# Secret Histories rulebook

In Secret Histories game players attempt to fulfill their desire to gain immortality and ascend to become one of the Long. There are many paths to shedding or transforming one’s physical form but ultimately the Hours that dwell in Mansus will only allow one player to bask in the illumination of The Glory.

Player will spend their turns trying to obtain and upgrade *Lore*, *Influence* and *Ingredient* cards. While they are seeking immortality, wordily affairs still impact them and they must earn a living or face starvation.They will also have to avoid or mitigate effects of Ill effect Influences and Seasonal cards. Growing more powerful and resilient through *Ability* and *Skill* cards is inevitable part of the progression*.* And there is never enough time to do all that needs to be done.

Players indirectly compete for the attention of the Hours. Therefore, they must keep the obtained occult knowledge close to their chest and carefully choose the right moment to dedicate themselves to a path to ascension.

Once a player progresses through their chosen ascension path, only the final ritual is separating them from their victory. That, or some other disciple performing the ritual themselves.

## Game components

679 cards, 45 time tokens, 9 society tokens and 50 money tokens.

## Board setup

* Create a face down deck somewhere near the center of the play area for the *Season* cards, except for the **Season of Chill** and shuffle it. Place the **Season of Chill** below the deck, face up. Reveal to the top card of the deck and keep it face up on top of the deck.
* Place **Time Passes** card next to the **Season of Chill** card.
* Place **Temptation: Power**, **Temptation: Sensation** and **Temptation: Enlightenment** above the season deck.
* Create a sorted face down pile for all of the *Dedication* and *Ascension* cards.
* Create a sorted pile from all of the *Ill effect* cards and relevant *Influence* cards: **An Affliction**, **Dread**, **Restlessness**, **Contentment** and **Bleak Thoughts**.
* Create piles for following *Influence* cards **Glimmering** + **Fervor**, **Vitality** + **Fortitude** and **Wisdom** + **Erudition**.
* Create a pile for *reputation* cards: **Mystique** and **Notoriety**.
* Create piles for the following *Ingredient* cards: **Health**, **Reason**, **Passion**.
* Create a sorted pile for following cards: **Robust Strength**, **Unyielding Training**, **Unyielding Strength**.
* Create a sorted pile for following cards: **Vivid Imagination**, **Envisage the concept**, **Fevered Imagination, Creative Mastery**.
* Create a sorted pile for following cards: **Scholarship, Cerebral problem, Sage Scholarship**.
* Create a face down deck for the *Patron* cards, except for **Sulochana Amavasya** and shuffle the deck. Place **Sulochana Amavasya** at the bottom of this deck so that she is always drawn last**.**
* Create a sorted pile for all of the *Lore* cards.
* Create a face down pile with the *Masterpiece* cards.
* Create a face down deck for *Morland's Shop* cards and shuffle it.
* Create a sorted pile with all of the *Spintria* cards.
* Create a face down deck for *Oriflamme's Auction House* cards, except for the cards with *Ingredient* aspect, and shuffle it. Cut the deck and shuffle the withheld ingredients cards to the bottom half of the deck. Place the whole deck somewhere to the side, it will become active once *Morland's Shop* is empty*.*
* Create a deck from *Commission* cards, except for *Substantial Commissions* cards, and shuffle it. Cut the deck and shuffle the substantial commissions into the bottom half of the deck.
* Create a face down pile with all of the *Society* cards.
* Create a face down *Hours* deck and shuffle it. Hours cards have distinct portrait art style with black and white title and principles without strength number.
* Create a face down deck for the *White Door* cards and shuffle it.
* Create a sorted pile for **Way: The White Door**, **Stag riddle** and **Way: The Stag Door** cards.
* Create a face down deck for the *Stag Door* cards and shuffle it.
* Create a sorted pile for **Glover&Glover** and **Senior at Glover&Glover** cards.
* Create a face down deck for the *Burglary* cardsand shuffle it.
* Create a face down pile with all of the remaining influences.

## Player setup

* Take 10 funds
* Take 1 **Reason**, **Passion** and **Health** card
* Take 1 **Unskilled Labor, Robust Training, Creativity, Find an inspiration, Elementary Insight**, **Intellectual Problem, Difficulty at Work** and **Your “Mr Alden”** card
* Take 1 **White riddle** and **Way: The Wood** card
* Draw 3 cards from *Morland's Shop* deck. You can mulligan once all of these 3 cards; draw 3 new ones.

## Playing the game

### Goal

Ascension to immortality requires an occult ritual using one of each card with the following *Aspects*:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Lore** | **Influence** | **Ingredient** |
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There are three paths available to ascension: *Power*, *Sensation* and *Enlightenment*. Multiple players can compete for the same path but there is limited number of resources for each path. Once a player dedicates themselves to a path, it cannot be changed.

Cards have one or more associated *Principle,* usually together with a strength as a numeric value:

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| **Heart** | **Grail** | **Moth** | **Lantern** | **Forge** | **Edge** | **Winter** | **Knock** |
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*Enlightenment* path seeks sufficiently strong *Lantern* lore, influence and ingredient to gain ultimate knowledge and immortality.

*Sensation* path seeks sufficiently strong Grail lore, influence and ingredient to discover new pleasures and evolve your body to achieve immortality

Power path seeks sufficiently strong *Forge* lore, influence and ingredient to gain true power and immortality.

Player progress through the chosen path’s *Temptation*, *Dedication* and finally *Ascension* cards. Once a player has an *Ascension* card and performs the prescribed action on it, they instantly win the game.

### Rounds

The game is played in rounds which continue until one of the players perform ascension ritual.

#### Beginning of round

At the beginning of the round the following events happen:

* New *Patron* is draw from the patrons’ deck. Then from the commissions deck, cards are drawn until a *Commission* with a *Principle* that the patron gives is found. The commission is placed under the patron face up. The drawn commissions that did not matched the principle are placed in a dedicated commission discard pile. If commission deck is empty, commission discard pile is shuffled and it creates a new commission deck. **Sulochana Amavasya** does not give any commissions and stays on the board for the rest of the game. If the patrons’ deck is empty, nothing happens.
* Each player can spend 1 fund, once, to draw a card from the *Morland's Shop* deck. Players go in the order of amount of funds they currently own, poorest first. This does not count as an action. Once the last card is bought this way from the *Morland's Shop* deck, this event becomes inactive. Retrieve the *Oriflamme's Auction House* deck and place in the same place. It will become active next round so skip the following event.
* Assuming *Oriflamme's Auction House* deck is active, reveal a card from it. A public auction for this card is now open. Players can either place increasing bids or pass. Once they pass, they can no longer bid. The bids or passes start from the poorest player. The opening bid must be at least 1 fund. The last player to stay in the auction obtains the card. If all players passed immediately, discard the card.

During each round, players take turns in the order of amount of funds they owned at the start of the round, poorest player going first**. Each player will take 3 turns**. If a player does not want to take an action, they can forfeit their turn and the following player takes their turn. During their turn, a player can perform exactly one action. There are 4 types of actions:

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| **Dream** | **Study** | **Work** | **Talk** |
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The action type is displayed next to a verb in the card description and also in the top right corner of the card. Each action in a round must be of a unique type. For example, player can spend their turn playing a *Dream* action, *Work* action and *Talk* action. They could not perform *Study* action because they are out of turns. They also could not perform two *Talk* actions in the same round.

There is also an option of **double-action round** where player can perform two actions of the same type at the cost of their third action. For example, after player studies a book, for their second action they can declare double study round and they can perform another *Study* action as their final action of the round.

#### End of round

At the end of the round following actions take place:

* The effect of the current *Season* card is evaluated. Place it in the dedicated season discard pile. Then the face up card on the season deck is placed below the deck and it will be the next round’s seasonal effect. Finally, reveal the next season card from the deck and put it face up on top of the deck. This card will be the future round seasonal effect. If the season deck is empty, shuffle season discard pile and it becomes the new season deck.
* The effect of **Time Passes** card is evaluated
* Players remove one *Time* token from each of their temporary card. If it was the last Time token on the card, it is discarded. If the discarded card says that it *decays* to another card, player must obtain that card and load it up with time tokens indicated by *Temporary* aspect.
* All tapped cards are un-tapped

At any point during their turn, players can **sell cards with *Auction* aspect** to gain the amount of funds specified on the right of the aspect. This does not count as an action.

## Aspects

Cards usually have aspects that signify their origin or how are they are used.

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| **Auction** |  | These cards can be sold to *Oriflamme's Auction House.* Sometimes for a hefty profit. |
| **Auction House** |  | This card is from *Oriflamme's Auction House* deck. The auction house deck becomes active once *Morland's Shop* deck is exhausted. These cards are auctioned among players. |
| **Book** |  | Books are valuable commodities that can be studied to obtain occult Lore. |
| **Bookstore** |  | This card is from *Morland's Shop* deck. Player can pay 1 fund to obtain one such card each round before the Morland’s shop runs out of stock. |
| **Cult** |  | Cults are secret societies offering services to players for funds. If you are first player to approach them with appropriate occult *Lore* their service will be free. |
| **Ill Effect** |  | The card will spell trouble down the line when the matching Season comes. Try to get rid of it. |
| **Influence** |  | One of the necessary components for performing game ending ritual. The strength and *Principle* matters. All *Influences* are temporary in nature and not all *Influences* are good. |
| **Ingredient** |  | One of the necessary components for performing game ending ritual. The strength and *Principle* matters. |
| **Lore** |  | One of the necessary components for performing game ending ritual. The strength and *Principle* matters. |
| **Patron** |  | *Patrons* are helpful individuals who usually offer commissions for studying occult lore that offer monetary rewards. |
| **Pigment** |  | Special type of *Ingredient* that can be used to create a masterpiece with sufficient Imagination skill. |
| **Robbery** |  | Robbery deck reward obtained from certain Cults actions. |
| **Season** |  | *Season* cards are result of natural passage of time. They usually spell misfortune. If they have strength 1 come and go with each round. |
| **Stag Door** |  | Part of the *Stag Door* dreaming reward deck. You gain copies of the listed cards and place this card in the dedicated discard pile. |
| **Temporary** |  | The card starts with a certain amount of Time tokens and loses one at the end of each round. When all Time tokens are gone, the card decays to another card od nothingness. |
| **White Door** |  | Part of the *White Door* dreaming reward deck. You gain copies of the listed cards and place this card in the dedicated discard pile. |

## Clarifications

Whenever a player obtains a card with *Temporary* aspect, they place it face up in their board area and immediately load it up with Time tokens equal to number specified to the right of the aspect. The card will lose one time token at the end of the current round. Temporary cards are always visible to all players.

If a player cannot perform the first step of a card effect they move to the “if you cannot” effect. For example, when evaluating **Time passes** card, player must pay 1 funds. If they don’t have any funds, they must perform the next effect.

If player does not meet all conditions of the first effect of an action card, they cannot perform the action. For example, player that does not have appropriate 2+ lore cannot work on a commission. In the same vein, if they don’t have untapped **Reason,** they cannot work on a commission either.

If a card says you must reveal or show another card, the revealed card is clearly shown to every player and returned to hand. These cards follow all other relevant rules.

Cards with *draw from Hours deck* effect come in two types. Either they are “additive”, noted by plus signs (+) in their effect. In that case, each *Principle* that is both on the drawn Hour card and triggering card causes you to obtain the card next to the principle. Or they are “exclusive”, noted by vertical bars (|) in their effect. This means you need to match principles between the drawn Hour card and the triggering card left to right. If any principle is matching, you must stop immediately and obtain the card next to the matching principle. Sometimes exclusive cards have a final card without any principle before it which means you get that card if none of the previous principles matched.

Decks, whose cards are moved to dedicated discard pile, are always refreshed from the discard pile at the moment a card needs to be drawn from the deck but there is none. *Hours* deck is one such deck.

## Tips and Tricks

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