

CALL OF CTHULHU

COLLECTIBLE CARD GAME

Eldritch Edition Official Rules v2.0

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the strange and terrifying world inspired by the stories of Howard Phillips Lovecraft, his literary circle, and the classic *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game.

In the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG, players take on the roles of intrepid investigators and unspeakable horrors, trying to succeed at their dangerous missions while opposed by the forces of their opponents.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Unlike traditional card games where all players share a deck, each CALL OF CTHULHU CCG player customizes his own deck of cards from any cards in his collection.

The starter box that you have purchased contains the rules, story cards, and game cards needed for one player. However, there are over 200 different cards for you to collect and trade in Eldritch Edition alone. You may purchase more cards or trade with your friends in order to add to your collection, giving you more options for building your own deck.

GAME OVERVIEW

The focal points of the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG are the **story cards**, which are drawn at random from a fixed common story deck and placed in the middle of the table between the players. During the game, players take turns playing **character** and **support** cards from their hands, then using these cards to achieve success at these stories.

While characters are committed to a story, they may face opposition in four different arenas: **Terror**, **Combat**, **Arcane**, and **Investigation**.

Every turn, as a story resolves, the active player may receive success tokens on his side of a story card. When a player has accumulated five success tokens on his side of a story card, he wins that story. A player that wins three stories immediately wins the game!

THE ELDRITCH EDITION

This brand new edition provides a fresh start to the Call of Cthulhu CCG for new players and experienced players alike. It introduces over 200 new cards as well as a few exciting new rules and some rules changes. If you are familiar with the game you need only look at the sections marked **(NEW)** to see what has been changed or added.

THE FACTIONS

There are seven different factions in the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG, each with its own unique take on the Mythos. Each faction is represented in the game with a unique symbol and color/texture on its card border. You can read more about the backgrounds and motivations of these factions on www.CTHULHUCCG.COM. The factions and their symbols are as follows:

- The Agency
- { Miskatonic University
- } The Syndicate
- [Cthulhu
-] Hastur
- < Yog-Sothoth
- > Shub-Niggurath

Cards with a grey border and no specific resource symbol are **neutral**. Neutral cards do not belong to any faction.

THE GOLDEN RULE

If the rules text of a card contradicts the text of this rulebook, the rules on the card take precedence (with a few exceptions, as listed in the rules).

EXHAUSTED, READY & INSANE

Normally, when you put a card into play from your hand, it comes into play in the **ready** position; that is, faceup on the playing surface in front of you.

When a card has been “used” for some purpose, like committing to a story or to activate an ability, it is **exhausted**. To show that a card is exhausted, it is turned 90 degrees sideways. A card that is exhausted cannot exhaust again until it has been readied once more.

When you are asked to ready an exhausted card, simply return that card to its normal up-right position.

Some effects will cause a character to become **insane**. To reflect this, flip that card over so that it is facedown on the table (see more on insanity later).



RESOURCES & DOMAINS

Enclosed in your starter box, you will find three cards depicting nothing but a large three-way split piece of artwork. These are your three **domain cards**. Before starting the game, each player places his three domain cards in his play area. Domains are used, along with the resources attached to them, to pay for cards that you want to play from your hand.

In order to play a card from your hand, you must **drain** a domain (by placing a token on it to indicate that it has been drained). The drained domain must have at least as many resources attached to it as the cost of the card that you want to play (read more about paying for cards later).

THE CARDS

There are four different types of cards in the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG. Each card has a unique title, piece of art, and collector statistics.

There are four levels of rarity in this game: fixed (F) (meaning you will only find this card in a starter deck), common (C), uncommon (U), and rare (R). Rarity and collector numbers are printed on each card.

Story Cards

This deck of 10 cards (found in your starter box) represents the strange tales and horrors of the city of Arkham and its surrounding areas.

FFG plans to release a new story deck once a year with different cards and rules to be used in organized play.

You only need one deck of story cards for a two-player game.



Character Cards

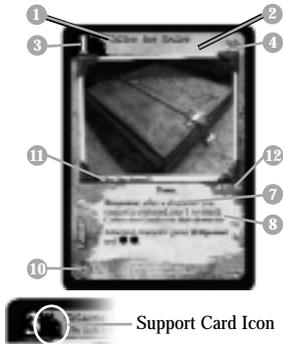
Character cards represent intrepid investigators, scientists, and adventurers, as well as the unspeakable minions and Outer Gods of the Mythos. You need character cards in order to succeed at story cards and win the game. Once played, characters remain in play until destroyed by game or card effects.



Support Cards

Support cards represent locations, items, tomes, vehicles, and attachments. Once played, support cards remain in play until destroyed by game or card effects.

Exception: Cards that are attached to another card (most often support cards) are immediately destroyed (put into the discard pile) if the card they are attached to leaves play for any reason.



Event Cards

Event cards represent spells, actions, disasters, and exciting plot twists. Event cards are normally played from your hand, their text effect is resolved, and then they are placed in your discard pile.



CARD ANATOMY

- 1. Title:** The name of this card. A card with a bullet next to its name is unique.
- 2. Descriptor:** The descriptive text here (if any) contains thematic information about the card, and is not an extension of the card's title. (See “Deck Building Rules” for more information.)

3. Cost: The number of resources you need when draining a domain in order to pay for a card that you wish to play from your hand. *Note that at least one of the domain's resources must match that of the played card's faction.*

4. Faction Symbol: The faction the card belongs to.

5. Icons: The abilities of the character during the icon struggles of a story card.

- @ Terror
- # Combat
- S Arcane
- % Investigation

6. Skill: A measure of how much a character can contribute towards your success at a story.

7. Subtypes: Special designators that have no rules, but may be affected by other cards in play. Examples include **Deep One**, **Investigator**, and **Government**.

8. Card text: The special effects unique to that card.

9. Keyword: Keywords are found at the top of a card's text effect, in **bold** type. Examples include **Heroic**, **Willpower**, and **Fast**. The presence of a keyword indicates that the card has one of the special abilities described later in these rules.

10. Resource Icon: When a card is attached upside down to one of your domains, it is considered a resource, and adds its resource icon to a domain when drained to pay for cards or card effects.

11. Art Credit: The name of the card's illustrator.

12. Collector Info: Denotes the rarity and collector number of the card.

13. Struggle Icons (story card only): The order in which the icon struggles of a story are resolved. These icons can be added or removed by card effects.

ICON BOOSTERS

There are a few cards that have a large struggle icon (identical to those on the story cards) printed in their text box. When such a card is either attached to a story or committed to a story (in the case of a character), it forces an additional icon struggle of that type while the story is being resolved. This additional icon struggle is resolved according to the order of the printed icons.

For example, if the "Cairo Mercenary" (which has two Combat booster icons) is committed to a story, a Combat struggle would resolve three times; once as normal, and two additional times immediately thereafter. If the card that added the icon struggle is removed from play, ignore the extra icon struggle it provided.

UNIQUE CARDS

Some cards in the game are unique. They are marked with a bullet (•) before their card name to indicate their uniqueness.

You cannot play, or put into play, another copy of a card if you own and/or already control one in play. It is possible, however, for both players to have the same unique card in play at the same time. If a unique card is destroyed or leaves play for any other reason, you are allowed to play another copy of that unique card according to the normal rules.

SETUP

Before you begin playing the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG, both players follow these quick steps in order:

1. Shuffle Your Deck

As you would with a deck of playing cards, shuffle the cards in your deck until they are sufficiently randomized.

2. Shuffle and Deal Story Cards

One player shuffles his story deck (the other player puts his away), and deals three story cards faceup to the center of the table between the two players.

3. Place Domains

Find your three domain cards and place them next to your deck. They should form a "back row" in your playing area.

4. Draw Setup Hand

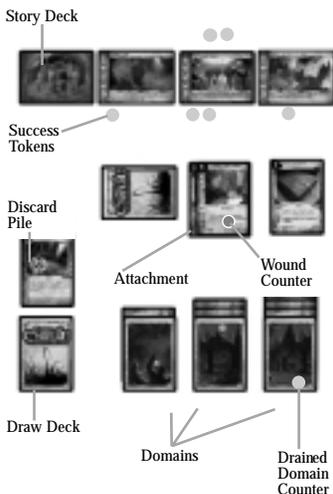
Draw eight cards from your deck. This is your setup hand. Choose five of these cards to be your opening hand. The remaining three cards will become your starting resources.

5. Attach Resources

Take the remaining three cards from your setup hand and attach one, upside down, to each of your three domains. The card bottom and resource icon should be all that is visible above the domain card. The attached cards are now considered **resources**. (Your opponent may look at your resources if he wants to.)

Once these steps are complete, the game is ready to begin!

SAMPLE PLAYER'S PLAY AREA



TURN SEQUENCE

The CALL OF CTHULHU CCG is played over a series of **turns**. Each player completes his entire turn before the other player takes his turn. Before the game begins, randomly determine which player will take the first turn.

Your turn is divided into five **phases**, which must be taken in this order:

1. Refresh phase
2. Draw phase
3. Resource phase
4. Operations phase
5. Story phase

When you have completed all five phases, your turn is over. Below is a detailed outline of the turn sequence.

Important Exception: During the very first turn of the game, the starting player may only draw one card during his draw phase and must skip his entire story phase. This is known as the "first player penalty," and only applies to the starting player on the very first turn of the game.

Refresh phase

First choose and **restore** one of your insane characters (if any) by flipping it faceup and **exhausting** it (or leave it exhausted if it is exhausted already). A restored character is no longer considered insane, but remains exhausted until your next turn.

Then ready all of your exhausted cards in play (except the one just restored) and **refresh** your drained domains by removing any tokens on them.

Draw phase

Draw two cards from your deck. If **at any point** you have no cards remaining in your deck, you are immediately eliminated from the game and your opponent is the winner.

Resource phase

During this phase you may choose a single card from your hand, and attach it, upside down, to one of your domains as a resource (there is no limit to how many resources can be attached to a domain). The number (and type) of resources attached to a

domain is important when that domain is drained to pay for playing cards (or card effects). A resource is no longer a part of your hand, and cannot be used for anything else.

Operations phase

This is the only phase in which you are allowed to play character and support cards from your hand. Only the active player (the player whose turn it is) may play character and support cards during this phase.

In order to play a card from your hand (or to activate certain card effects), you must pay for it by draining a domain with sufficient resources (place a token on the domain to illustrate that it has been drained).

A domain cannot be drained to pay for a card (or card effect) unless the number of resources attached to it is equal to or greater than the cost. Also note that when draining a domain to play a non-neutral card, *at least one of the attached resources must be of that card's faction* (this does not apply to neutral cards). This is called making a **resource match**.

A domain that is drained cannot be drained again until it is refreshed by card effects or during the refresh phase.

Cards with a cost of zero do not require a domain to be drained in order to pay their cost, nor do they require a resource match in order to be played.

After playing a character or support card from your hand, place it ready and faceup in the playing area in front of you. It is recommended that you play all your characters in one area, and all of your support cards in another area, so that you and your opponent can easily survey the gaming area.

Example: During his operations phase, Darin wishes to play a "Spawn of Sebek" from his hand. To do so, he must drain one of his domains that has at least three resources attached, one of which must be a Cthulhu faction resource "[" (the "Spawn of Sebek" is part of the Cthulhu faction).

Important: Remember that at least one of the resources attached to the domain must match the faction of the card being played. This is called making a **resource match**.

Important: You can never drain more than one domain to pay the cost of playing a card or activating a card effect! Many times you will "overpay" for a card, because the drained domain will have more resources attached than the cost of the card. The additional resources paid are immediately lost; they do not "carry over" to the next card played.

Story phase

This is where most of the action in the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG takes place. During this phase, the active player commits his characters to stories in an effort to place success tokens on his side of those story cards, while his opponent tries to prevent him from doing so.

The story phase is played in three steps:

1. Active Player Commits
2. Opponent Commits
3. Stories Are Resolved

Step 1 – Active Player Commits

The active player decides which of his ready characters in play will commit to which of the three stories, and then commits all of those characters to the three story cards at one time. When a character has been committed to a story, exhaust that character and move it in front of the specific story card. You may commit any number of characters to each story, as long as they are not already exhausted. Each character may only be committed to one story.

The active player may choose to not commit to any or all of the stories during this step. If the active player decides to not commit to at least one character to a story, the phase ends and the player's turn is over.

Example: Darin has five characters in play. During step 1 of the story phase, he decides to commit one character to story A and two characters to story B, but does not commit his two remaining characters to story C because he believes that he will need them during his opponent's turn.

Step 2 – Opponent Commits

Your opponent (the non-active player) may now commit any number of his ready characters to any story where you have committed at least one character during step 1.

Step 3 – Stories Are Resolved

The active player now selects one story at a time to be resolved. When resolving a story, the committed characters will go through a series of struggles, and finally the active player will determine if he has met success at that story (see the detailed section “Resolving a Story Card” for more detail).

At the end of your story phase, play passes to your opponent, who then must complete his entire turn. In this way, turns pass back and forth between players until one player has won the game.

RESOLVING A STORY CARD

During the story phase, in the order determined by the active player, each story card (that contains committed characters) must be resolved. This is done by following these five steps:

1. **Terror Struggle**
2. **Combat Struggle**
3. **Arcane Struggle**
4. **Investigation Struggle**
5. **Determine Success**

The Terror, Combat, Arcane, and Investigation struggles are also called **icon struggles**. Note that the *order* of the icon struggles is printed on the left side of each story card.

Resolving an Icon Struggle

To resolve an icon struggle (such as “Terror”), the active player counts the total number of the relevant icon on all his committed characters at that story. Then the opponent does the same for his characters that are committed to the story. The player (active player or opponent) that has the most icons of the relevant type wins that struggle and immediately exercises its specific effect (see below).

If the players tie in number of icons (they both have an equal number of icons of the relevant type, including zero) then nothing happens and the game proceeds to the next step.

Note that icon boosters do not count as icons when comparing the total number of icons during an icon struggle.

@ Terror Struggle

The player who *loses* a Terror struggle must immediately choose one of his characters (committed to that story), if able, to go insane. That character is no longer considered to be committed to the story (the character is thought to have fled the scene, gibbering and drooling).

Important exception: Characters that have a terror (@) icon, or the **Willpower** keyword, can never (regardless of card effects) go insane for any reason, nor may such a character be chosen to go insane. Thus, if all of the losing player’s characters (at that story) possess the Terror icon, then losing the Terror struggle has no effect on that player.

Combat Struggle

The player who *loses* a Combat struggle must immediately choose one of his characters (committed to that story) to take a wound, if able.

Most characters are destroyed (go to the discard pile) after taking a single wound. Some characters, however, have the **Toughness** keyword which allows them to take additional wounds before being destroyed. A character with **Toughness +2**, for example, will be destroyed only after receiving its third wound. Each time a character is wounded, indicate this by placing a token on that character.

S Arcane Struggle

The player who *wins* an Arcane struggle may immediately ready *any* one of his characters committed to that story (the character is still considered to be committed to that story, but is no longer exhausted). Note that the readied character does *not* need to have the Arcane icon.

% Investigation Struggle

The player who *wins* an Investigation struggle may immediately place a success token on the story card currently being resolved. This could cause you to instantly win a story card. If this is the case, take that story card and resolve its effects before continuing.

Determine Success

After the four icon struggles, the active player determines if he has been successful at the story. He now adds the combined skill values of all his characters currently committed to the story. This number is the **total skill**. If the total skill value of the active player exceeds the total skill value of the opponent, then the active player may place a success token on his side of the story being resolved.

In addition, in order to be successful at a story, the active player’s total skill must always be at least one or higher. If his total skill is zero or less, he does not succeed at the story.

Note that characters that were destroyed or driven insane during the icon struggles do not add their skill value to determine success.

Note also that only the active player may place a success token for being successful at a story. If the non-active player has the most total skill at this story, nothing happens.

Unchallenged Stories: If the active player succeeds at a story, and the total skill of his opponent was zero (or less), the story is considered unchallenged, and the active player may place an additional success token on the story card.

If, at any time, a player has five or more success tokens on his side of a story card, he immediately wins the story and may choose to execute its effect (see below). When a player wins his third story card, he immediately wins the game!

WINNING A STORY CARD

Immediately after a player has won a story card (which happens the moment that a player has five or more success tokens on his side of the story card) that player takes the story card, chooses whether or not to execute its effect, and then places it prominently face-up in his game area to illustrate that he has won the story.

After a story card has been won, and its effect executed or declined, it is replaced by a new story card from the story deck. Thus, if a story card has been won before it is fully resolved (usually by having the fifth token placed from an investigation struggle), it is replaced before players compare total skill to determine success.

Characters that were committed to a story that was won are no longer considered committed to any story.

The Story Card’s Effect

Every story card has a special powerful effect. When a player wins a story card, that player chooses whether or not to execute the effect. Once the effect has been executed (or declined), the story card (and its effect) are no longer a part of the game, except for victory purposes.

After a story card has been won and its effect executed (or not), discard all success tokens (for both players) that had been placed by that story. These success tokens are now lost. Then draw another story card from the story deck and place it where the old story used to sit. In this way, there will *always* be three story cards between the players on the table.

If, through card effects, multiple story cards are won at the same time, the active player decides the order in which they are won. Resolve each win as above before moving on.

If, through card effects, both players would simultaneously win a story card, the active player wins the story.

Note that the story deck must always contain the same 10 story cards found in this starter box. You may not change the contents of the story deck before a game.

End of Turn

At the end of the story phase, players have one more chance to take actions (such as playing event cards or using card abilities in play), and then all characters are uncommitted from their story cards. They are no longer considered at that story, and may commit to different story cards in the future, when and if they are able.

Play then passes to your opponent, who begins his turn with his refresh phase.

KEYWORDS

Characters may have one or more of the following keywords (this is always indicated in bold type above their rules text or printed up-side down at the bottom of a card). The keywords in the Eldritch Edition are as follows:

Heroic/Villainous

During the game, you cannot play (or bring into play via card effects) a Heroic character if you control any Villainous characters. Similarly, you cannot play a Villainous character if you control any Heroic characters in play. If at any time you control both a Villainous and Heroic character, you must immediately choose one to be discarded from play.

Loyal

When you drain a Domain in order to pay the resource cost of playing a Loyal card, the Domain must contain enough resources of that card’s faction to pay for its entire cost (normally, one resource match is sufficient).

Fast

When resolving a story, the player who controls the most Fast characters committed to that story wins all ties during icon struggles and when determining success at that story. Note, however, that a tie of zero is still even and has no winner. If the players have an equal number of Fast characters at that story, ties are resolved as normal.

Toughness +X

Characters with Toughness may be wounded an additional X times (mark each wound by putting a token on that character). For example, a character with Toughness +2 can take two wounds without being destroyed. The next wound would then destroy it.

Willpower

Characters with Willpower can never go insane or be chosen to go insane, regardless of card effects.

Invulnerability

Characters with Invulnerability can never be wounded or chosen to be wounded, regardless of card effects.

Steadfast (NEW)

Certain cards in Eldritch Edition have faction symbols in their title. These symbols are part of the card’s cost. These new cards are known as “steadfast” cards. When you drain a domain in order to pay the resource cost of playing a Steadfast card, you must have at least that many resources on the total number of domains you control (and make a resource match as normal).

Example: Darin wants to play the character card “Government Liaison” during his operations phase. “Government Liaison” is a cost 3, Steadfast member of the Miskatonic faction, with two faction symbols in its title. In order to play this card, Darin must first have at least 2 Miskatonic resources attached to any number of domains he controls and drain a domain with at least 3 resources (one of which is Miskatonic).

Transient (NEW)

Cards with the Transient keyword count as two resources when the domain they are attached to is drained to play a card. Once a domain with Transient resources attached to it is drained for any reason, all Transient resources attached are destroyed and placed in the discard pile.

Example: Darin attaches a Transient resource to a domain with no resources attached. If Darin chooses to drain this domain, it would provide two resources instead of one. After Darin drains the domain, all Transient resources attached are destroyed and placed in the discard pile.

EXPERT RULES

Following are some of the more intricate rules of the game. You do not need to know these rules in order to start playing, but it may help to refer to them from time to time.

TIMING RULES

Each player may take actions (by playing event cards or using card abilities) during each step of every phase except for certain intervals of play (see the turn sequence diagram for details). In particular, *during the resolve story card step of the story phase, no card effects or actions may be taken until all three stories have been resolved.* The active player always takes the first action in any phase.

Actions are taken one at a time. After a player has taken and resolved an action, he must allow his opponent the opportunity to take and resolve an action before he can take another, etc.

An action is resolved completely before another action may be taken (exception: disrupt, see below)

A **Response** is an action that can only be played if the circumstances described in its text are met. Responses are always worded in a fashion similar to the example below:

“Response: after a character is destroyed, put one success token on a story card.”

A response cannot be played until the effect that triggers it has fully resolved. A response can only be played once per trigger.

Special Exception: There are several responses that take place after a card is destroyed. Normally, cards do not have any effect while in your discard pile, but a card that has a response triggered by its own destruction may be activated.

A **Forced Response** is an action that a player *must* trigger when its circumstances apply (even during story resolution).

Disrupt is a special action that can actually cancel or change an action just taken by the opponent. Remember that all actions are fully resolved before the next action may be taken. The Disrupt action can create the only exception to this rule.

When a card, or card effect, is canceled, its cost must still be paid (and thus wasted). Canceled event cards are immediately discarded.

Cumulative Effects

Many effects are cumulative and take effect multiple times if multiple copies of that effect are in play. For example, if there are 3 copies of the card “Lost History of Herodotus” (a Miskatonic support card with the text: “lower the cost for you to play events by 1 (to a minimum of 1).”) in play, each copy would reduce the cost to play events by 1. Thus, in this case, all your event cards would cost 3 less.

Note that a response may take effect multiple times if multiple copies of that effect are in play (but still only once per card per trigger).

Destroy and Sacrifice

When a card is destroyed (this includes a character that has taken a fatal number of wounds), it is placed into the discard pile.

A character that is sacrificed is also placed in the discard pile. You can only sacrifice cards that you control, that is, you can never sacrifice an opponent’s card. Also note that “sacrifice” and “destroy” are not interchangeable terms, thus a card that is destroyed is not sacrificed, and vice versa.

Insanity

When a character goes insane, it is flipped facedown and all cards attached to it are destroyed. If a wounded character, regardless of its Toughness, goes insane, it is immediately

destroyed. Likewise, if an insane character is wounded, it is immediately destroyed.

Insane characters have the following statistics: 0-cost, 0-skill, no faction, no icons, no traits, and no text. An insane character cannot commit to a story and is never considered to be committed to a story.

Adding a Domain

Some effects in the game allow you to add additional domain cards. When adding a new domain, simply draw the top card of your deck, look at it, and then place it facedown next to your existing domains. That card is now considered a domain card and loses all other identification and game functions. Resources can be added to your new domain during the resource phase (and via card effects) as if it were a normal domain card.

Day and Night

Some cards in the game will change the “time” to either **Night** or **Day** (neither of which have any specific effect, but allow other specific card effects to be active). At the beginning of the game it is neither **Night** or **Day**. It is not considered to be **Day** or **Night** unless there is a **Day** or **Night** card in play. If for any reason there is both a **Day** and **Night** card in play, then it is considered to be both **Day** and **Night**.

DECK BUILDING RULES

In this starter box you will find 10 story cards, 3 domain cards, and 47 game cards. When constructing your own deck from your collection for tournament purposes, you must use the following restrictions:

- 1) Your deck must contain at least 50 cards.
- 2) No more than 4 copies of a card with the same title and descriptor may be in your deck. (If 2 cards have the same title but different descriptors, they are considered to be the same card.)

Note that as more cards become available for the CALL OF CTHULHU CCG, the minimum number of required cards in your deck may increase for organized play.

Organized Play

Join the Call of Cthulhu community at WWW.CTHULHUCCG.COM to find retailers, special events and tournaments near you. You can also visit the site to become a Servitor and help FFG organize CALL OF CTHULHU CCG events and organized play in your area.

Additionally, on WWW.CTHULHUCCG.COM you will be able to find updates, rules clarifications, community message boards, and exciting articles about the game. See you there!

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Thank you!

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DETAILED TURN SEQUENCE

1. Refresh Phase

- Ready all of your exhausted cards
- Restore 1 insane character (exhausted)

• Actions may be taken

2. Draw Phase

- Draw 2 cards

• Actions may be taken

3. Resource Phase

- Attach 1 resource to a Domain (*optional*)

• Actions may be taken

4. Operations Phase

- Actions may be taken

When the active player plays a character or a support card from his hand, it is considered taking an Action.

5. Story Phase

- Actions may be taken

• You (active player) commit characters to stories.

• Actions may be taken

- Opponent (non-active player) commits characters to oppose yours.

• Actions may be taken

Resolve each story, in order of your choosing. For each story, resolve the following in order:

- Resolve Terror (@) Struggle
- Resolve Combat (#) Struggle
- Resolve Arcane (S) Struggle
- Resolve Investigation (%) Struggle
- Determine success

• Responses to struggle and success results may be played

• Actions may be taken

• Characters are uncommitted

• End of Turn

SEQUENCES IN GREY BOXES CANNOT BE INTERRUPTED BY ANY ACTIONS OR RESPONSES (DISRUPTS MAY STILL TAKE PLACE AND FORCED RESPONSES MUST RESOLVE IMMEDIATELY).