

Sifteo Cube - Board Game Design



MASQUERADE MURDER



Design, Illustration and Documentation by

Mohan Subramanian

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1. GOAL

To create a social board game designed around the Sifteo cubes as the game platform. The 'Masquerade Murder' is a board game of tactical/strategy genre where players play as the five main characters, each of whom has his own mission to complete and an unique ability to aid his quest.

1.1 Story

Our story takes place in a town near Paris in 15th Century. The old and noble Duke of the town has enemies who want him dead. A deadly assassin has been hired to finish the task. The Assassin chooses the masquerade ball (which the duke is sure to attend), to execute the assassination. He is not alone as his accomplice, a vile seductress, is aiding him in his quest. Masquerade Ball is a medieval mask-carnival that goes on for many nights. People who attend the carnival never reveal their true identity. Along with the duke, assassin and the seductress, the fates of a loyal constable and a local thug get intertwined into this plot.

2. CHARACTERS

2.1 Overview:

The game is centered around the five main characters. Each character has his/her own mission. To aid their mission, each character possesses a special action which can be targeted on someone.



1. Duke - A powerful man in the town, whose enemies who want him dead.
2. Assassin - The hired professional. He never misses his target. Above all, he never gets caught.
3. Seductress - A young, beautiful but vile woman. She knows how to use her beauty to her advantage. She partners up with the assassin on his mission.
4. Constable - A stern and strict officer of the Law. He wants to save the Duke at any cost, even if it means giving up his life.
5. Thug - A local thug who protects people and gets paid for his services. He lost his family, his life and everything dear to his heart. Now he takes the side of the person who pays him more.

2.2 Character description

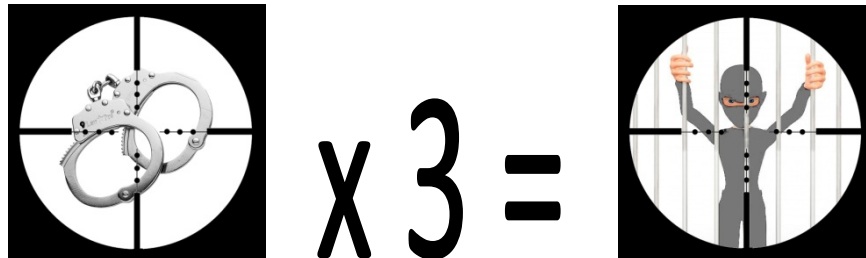
The detailed description of each character, their goals and actions are given below.

1. Constable

Goal: To arrest the assassin before he kills the duke.

CHARACTER	ACTION
	
Constable	Lock up people



Action: The target chosen by the constable is knocked out cold and locked in a room. Thus the targeted player is protected from any action targeted on him, while preventing any action that the targeted player was intending to take. The constable cannot possibly be seduced by the seductress.



A player who is captured by the constable three times is arrested and sent to Jail. Thus that player has to leave the game. The constable must aim to capture the assassin thrice to arrest him and win the game.

2. Thug

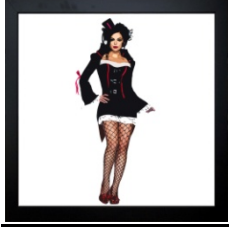

Goal: To continue protecting people for money. Bribes are more than welcome.

CHARACTER	ACTION
	
Thug	Protect people from harm

Action: The thug chooses a target and guards them closely from a distance. He does not interfere with the target's business. Thus the targeted player is protected from any action aimed on him. The thug does not prevent the action of the targeted player. Thug's protection is ineffective against the constable.

3. Seductress

Goal: To assist the assassin in his mission.


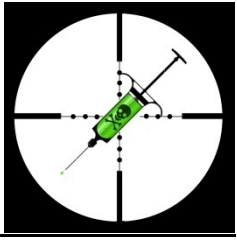
CHARACTER	ACTION
	
Seductress	Distract people

Action: The seductress uses her beauty to distract any person from performing their action. Thus the target player is prevented from taking action he intended to do. The target player is not harmed in anyway. As the assassin is wearing a mask and cannot reveal his identity in front of the others, seductress does not know who the assassin is. She must try her best not to target and distract the assassin.

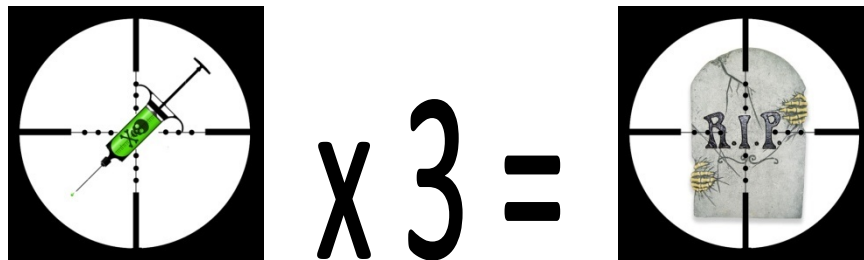
Seductress's distraction is ineffective against the constable.

4. Assassin

Goal: To assassinate the duke before the balls ends. Kill anyone who comes in the way

CHARACTER	ACTION
	
Assassin	Poison people



Action: The assassin stealthily poisons his target. He uses a slow poison. Thus the target player only gets sick. The slow-poisoning does not prevent the action of the target player.



A player who is poisoned thrice dies and thus exits the game. The assassin must aim to poison the duke thrice to kill him.

5. Duke

Goal: To survive the assassination attempt using the aid of the constable or the thug. But first, the duke has to find out who they are.

CHARACTER	ACTION
	
Duke	Break into people's minds

Action: To break into people's minds. The Duke chooses a target and finds out if the target has good or bad intentions. The target player is neither harmed nor prevented from taking any action. Just the allegiance of target is revealed to the Duke.

3. GAMEPLAY:

3.1 Overview:

Each player chooses a sifteo cube and flips it to confirm the choice. Once chosen, the cube reveals the character as well as its respective action. The player retains the same cube till the end of the game. So for a game, the player plays as the same character throughout the game.

Every night of the carnival, the characters meet up to dine and wine. Since they are wearing the masks, nobody knows the other's original identity. Secretly each player chooses to perform his action on a specific target. As the night goes on, each player attempts to execute their plan. At the end of the night, each player has the revelation about any harmful action performed on himself. He also learns about the success or failure of his action on the target. Players also learn about what happened to others, though nobody knows who was responsible for each of these actions. They all leave for the night, thinking about the events of the night.

Thus the carnival goes on till the duke is killed or the assassin is arrested. The assassin/seductress win by default if the duke is arrested by the constable.

3.2 How to play

The player who completes his mission before the rest of the players wins. The game is played in rounds. A round represents one night of carnival. Each round is played in three phases - Target phase, Execution phase and Revelation phase.

a. Target phase

- First, the player chooses his target for that round using his sifteo cube, without others knowing. The player rotates the cube till the desired target is highlighted in red. Then the player presses the cube to confirm the highlighted player as the target.
- Once the target has been chosen, the player flips/shakes his cube to hide his screen. The animation shows the character wearing a new mask.

b. Execution phase

- Each player tries to execute his action on his target by placing his cube immediately next to his target's cube.
- The targeted action can be performed ONLY if the player cube is touching the target cube in any one of the four sides.
- The players, one by one, place the cubes on the game board. Check below for the game board and the order in which the players are supposed to place the cubes (sections 3.3 and 3.4)
- Once all the cube are placed, they press the cube to move on to the next phase - revelation phase. - Animation indicates that actions have been performed and the end of the night has arrived.

c. Revelation phase

- Each player takes back his own cube. He flips to reveal the secret screen.
- The screen gives a summary of the events of that round.
- The player learns if any one of the three harmful actions were targeted and successfully performed on him- Capture / Distraction / Poisoning.
- It also informs the result of his targeting, through one of the 'result indicator' icons. Refer below for the result indicators for each character's action.
- It also informs if other players were successfully targeted by the three harmful actions - Capture / Distraction / Poisoning
- Once everybody has gone through all the information, they press the cube to begin the next round.

Throughout the game, the players are encouraged to talk openly. They can also talk in private to strategize, bribe or even beg, if they are sure of the identity of the other player.

3.3 Game Board

The game board layout is given below. The colored spaces represent tables and cannot be occupied by any player cube. The white spaces represent the seats and can be occupied by player cubes.

3.4 Cube-Placement Order

Every round, after the target phase, the players must place the cubes on the white spaces of the game board in a particular order for the Execution phase. The order is defined by the following mechanic. A deck of playing cards can be used for this.

- Take the following cards from your deck to use in our game -
Ace, two, Jack, Queen and King of one particular suite and the Joker.
Shuffle and place these cards face down in a pile.
- During the first round of the game, the players randomly draw one card each.
- During the Execution phase, players take turns to place the cubes on the game board. This is based on the card each player has drawn. The player holding 'Ace' places first. The player holding 'two' places next, followed by the players holding 'Jack', 'Queen' and 'King' respectively.
- If a player has drawn the 'Joker' card instead of a suite card, then this player takes the turn of that extra card that was not chosen by anyone (there are 5 players and 6 cards. Hence 1 extra card every round)
- In every round, the player having the Joker card has a special benefit. This player, only during his turn, can replace (only) one of the already-placed-cubes by his own cube and he can move the other cube to a space of his choice. This benefit is optional benefit for the player with 'joker'.
- Beginning from the second round, the players draw the card by looking at the pile. The player who had 'Ace' card the previous round, starts first. He secretly draws one card of his choice from the six-cards-pile by looking at them. After drawing, he passes the remaining cards face down to the player on his left. Every player repeats the same action till all players have drawn a card. The extra card is revealed to find out the turn of the player with 'joker' card.
- The above mentioned procedure is repeated for every round to determine the players' order for the Execution phase. Each round, the player with the Joker card has an option of using his benefit during his turn (determined by the extra card). The player holding the Ace card in the current round gets to start the card-drawing in the next round.

3.5 Action Precedence

Constable > Thug > Seductress > Assassin > Duke






- As the constable is immune to the seductress, his action takes place first. His target is captured and protected immediately. Also his target's action is immediately nullified.
- Next is the Thug. Unless the thug is captured by constable or distracted by Seductress, his action takes place second. His target is marked with his protection from Distraction/Poisoning, unless he is already protected by the constable.
- The vile seductress's action is third in line, unless she is captured by the constable. Her target is distracted from taking any action, unless the target is protected by the thug or constable.
- Next is the assassin's target. Unless the assassin is captured by constable or distracted by seductress, his action is carried out. His target is poisoned, without preventing any action the target is taking. A player dies if he is poisoned three times. The target can be protected against poisoning by the constable or thug.
- Finally the duke can take his action, unless he is captured by the constable or distracted by the seductress. The allegiance of the duke's target is revealed to the duke, unless he is captured by constable or distracted by the seductress.




3.6 Result Indicators

Every round, based on the other players' characters and their respective targeting, the result of the player's action may vary. This result is indicated by the player's cube during the revelation phase of each round. It is displayed as one of the three colors - Green, Red and Grey! The players can use this result indicator information to deduce the right target in the next round.

1. Constable





COLOR	TARGET	REASON
 GREEN	If the player had targeted - Assassin / Seductress	The result is green indicating that his targeting was favoring his goal.
 RED	If the player had targeted - Thug / Duke	The result is red as the player had targeted either the thug or duke, whom he is supposed to save.
 GREEN (Special circumstances)	If the player had targeted - Thug / Duke	The result for targeting Thug/Duke will be green ONLY if the thug/duke were targeted for Poison / Distraction and the constable had protected by them through his action

2. Thug





COLOR	TARGET	REASON
 GREY	NO ACTION TAKEN	This result is shown when the player was captured or distracted and hence unable to perform his action.
 GREEN	ANY CHARACTER who needed protection that round	This result means that the thug's target was indeed targeted for Poison or Distraction and the thug had just protected his target.
 RED	ANY CHARACTER who did not need protection that round	The result indicates that his target was not marked for Poisoning or distraction.

As the thug does not care about anybody's character, he does not learn about the true identity of people. He can be requested, bribed or coerced to protect someone by the other players.




3. Seductress

COLOR	TARGET	REASON
 GREY	NO ACTION TAKEN	This result is shown when the player was captured and hence unable to perform his action.
 GREEN	If the player had targeted - Thug / Duke	This result means that the seductress had successfully distracted the thug or the duke.
 RED	If the player had targeted - Assassin / Constable	This result is displayed if the player had distracted the wrong person. She is here to aid the assassin, not distract him from his mission. Also the Seductress has no effect on the constable. So she targeting either one will result in a red indicator.
 GREEN (Special circumstances)	If the player had targeted - Assassin	The result for targeting the Assassin will be green ONLY if the assassin had unknowingly targeted the Seductress for poisoning. By distracting him this round, the seductress has saved herself from his poison.

4. Assassin

COLOR	TARGET	REASON
 GREY	NO ACTION TAKEN	This result is shown when the player was captured or distracted and hence unable to perform his action.
 GREEN	If the player had targeted - Constable / Duke	This result means that the Assassin has targeted the right person. Poisoning the Constable or Duke gets the assassin one step closer to his goal.
 RED	If the player had targeted - Seductress / Thug	This result is displayed if the player had poisoned the wrong person. Seductress is here to aid him and thug could be useful is properly coerced. So he targeting either one will result in a red indicator.
 GREEN (Special circumstances)	If the player had targeted - Thug	The result for targeting the thug will be green ONLY if the thug had protected the duke that round. The thug is being punished for going against the assassin.

5. Duke





COLOR	TARGET	REASON
 GREY	NO ACTION TAKEN	This result is shown when the player was captured or distracted and hence unable to perform his action.
 GREEN	If the player had targeted - Constable / Thug	This result shows the allegiance of the target as good people. Constable is there to save Duke's life. Thug might be useful if properly coerced.
 RED	If the player had targeted - Assassin / Seductress	The result indicates that his target is someone dangerous. Someone he must avoid for life.

4. CHEAT SHEET

How to play:

1. Choose a Sifteo cube randomly. Find out your character secretly. Understand the goal and action of that character from the Guide.
2. Every round, try to deduce and target the right person for your action through your sifteo cube.
3. During Execution phase, draw the card of your choice from the pile to find out your turn.
4. During your turn to place the cube, try placing your cube next to your target's cube. Else your action will not be performed.
5. Once all cubes are placed, press cube's button to move to next phase.
6. Pick you cube back. Find out if at all, you were captured or distracted and/or poisoned.
7. Use the result indicator icon to guess/deduce who you might have targeted.
8. Also find out if anything bad happened to other players.
9. Press cube to start next round.
10. Continue playing till Duke is killed or Assassin is arrested.

Result Indicators

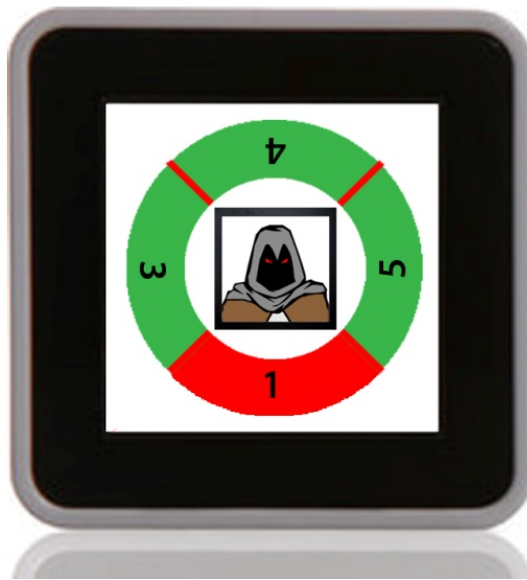
	 GREY	 GREEN	 RED	 GREEN (Special)
CONSTABLE	No action	Assassin / Seductress	Thug / Duke	Thug / Duke If targeted by A. or S.
THUG	No action	Any character If targeted by A. or S.	Any character Not targeted by A. or S.	Not applicable
SEDUCTRESS	No action	Thug / Duke	Assassin / Constable	Assassin If he targeted you
ASSASSIN	No action	Constable / Duke	Seductress / Thug	Thug if he protected Duke
DUKE	No action	Constable / Thug	Seductress / Assassin	Not applicable

5. SCREENSHOTS:

5.1 Target Phase - Mockup












Consider the following mockup game. Player #2 finds out that he plays the Assassin character. The player aims to poison and kill the duke. After second round, the game moves into the third round.

During the target phase, the player decides to target his action on player #1. He chooses so by rotating the cube till #1 gets highlighted and presses the cube to confirm.








5.2 Execution Phase - Mockup

- Player #2 had got the 'Ace' card during the previous round. So this round, he begins the card drawing.
- The player #2 decides to take the 'joker' card this round. He secretly removes this card and hands the remaining pile face down to the player #5 on his left.
- Player #5 chooses 'Ace' and hands the remaining cards to player #1 on his left.
- Player #1, #4 and #3 all do the same action one by one. The final card selection of all players is shown in the figure below.
- Player #5 has the Ace card. So he places his cube first. He also gets to start the card-drawing next round.
- After Ace, the 'two' card gets into play. Hence player #3 places his cube in a space of his choice.
- Next in line is the 'jack'. As it was not chosen by any player, the player #2 holding 'joker' card instead, gets to play now. He replaces #3's cube by his own cube and moves #3's cube to a different space.

			
			
		EXTRA CARD	

- After #2, players #4 and #1 place their cubes respectively. The final positions of all cubes are given below.
- After this, the cube's button is pressed to move to the next phase. All the actions and their results are calculated and made ready to displayed to the players.

5.2 Revelation Phase - Mockup

Player #2 takes his cube back and so do all other players. He flips/shakes the cube to unveil the secret screen. This screen gives a summary of that round's events. He learns of the result of his action. It also informs of any harmful actions on other players.

- The player had targeted player #1 for poisoning. But the result indicator shows GREY. According to the table, this means that 'No Action was taken'.
- The player understands that he (player #2) was distracted by the Seductress. Hence his poisoning action was not executed. This explains why player #2 got Grey icon as his result indicator.
- The player also learns that player #3 was captured, though the identity of constable is still unknown.

