EITHER move 3 spaces OR roll one die to determine how many spaces you *must* move. Make sure you move only on spaces defined by the grid of squares. Some rooms may have obstacles or places where there are no squares to move into.
- 6.4 You may **not** move diagonally or through the same space twice during the same move.
- 6.5 While you may pass through a space occupied by another player, you may not share it.

BUILDING NEW ROOMS

- 6.6 All room tiles are considered “rooms,” regardless of what they may depict. Humble hallways and vast arenas are all rooms.
- 6.7 When you exit through a door and find no room waiting for you, you must draw a new room from the Room Deck and place it adjacent to the room you just left behind.
- 6.8 Do not place a new room until you are able to move out of your current room.
- 6.9 Rooms must have all sides flush with any adjacent rooms.
- 6.10 At the very least, one door in the new room must line up with the door you just exited. Doors that end up adjacent to the doorless walls of other rooms are still doors, though they are useless for entering the adjacent room.
- 6.11 A room is considered **adjacent** if one of its sides touches a side of the current room (that is, orthogonal rooms next to the room). A **surrounding** room includes adjacent rooms as well as any room whose corner touches the current room (both orthogonal and diagonal rooms). Rooms are considered **connected** if one can move between them via a *persistent* portal such as adjacent doors or secret doors. Rooms separated by a locked door are NOT connected.

ROOM TILES

- 7.1 Most rooms feature special instructions that affect game play. As long as you are in a room and it is your turn, you may follow the instructions on the room tile. Sometimes you will have no choice.
- 7.2 A room will indicate if it requires an Action to use its special abilities.
- 7.3 Some rooms have a player token target  in the upper right corner. This means that a player must have one of their player tokens in the room to use its special abilities. Players typically place tokens when they draw a Whack card.

- 7.4 Some rooms have a Charge icon , indicating that they have a limited number of uses. When the room is built, place a die counter on the room set to the number in the Charge icon. Each time a room's ability is used, reduce the charges by one. When all the charges are gone, the room's ability may no longer be used.
- 7.5 Some rooms will ask you to consult the Grimoire. That means I didn't want to clutter up the artwork with a bunch of text, so I made a section in the back of this book for each such room.

SECRET DOORS

- 8.1 Secret doors enter play via a Twist card. You will be instructed to place two black die counters to represent the secret doors.
- 8.2 You may place secret door counters on any space a player could normally move into.
- 8.3 A space with a secret door still counts as a normal space for the purpose of movement. You need not enter the secret door if you do not wish to. You may pass through the space as usual.
- 8.4 When you land on a secret door, you may then move to its matching door in another room (this counts as moving two spaces: the first door space and then the matching door space).
- 8.5 A numbered secret door can only connect to its matching number (Door #2 to another Door #2).

STAIRS AND FLOORS

- 9.1 Stairs enter play via Twist cards, just like Secret Doors. Not all Houses will have Stairs.
- 9.2 Stairs function identically to Secret Doors, but with this major exception: Stairs connect entire new floors of the House.
- 9.3 One stair die counter will go in the room where the Twist was drawn, but the other goes on a new floor of the House. Draw a new room tile and set it aside from the current set of rooms. This is the start of a brand new section. Place the other stair die counter in this new room.
- 9.4 The new floor of the House cannot be connected to the original floor except by the stairs or secret doors. Place the new floor far enough away from the original floor so that there is no danger of the rooms accidentally connecting to each other.
- 9.5 In all other respects, treat the new floor as part of the original set of rooms. For instance, abilities which allow you to move cards to other rooms can move them between floors. Similarly, if you are allowed to move or place a room tile, you are not limited to any particular floor.

LOCKED DOORS

- 10.1 Locked doors enter play via a Twist card. The card will tell you to place either a red or blue die counter on a door to represent the lock. Roll the appropriate die to determine the door's Strength or Spirit.
- 10.2 You may place a locked door counter on any of the room's doors, including secret doors. More than one lock may be placed on a door. Treat the locks separately; do not increase the lock's Strength or Spirit.
- 10.3 The locked door hinders your movement and you may not move through the door until the lock is removed.
- 10.4 You may use an Action and attempt to remove the lock by resolving a Conflict with it, just as if it were a Minion. The type of Conflict is determined by the lock's color: red for Strength, blue for Spirit. The lock's Strength or Spirit is the value shown on the die.
- 10.5 If you win the Conflict, remove the lock. If you lose or draw, nothing happens.
- 10.6 A locked door will bar passage through any adjacent door, but the lock is associated with one particular door. If a room is moved or reoriented, the lock remains attached to the original door.

THE WHACK DECK

- 11.1 At the beginning of each game, shuffle the deck of cards bearing the words "House of Whack" on the back. This forms the Whack Deck.
- 11.2 The Whack Deck is composed of several different types of cards: Twist, Prop, Arrival, Minion, Trap, and House cards.
- 11.3 **Twist:** You must follow the instructions on the card right away. Most Twists get discarded after you follow the instructions.
- 11.4 **Prop:** Props can be picked up, granting advantages in Conflicts or special Powers. See the section on Props.
- 11.5 **Arrival:** These cards announce the arrival of a new Guest, either an Ally or Resident. Refer to the Ally or Resident section.
- 11.6 **Minion:** Minions will attack you right away. See the section on Minions and Conflict.
- 11.7 **Trap:** You must attempt to avoid a Trap right away by resolving a Conflict.
- 11.8 **House Rule:** These cards will affect the very nature of the House. See the section on House Rule cards.
- 11.9 If the Whack deck is depleted, shuffle the discard pile to form a new Whack deck.

ICONS

- 12.1  icons inform you that using a card's ability requires you to spend an Action.
- 12.2 The  icon indicates an effect that requires special attention during the Housekeeping phase. A number on the icon (on a Trap card, for example) indicates the number of turns the effect lasts.
- 12.3  - The heart icon in the upper right of a card indicates a card's value. This comes into play when redeeming cards.
- 12.4  - Certain Props have a limited number of uses. Use a die counter to record the number of uses remaining.
- 12.5  - Certain Weapon Props allow you to attack at range. The number in the range icon indicates how many rooms away from your current room your target may be.
- 12.6  - If you have a player token in a room with this icon, you gain the new power described on the room tile.
- 12.7 You may encounter strange icons not described here. They are safe to ignore. Though I wonder what they might signify...

HOUSE RULE CARDS

- 13.1 House Rules describe new rules that go into effect as soon as they are drawn. Place the rule near the Whack Track where all players can see it.
- 13.2 You may decide to limit the number of House rules that can be in play at once. For example, you might decide that 2 are enough. If a third is drawn, discard the House Rule that has been in play the longest.
- 13.3 House Rules stay in play until the end of a floor is reached (when someone draws "The End" room tile and a scoring phase takes place).

PROPS

- 14.1 You may pick up Props drawn from the Whack Deck or found in rooms by placing them face up before you. Any Props you don't want or cannot carry must be left face up in your room.
- 14.2 It is a Free Action to drop or pick up any number of Props in your current room.
- 14.3 You may only carry one of each type of Prop: Weapon, Wearable, or Artifact. Drop any excess Props immediately.
- 14.4 Some props grant bonuses to Strength or Spirit, indicated by a number in a red or blue heart. Your Strength or Spirit is increased as long as you carry the Prop. Remember that you do not actually change your Strength or Spirit die counter; just add the bonus as needed.
- 14.5 Props often grant new Powers described on the card. A  icon indicates the ability requires one of your Actions to use.

- 14.6 Some Props have a limited amount of ammunition or charges, indicated by a number inside a  icon. Place a die counter on the Prop set to its initial charge value and deduct one point each time you use the Prop. When there are no charges left, you may no longer use the Prop's abilities, but you may still carry the Prop and redeem it.
- 14.7 Some props allow you to attack from a distance. See the section on Ranged Attacks after the Conflict section.

ALLIES

- 15.1 Arrival cards will announce that an Ally has arrived in your current room. Randomly draw a new Guest card and rotate it so the Ally section of the card is right side up.
- 15.2 If you draw an Ally Arrival from the Whack Deck or meet an Ally in a room during your turn, you may take the Ally with you by placing it face up before you. This is a Free Action. Otherwise, you must leave the Ally in the room.
- 15.3 Allies grant you Powers, described on their card. An Action may be required to use a Power. Otherwise it is always in effect.
- 15.4 Allies may also grant a bonus to Strength or Spirit, shown in a red or blue heart. Add this bonus to the relevant stat when appropriate, such as in a Conflict.
- 15.5 Allies have a value and may be redeemed for Gold Hearts, Strength, Spirit or Life just like Props, Minions and Residents.

RESIDENTS

- 16.1 Residents are very similar to Allies except that they remain in the room where you discovered them. They do not join you.
- 16.2 Arrival cards will announce that a Resident has arrived in your current room. Randomly draw a new Guest card and rotate it so the Resident side of the card is right side up.
- 16.3 Some Guest cards have a Minion version rather than a Resident. In this case, treat them as a Minion (see below).
- 16.4 Residents perform services or affect the game in different ways, described on their card. An Action may be required to use a Resident's Power. Otherwise it is always in effect.
- 16.5 Residents will not attack players, but players may still attack them. Spend an Action and resolve a Conflict as though the Resident were a Minion. If defeated, the Resident card may be claimed and redeemed just like a Minion. If the Resident wins the Conflict, the player suffers the normal penalty described in the Conflict section.

MINIONS

- 17.1 Minions drawn from the Whack Deck will attack immediately. If you end your movement in a room containing a Minion, it will attack right away unless you use another Action to attempt to flee the room via a movement action. Otherwise you must resolve a Conflict with or evade the Minion before you may proceed with your turn. Follow the Conflict rules below.
- 17.2 Once you have resolved a Conflict with a Minion, you may continue your turn.
- 17.3 If you remain in the room with the Minion, you must face it again on your next turn only if you want to use Actions other than movement in that room. *It will not automatically attack you again.*
- 17.4 There is a difference between “fleeing” and “evading”: Fleeing means that you use enough movement to actually exit the room. Evading allows you to remain in the room with the Minion and still take further Actions without fighting it. Turning invisible is an example of evading.
- 17.5 Minions have either a Strength or Spirit, indicated by a number inside a red or blue heart, respectively. This stat determines the type of Conflict as well as the number you’ll have to beat.
- 17.6 Unless otherwise stated, a Minion remains in a room until defeated.
- 17.7 If there is more than one Minion in a room, choose one to encounter. If you defeat or evade it, you must then encounter any remaining Minions.
- 17.8 If you defeat a Minion, claim its card rather than discarding it. You will be able to redeem it for Gold Hearts or improved stats later.
- 17.9 If a Minion defeats you in a Conflict, follow the LOSE instructions.

TRAPS

- 18.1 If you draw a Trap from the Whack Deck, you must deal with it immediately.
- 18.2 Traps have either a Strength or Spirit value, indicated by a red or blue heart, respectively. This determines the type of Conflict you must resolve with the Trap.
- 18.3 If you win the Conflict, keep the Trap card to redeem later and continue on your merry way. But, if you lose, the Trap is activated and you must follow the instructions detailed on the LOSE section of the card.
- 18.4 If the result is a draw, you may use an Action to resolve another Conflict. Otherwise, follow the LOSE instructions as above.
- 18.5 Some Traps stay activated for several turns, indicated by a  icon. Keep it in front of you until the Trap is deactivated. Use a die counter to keep track of how many turns the Trap is activated. Lower the counter by one on your Housekeeping phase.
- 18.6 Once you have finished dealing with the consequences of an activated Trap, discard it.

CONFLICT

- 19.1 You may find yourself at odds with an opponent many times during your visit here. You may encounter Minions, hostile players, locked doors and Traps. All must be faced in a Conflict.
- 19.2 Conflicts are resolved either with Strength or Spirit, depending on the attribute of your opponent. See below if your opponent is another player.
- 19.3 Begin by taking your base Strength or base Spirit (according to the type of Conflict) and adding any bonuses granted by Allies, Props, or Powers (i.e. your Total Strength or Total Spirit).
- 19.4 You then decide if you want to play any Arcana cards with Strength, Spirit or Wild modifiers. You can play any number of these cards on yourself (but not on your opponent). Play these cards **face down**.
- 19.5 Your opponent adds any applicable bonuses to their Strength or Spirit, and plays any Arcana cards face down. If you are not in Conflict with a player, have another player draw one Drama card from the deck and place it face down without looking at it.
- 19.6 The other players then have the opportunity to assist you or interfere by playing Strength, Spirit or Wild Arcana on either you **or** your opponent. These cards are also played **face down**. This portion of the Conflict can involve all manner of bargaining, pleas and threats as opponents try to win assistance from the other players.
- 19.7 All face down cards are then revealed. Each side adds only the relevant Arcana bonuses to their Strength or Spirit. For instance, if it is a Strength Conflict, you may only add Strength Arcana bonuses to your Strength. Ignore any Spirit bonuses. Wild Arcana can modify both Strength and Spirit.
- 19.8 If your opponent was not a player, they will have a randomly-drawn Drama card. They must apply the modifier if relevant to the Conflict. Otherwise ignore the card.
- 19.9 Once each side has totaled their Strength or Spirit, any player may further modify either side's total by playing Wild Arcana modifiers. Players continue to play Wild modifiers until no one can or wants to play any more cards.
- 19.10 The final total for each opponent is their Conflict Score.
- 19.11 If your Conflict Score is higher than your opponent, you have won the Conflict. You collect the defeated Minion, Trap or Resident, or remove the locked door, as appropriate. See below if your Conflict is with another player.
- 19.12 If the Conflict Scores are equal, then the result is a draw. You neither win nor lose. If you have any Actions remaining, you may use one to resolve the Conflict from the beginning. Treat it is a brand new Conflict. Otherwise, in a draw, neither opponent suffers any penalties. **Exception: In the case of Traps, a draw still results in failure (follow the LOSE instructions).**
- 19.13 If your opponent has the higher Conflict Score, then you have lost. If your opponent was a Minion or Trap, follow the LOSE instructions on the opponent's card. If your opponent was a Resident, lose 1 Life for a Strength

Conflict or 1 Spirit for a Spirit Conflict. If your opponent was another player, see below.

CONFLICT BETWEEN PLAYERS

- 19.14 If you are in the same room as another player, you may choose to spend an Action and attack them. Unless you have a Power or other ability which says otherwise, you may only engage another player in a Conflict using Strength.
- 19.15 Determine Conflict Scores as detailed above.
- 19.16 In a Strength Conflict, the winner may take a Prop from the loser, OR make the loser deduct 1 Life point. In a Spirit Conflict, the winner may take a Drama card of their choice from the loser, OR make the loser deduct 1 Spirit point.
- 19.17 Alternately, if the loser has a player token in the current room, the winner of the Conflict may replace the token with one of their own player tokens from their unused supply.

CONFLICT SUMMARY

- 19.18 Each side totals up their relevant bonuses and adds them to their Strength or Spirit (depending on the Conflict).
- 19.19 Opponents play Arcana cards face down.
- 19.20 Other players interfere or aid either opponent with Arcana modifiers played face down.
- 19.21 Arcana cards are turned face up and added to each side's total.
- 19.22 All players can play Wild Arcana modifiers to further affect either opponent's total.
- 19.23 The highest Conflict Score wins.
- 19.24 Resolve the consequences (rewards and penalties).

RANGED ATTACKS

- 19.25 Some Props have a  icon with a number in it, indicating you may use it to attack at range or use its abilities from a distance.
- 19.26 The number on the range icon tells you how many rooms its effect or projectile may reach. So if the range is "2," you may fire the weapon or use the Prop's effect on a target up to 2 rooms away from yours (counting the target's room but not your own).
- 19.27 The rooms between you and your target must be connected and in a single row (no shooting around corners).
- 19.28 If you win the ranged Conflict, you **may only cause your opponent to lose 1 Life (or 1 Spirit in a Spirit Conflict)**.
- 19.29 If you lose the Conflict, treat it as a draw instead. So you see the advantage of attacking at range: you have little to lose besides ammo.

REDEEMING CARDS

- 20.1  The number inside the heart icon in the upper right corner of a Prop, Ally, Resident, Trap, or Minion card is that card's Gold Heart value.
- 20.2 Certain rooms will have one or more colored hearts indicating they allow you to redeem cards for other things. Red hearts indicate you may redeem cards for base Strength points. Blue hearts are for base Spirit points. Green hearts are for Life. Gold hearts are for the Gold Hearts needed to win the game. Purple hearts are special. Refer to the room's text to see what you get in exchange.
- 20.3 The Whack track shows the default exchange ratio for each type of heart. For instance, the red heart has a ratio of 3:1, meaning you need to redeem 3 hearts' worth of cards to gain 1 point of Strength.
- 20.4 It costs one Action to redeem any number of cards during your turn.
- 20.5 To redeem cards, simply set them aside, out of play. **Do not discard them.** A redeemed card is now outside of the game and may not return during this play session, nor may it be targeted or affected in any way.
- 20.6 If you are unable to redeem your cards evenly, the remaining hearts are lost. You may not save them for later.
- 20.7 In addition to redeeming cards, players may redeem their existing Gold Hearts for Strength, Spirit or Life. Lower the Gold Hearts on the Whack Track and increase Strength, Spirit or Life accordingly.
- 20.8 Gold Hearts will determine who wins the game.

HOW TO WIN

- 21.1 Players are trying to accumulate the most Gold Hearts before the game ends. When a player redeems a card for Gold Hearts, they advance their token on the Whack Track to record the gain in Hearts. Similarly, they move the token backwards on the track should they lose Gold Hearts.
- 22.1 When the "The End" room tile is revealed or the last remaining room tile is placed, this signals the end of a floor.
- 23.1 The player placing The End or the last room is allowed to finish their turn.
- 24.1 There is now a scoring phase: Players add the number of their own player tokens in the House to their Gold Hearts.
- 25.1 All players move back to the Start tile. Any cards or tokens remaining in the House are all discarded. The End tile is set aside and all other room tiles in play (except Start) are removed from the game. Shuffle any rooms in the discard pile into the remaining room deck.
- 26.1 Play then resumes with the next player. Play continues until all remaining room tiles are used. Place The End back into the room deck (it will be the only room tile in the deck at this point). The player who places The End is allowed to finish their turn. The game then ends.
- 27.1 There is a final scoring phase. Players again add the number of their own player tokens in the House to their Gold Hearts. The player with the most Gold Hearts is the winner.

ALTERNATE ENDING

- 28.1 Instead of playing as described above, the players may decide at the beginning of the game how many “floors” they will play, say from 1 to 5.
- 29.1 Whenever the The End tile comes up, it signals the end of a floor. The current player finishes their turn. Have a scoring phase where the tokens are added to each player’s Gold Hearts. All players then return to Start and the components are discarded as above, but **all** rooms, including The End, are shuffled back together to form a new room deck.
- 30.1 Play proceeds until the next time The End appears and the process is repeated.
- 31.1 When the last floor ends, a final scoring phase occurs and the player with the most Gold Hearts wins.

ALTERNATE RULE: AVATARS

- 31.2 Instead of starting the game as Guests, the players enter the House as themselves, the people they are in real life. They will be able to change into Guests later in the game.
- 31.3 All players begin with these stats: Strength 3, Spirit 3 and Life 4.
- 31.4 All Residents and Allies in the House are potential “Avatars” that players may assume control of.
- 31.5 If a player is in a room with a Resident, they may use an Action and spend Gold Hearts equal to the Resident’s value. They then assume control of that Guest. The player removes the Guest card and begins using the player section of the card immediately.
- 31.6 A player can also assume control of one of their own Allies (not another player’s) in the exact same way as controlling a Resident.
- 31.7 A player may use an Action to release their Guest and become themselves again. The Guest is placed in the player’s current room as a Resident or Ally (it is up to the player). Any player may become that Guest now.
- 31.8 Players retain their base stats when they become a new Guest or when they release a Guest, even if the Guest has higher or lower stats. You still use the Guest’s stats when determining Original stats (if your Strength gets reset to its original value, for example).
- 31.9 A player may only be one Guest at a time. If a player assumes control of another Guest, they immediately relinquish control of their current Guest.

ALTERNATE RULE: PLAY VS. THE HOUSE

- 32.1 The players are now playing against the House itself! During the game, the House will also gain Gold Hearts.
- 32.2 Use a token to represent the House’s Gold Hearts, which start at zero along with the other players.
- 32.3 When a Twist card is played, the House gains 1 Gold Heart.

- 32.4 When a House card is played, the House gains 2 Gold Hearts.
- 32.5 If a Minion, Trap or Resident wins any Conflict, the House gains Gold Hearts equal to the card's value.
- 32.6 If the House has the most Gold Hearts at the end of the game, it wins and all the players lose!

SPECIAL ROOMS

Boiler Room

While the Boiler Room is in play, redeeming cards in *any* room will generate a number of special steam tokens equal to the cards' value. The player redeeming the cards must distribute all of these tokens to any rooms in the House, including the Boiler Room itself. When placing steam tokens, no more than 1 may be added to a room during that turn.

If there are not enough rooms to handle the number of tokens generated, discard the leftover tokens.

If any room reaches 5 steam tokens, it explodes from the pressure! Discard the room along with its contents. Any players in such a room lose 2 Life and move to any connected room or to Start if there are no connected rooms.

If you are in the Boiler room, you may use an Action to redistribute any number of steam tokens from one room to any other rooms, using the rule of only 1 new token per room per turn.

The Gate

When this room is built, each player writes down two possible outcomes describing what happens if someone enters the Gate. This can be anything the players imagine, involving in-game consequences ("player gains 5 Life") or out-of-game "meta" consequences ("player has to buy dinner for everyone"). Fold up the results and mix them all together in a hat. If someone chooses to enter the Gate, they must randomly draw from the possible outcomes and obey the written results. The results are non-negotiable. If the player decides to ignore the results, they lose and are out of the game. The result they picked is removed from the pool.

The Hatch

When this room is built, all players secretly record a number on a piece of paper. This number is part of the combination required to unlock the Hatch. Players may use any means necessary to extract the rest of the combination from the other players. If a player defeats another player in a Conflict, they may look at the loser's piece of the combination instead of taking any other reward.

If a player has the entire combination, they may spend an Action to open the Hatch. A player who opens the Hatch chooses **one** of the following rewards:

1. Draw 10 Drama cards and keep them.
2. Draw 5 Whack cards, keeping any Props and encountering any Arrival cards. Shuffle the remainder back into the deck.
3. Draw 10 Whack cards and gain Gold Hearts equal to the total value shown on all of the cards. Shuffle the cards back into the deck.

Hedge Maze

The Hedge Maze consists of four separate room tiles that are all added to the House simultaneously when any one Hedge Maze tile is drawn from the room deck. If you draw a Hedge Maze tile, search through the room deck and retrieve the other three, remembering to shuffle the room tiles when finished.

Add the first Hedge Maze tile as normal and then build the other three with each tile adjacent to at least one other Hedge Maze tile. If this is not possible, discard the Hedge Maze tiles that do not fit.

When you exit a Hedge Maze tile and attempt to build a new room, there is a chance you could get lost in the maze. Roll a die. If you roll 1-3, move one of the other existing Hedge Maze tiles and place it where the new room would have gone. If you roll 4-6, build a new room normally.

Only do this when attempting to build a new room; if there is already a room adjacent to the door you exit, you move into that room normally.

Mystery Room

When this room is built, all players must decide upon a new type of redemption and exchange rate. It may involve existing game components (Strength, Gold Hearts, Drama cards, Actions, Minions, etc.) or it may involve meta elements from outside of the game (candy, kisses, jokes, jumping jacks, hard cash, etc.). It is up to the whimsical and perverse desires of the players. For instance, the players could decide the new rate is “Discard 2 Drama cards for 1 additional Action” or “Run 10 laps around the game table for 1 Life.” The exchange rate must be at least 1:1. The exchange rate only works in the Mystery Room. You only have three minutes to decide, though. If no consensus can be reached in that time frame, the room is discarded and a new one is drawn.

On a Cloud

The Cloud floats above the rooms of the House. When this room is built, set it aside from the rest of the House and move your piece onto it. Use a counter to indicate which room the Cloud is currently floating above. When this room is first built, the Cloud is floating above the room you were in prior to entering the Cloud.

A player on the Cloud may use an action to move the Cloud counter to any surrounding room. A player in the same room as the Cloud counter may spend an

Action to move onto the Cloud tile. A player already on the Cloud may spend an Action to move down to the room with the Cloud counter.

Throne of Swift and Whimsical Judgment

A player (the prosecutor) in this room may spend an Action to put another player (the defendant) on trial for crimes real or imagined. This may only occur in a game with at least three players.

The prosecutor presents their case (“Dave is hogging all the good rooms” or “Jeremy ate the last of the corn chips” for example) to the other players. The defendant is allowed a rebuttal. A period of deliberation among the players ensues. This period may include bribes and/or threats by the prosecutor and defendant.

The players who are not the prosecutor or defendant vote in favor of the prosecutor, in favor of the defendant, or decline to vote.

If the prosecutor wins, he may take up to two Allies or Props from the defendant, take the defendant’s entire hand of Drama cards, OR cause the defendant to lose 5 Gold Hearts. If the defendant wins, he gains the same reward as just described.

If the votes result in a draw, determine the winner randomly.

A player may be put on trial once per game.

Trophy Room

A card redeemed in the Trophy Room may be put on display if it has a greater value than any current card on display. Place it in this room, replacing any other card on display. The card does not count as being in the room (i.e. you cannot pick it up or move it). During a scoring phase (at the end of a floor or end of the game), if your card is on display, you gain twice its value in Gold Hearts.

The Wrong Floor

Upon entering this room, immediately disconnect it from the current floor and begin a new floor of the House (see the rules for Stairs and floors). This new floor is not connected to the other floors of the House.

Whenever a Minion is redeemed on another floor of the House, the player who redeemed it puts it back into play in any room of this new floor. All Minions on this floor are treated as having Spirit, even if the card shows a Strength stat.

No cards may be redeemed by a player on this entire floor.

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