

# DEATH OF THE PARTY™

is a social card game that combines Hidden Identity elements with the classic murder mystery. The players take on the roles of famous fictional detectives, at least one of whom is secretly a Killer who pretends to solve crimes by framing others.

Instructions

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## Objective

The partygoers try to determine how many Killers there are, and place them under House Arrest. The Killers are trying to murder someone and get away free and alive at the end of the game.

## Game Specifics

4-6 players in 2 rooms  
6-9 players in 3 rooms  
Ages 13+  
Play time 30-60 min.

# CONTENTS

- 10 Identity Cards (7 Partygoer, 3 Killer)
- 12 Identity Envelopes
- 12 Persona Cards (10 Detective, 2 Staff)
- 12 Persona Envelopes (5 Male, 5 Female, 2 Staff)
- 9 Clear plastic card sleeves
- 9 Lanyards or badge clips
- 72 Clue mini cards
- 22 Weapon mini cards
- 3 sets of 9 Drink mini cards
- 5 Partygoer Item mini cards
- 35 Drawer mini cards
- 1 BODY sheet, with Setup Reference on the back
- 1 Rulebook
- 1 Player Instructions

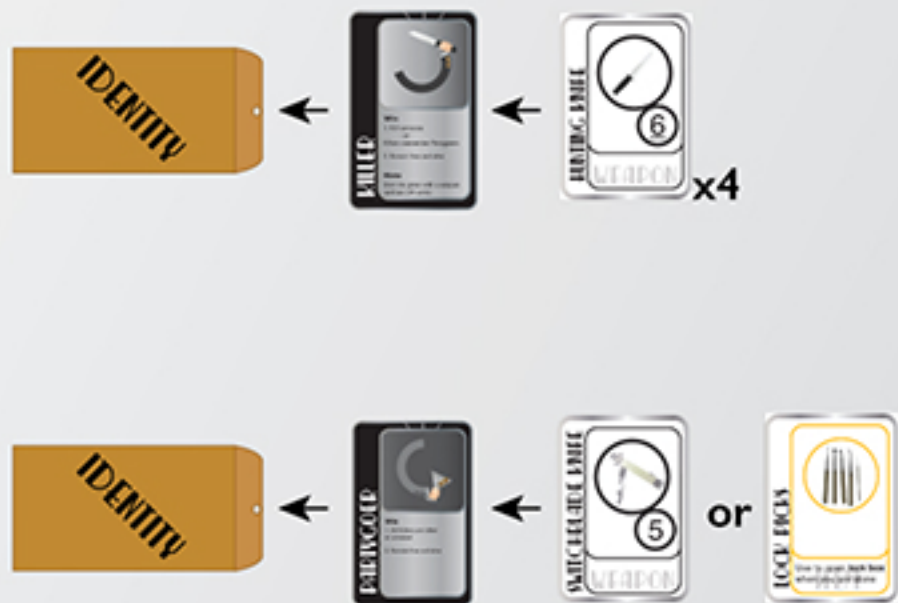
# SETTING UP THE GAME

(See also: Setup Reference on back of BODY sheet)

Choose Staff player(s). The Staff will set up the game and answer any questions about gameplay. Staff should be experience players familiar with the rules. (See: The Staff)

## Prepare the Identity Envelopes

Determine number of players and rooms.



4-8 Players: Start with as many Identity Envelopes as Players +4, and Partygoer Identity Cards as Players -1.

Two Rooms (4-6 Players): Take 1 Killer Identity Card.

Three Rooms (6-8 Players): Take 2 Killer Identity Cards.

Three Rooms (9 Players): Use all 12 Identity Envelopes, 7 Partygoer Identity Cards, and 3 Killer Identity Cards.

Take 5 Identity Envelopes, and sort the following Weapon Card Sets into the envelopes (there are 4 cards in each set):

- Stiletto (knife 4)
- Hunting Knife (knife 6)
- Machete (knife 7)
- Revolver (gun 9)
- Pistol (gun 10)

Shuffle these envelopes. Take as many envelopes as Killer Identity Cards and put a card in each. Set the remaining envelopes aside for now. Count the remaining Identity Envelopes, and take that many of following Weapon or Special Item Cards, in order:

1. Derringer (gun 8)
2. Fingerprinting Kit
3. Magnifying Glass
4. Lock Picks
5. Switchblade (knife 2)
6. UV Lamp
7. Flask

Put one into each of the Identity Envelopes with a Partygoer Identity Card. Shuffle the Killer and Partygoer Identity Envelopes together.

## Prepare the Persona Envelopes

Two Rooms: Take 9 Persona Envelopes, the first 9 Persona Cards listed, and all associated Clues except the Blood Spatter and Intangible (Red) Clues.

Three Rooms: Take all 12 Persona Envelopes, all 12 Persona Cards and all associated Clues.

Each Persona has 6 associated Clue Cards shown on the Persona Card: Fingerprint, Blood Spatter, Hair, Intangible Clue, general Item Clue, and unique Item Clue. Pay close attention to the unique Item Clue Cards, as multiple Items will be associated with the same Clue. (See: Clues)





The Persona Cards are:

1. The Butler
2. Dirk Roughly
3. Gilgameshe Pamplémousse
4. Hemlock Jones
5. John Shift
6. Jessi Kvetcher
7. Liz Salamander
8. Mrs. Maples
9. "Phalanges" Brendan
10. The Server
11. Dan Diamond
12. Wilma Jinkies



## Prepare the Rooms

**DEATH OF THE PARTY** takes place across multiple rooms. Choose rooms that can accommodate the number of players and place a small table away from the door. The first room is designated as the Parlor, with a second table placed in a central location where all the players can gather around it. Place the prepared Identity Envelopes, Persona Envelopes, and BODY Card on this table. The second room is the Study, and the third room is the Dining Room.

For each room, take one set of Drink Cards with the same back, shuffle and place them in a stack on the table. Shuffle the Drawer Cards for that room and spread them out next to the Drink Cards. The Parlor uses cards with an armoire face, the Study uses cards with a desk face, and the Dining Room uses cards with a cabinet face.

Take two of the Identity Envelopes (with Weapon Card Sets) that were set aside earlier and place one each face down on the tables in the Parlor and the Study. These are now Lockboxes (See: Playing the game; Step 1)



## THE STAFF

The Staff Persona Envelopes should be taken by players who are familiar with the rules. Staff are responsible for setup as well as answering questions and clarifying the rules. Otherwise, they act as any other player...after all, they could be a Killer, as well! It's always possible that The Butler did it.

Staff have the authority to suspend gameplay in any room they are in to address any questions players may have. If a player has a such a question, but there are no Staff players in the room, they can call for Staff to come help.

The Staff will announce, to all of the rooms, that gameplay is suspended, and leave to address the question in the other room. Upon returning to their original room, they will announce that gameplay has resumed. While gameplay is suspended players are allowed to mingle, but not continue the round of play.

# BEFORE THE GAME BEGINS

Each player takes a card sleeve with a lanyard or badge clip, an Identity Envelope and a Persona Envelope. Players acting as Staff should take Staff Persona Envelopes.

Without showing their cards to the other players, each player opens their two envelopes and examines their cards to ensure they have the proper cards for their Identity and Persona. Players insert their full sized Persona and Identity Cards in the card sleeve, with the Persona Card facing forward and the Reference Card, on the reverse of the Identity Card, showing on the back.

Players cannot show their Identity Card at any point before the end of the game. A Player may claim anything they like about their Identity.

Players hold the remaining mini cards in their hand. If you have a Weapon Card, place it as the first card in your hand. Then place the Blood Spatter Clue Card on top, clue face down with the **DEATH OF THE PARTY** logo showing. When playing with two rooms, or if you use your Blood Spatter Clue, use another card with a **DEATH OF THE PARTY** logo instead.

## Clues

There are 3 kinds of Clues:

Item Clues (green) are items the Persona has on them, with the evidence those items leave behind on the reverse. Each Persona has 2 Item Clues, an exclusive Item to that Persona and a generic Item shared with other Personæ. Some Drawer Cards have replacement Items that match those that come with a Persona. When asking a Suspicion Question (See: Playing The Game, Step 2), you can freely ask to see any Item associated with a Clue. The question is answered by showing the Item, not the Clue.

Special Item Clues (purple) are biological evidence that can be left at a crime. Each Persona has 3 Special Item Clues. Suspicion Questions can only be asked by a player who has the appropriate Special Item. In these cases, the question is answered by showing the Clue.

Intangible Clues (red) are evidence that can be associated with a Persona, but cannot be verified. No Suspicion Questions can be asked about these Clues.

## Weapons

There are two kinds of Weapon Cards. Weapons from Identity Envelopes (and Lockboxes) have a Weapon on one side and a COD (Gunshot or Stab Wound) on the other. Weapons from Drawer Cards have a Weapon and COD on the same side. Weapons have a value on the card, that can be compared when one player tries to kill another. (See: How To Commit Murder)





## BEGINNING THE GAME

After everyone has verified their cards from the Persona and Identity Envelopes and arranged their card sleeve and their hand, then the players should take some time to mingle and examine the Persona Cards of other players. Killers should take this opportunity to see what Clues are displayed for the other players and decide what Clue Card they want to leave on the BODY. While players are mingling, the Staff should start music or other background noise playing loudly enough that it will cover the sounds of Killers moving next to Partygoers while their eyes are covered.

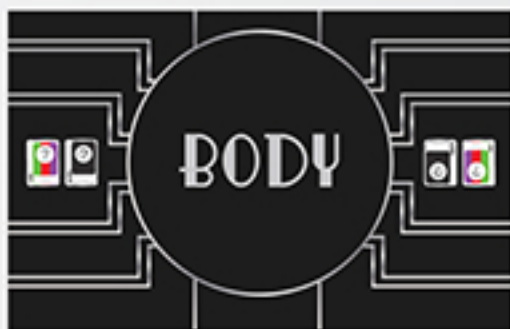
When ready, the Staff gathers everyone around the table with the BODY, and reviews the upcoming steps with the other players:

1. Everyone will close and cover their eyes. This includes the Staff player who is speaking!
2. The Staff starts counting to 50 (or to 20, for a two room game). The first few and last few numbers should be spoken out loud, but the rest is done silently, such as "1, 2, 3 ... 47, 48, 49, 50."
3. The Killer(s) open their eyes and identify each other.
4. One Killer must place a COD Card and a Clue Card on the BODY. If there are multiple Killers, the decision for which Killer will do this is handled quietly. Red or Purple Clues are recommended. Make sure the cards are the correct side up, so that a Weapon Card or Item Card is not showing.
5. The Killer(s) close and cover their eyes.
6. The Staff finishes counting, and everyone opens their eyes.



Once everyone is ready to play the Staff leads the players through these steps.

If the players open their eyes, and a Clue Card and a COD Card have not been left on the BODY, they can start over by repeating the steps above. If the players open their eyes while a Killer is holding their Clue and COD Cards, the Staff should collect Identity Cards and the associated Item and Weapon Cards, to prepare the Identity Envelopes again. The players can keep their Persona Cards, but take new Identities for the game.



The Staff player now reads the following aloud:

*I welcome all of the famous detectives who were invited here tonight with a mysterious offer that a secret would be revealed about one of you. As a member of our host's Staff, I know what he was planning to say. At least one of the people in this room is a Killer and a fraud, who pretends to solve murders by framing others for their crimes. I do not know who it was, and they have gotten to our host before he could expose them. The police have been called, but we are at a remote country estate and it will take them several hours to get here.*

*If we don't figure out who the Killer is, or if there are multiple Killers, they may murder the rest of us to cover up the crime.*

The Staff leads the players through the first round of play in the Parlor. If at least half of the players are already familiar with the game, they can leave the Parlor and take their first round of play in another room. If most of the players wish to play their first round in the Parlor, all players should remain.



# PLAYING THE GAME

A round of play starts when players enter a room, or in the case of the first round, once any players who wish to leave the Parlor have done so.

A round of play consists of three steps:

Step 1: Have a Drink Each player, one at a time, takes a turn at the table with the Drink and Drawer Cards:

- a. draw a Drink Card and display the number side up on top of the cards in the hand
- b. (optional) draw a Drawer Card. Drawer Cards are kept until the end of the game and are not replenished.

The tables in the Parlor and the Study each have a Lockbox with a Weapon Card Set inside. If a player has a Key or Lock Picks Item Card, they can open the Lockbox while taking their turn at the table, take the contents, and leave their Key or Lock Picks in its place. A Key can be used while other players are in the room, but Lock Picks can only be used while alone in the room. If a player opens a Lockbox and finds a Key or Lock Picks, they can keep their Item to use on the other Lockbox.

Step 2: Questioning Starting with the player with the lowest number on their Drink Card, with others following in ascending order, each player may ask a Suspicion Question of another player who is free and alive. A Suspicion Question is asked to gather evidence and solve a murder. Possible questions include:

- Ask about an Item that could have left a Clue found at a murder.
- Ask about a Weapon that could have left a COD from a murder.
- Ask about a Special Item that could be used to find a Killer.
- Ask where a player was at the time of a murder.
- Ask if that player has learned anything from their Suspicion Questions.
- Pass, or have a little fun with your Persona, if you have no questions.

To answer a Suspicion Question, the player can show the requested card. If the player has drawn a Drawer Card with an appropriate Item to match a particular Clue, they can show that instead. If they choose to not show a card, a player need not answer the question fully or honestly.

*For example:* one player could ask another player, "At the murder scene, the killer left a pair of bloody gloves. You were wearing gloves earlier, do you still have them?" The player being asked could show the appropriate Item Card, claim to have it, or attempt to deflect blame, discount the question, or say anything they want rather than show a card.

*Players cannot show a card unless answering a Suspicion Question.*

Step 3: Clean up The last player to ask a Suspicion Question, or pass, collects the Drink Cards and shuffles them into the stack. Players can leave for another room, or stay for another round of play, starting with Step 1.



If a player enters a room during Step 1, they can join that round of play.

If a player enters a room during Step 2, they cannot join that round of play. The player must immediately decide whether to leave the room or stay to observe the round. If they stay, they can listen to any remaining Suspicion Questions and the answers, and then must take part in the next round of play in that room. If the player leaves, it should be done quickly, and no Suspicion Questions should be asked while they remain.

If a player enters a room with no one else present, they can take a turn at the table alone. They can look at each Drawer Card, one at a time, until they find one they wish to keep. Only one card should be kept. An unwanted card should be replaced Drawer side up. If another player enters the room, whatever Drawer Card they are holding is kept as a new round of play begins. The player draws a Drink Card and completes their turn at the table.

If at any time the players hear an in-game noise, such as a scream, a gunshot, a player discovering a murder victim, or a player declaring they have solved the crime(s), the round of play is immediately ended. The player who is currently taking their turn collects the Drink Cards and shuffles them into the stack. All free and alive players go to investigate the room where the disturbance was heard.





# HOW TO COMMIT MURDER

When two players are in a game room (not hallways or other rooms), one player can attempt to murder another player with a Weapon and a Clue.

The intended victim may attempt to defend themselves by removing the top card from their hand. If the first card is a Weapon with a value above 0, the two Weapons are compared: the player with the higher value Weapon Card kills the other, and leaves the Weapon and their Blood Spatter Clue. The murderer now has a defensive wound. If they have already used their Blood Spatter, the original Clue is given and the murderer is now grievously wounded. They cannot leave the room, and must wait to be discovered with their victim.

Once the murder has been resolved, the victim is allowed to scream. To scream, the player makes a single loud noise that can be heard in another room, typically by yelling.

If the Weapon used is a gun, the gunshot was heard throughout the house! The victim can yell "bang" or "gunshot" repeatedly until other players enter the room. Two Rooms: Do not scream. Do not use Blood Spatter. Use the Clue that was chosen for the murder, or any Clue can be used when killing in self-defense.

## Killing Quietly

If one player can come up behind another, and touch them on the back with the hand holding a Weapon and a Clue, they have murdered that player quietly. If the victim turns around before they can be touched on the back, they can attempt to defend themselves, and scream if killed. Otherwise, they are dead immediately.

A gun cannot be used to kill quietly, and the victim still yells "bang" repeatedly.

Poison can be used to quietly kill a player with a Drink in their hand. A player killed using Poison cannot scream, but can defend themselves unless killed from behind. A player who has a Flask Item Card is immune to a Poison attack.

If a mistake is made during a murder, such as the victim forgetting to defend themselves or forgetting to scream, the mistake stands.





## What To Do When You're Dead

A player who has died reverses their Persona Card and displays the "In Memoriam" side up. They do not reveal their Identity Card. A murder victim is not allowed to speak as part of gameplay (out-of-character discussion at a party not withstanding). They must stay in the room until they are discovered and the Accusation Phase is complete.

When a player witnesses or discovers a murder, they call all other players to that room, and all other play stops. Another murder cannot take place in a room with a murder scene awaiting discovery, nor can a murder take place in another room once the discovery has been announced.

Once all players who are free and alive have entered the room, the Accusation Phase begins. If some players are missing, the Staff should find where they are located, and if they are found dead, return to inform the other players. The two simultaneous murders result in two Accusation Phases in a row, in the order and in the rooms where they were discovered.

## ACCUSATION PHASE

Only players who are free and alive can take part in the Accusation Phase. They cannot ask Suspicion Questions of each other and cannot reveal any cards in their hand.

The Accusation Phase has four steps:

Step 1: Examine the Body Each player is allowed to ask one Suspicion Question of the murder victim. The dead player can only answer by showing cards and cannot evade a question. The Clue and COD left by the murderer can be shown, without revealing any Weapon or Item on the reverse side. The victim can also show cards from their hand to answer questions about Items still in their possession, or purple Clues that can be checked with a Special Item.

Step 2: Accusations Any player may now accuse another player of this or any previous murder. They can say anything to make their case and convince the other players. The accused player can say anything to defend themselves. Other players can contribute any information they have learned, or claim to have learned in support of either side.

Step 3: Voting A vote is cast to decide if the accused player is placed under House Arrest. In the case of a tie, the accused goes free.

If the accusation fails, repeat Steps 2 and 3 until either every player has been accused or no players wish to make a new accusation. Each player may be accused only once during the Accusation Phase.

Step 4: Arrest If a player is arrested, they reverse their Persona Card and displays the "House Arrest" side up. They do not reveal their Identity Card.

Once the Accusation Phase is over, no other players may be accused. The murder victim and any arrested player now may leave for other rooms, but do not take part in rounds of play. Free and alive players can stay in the room or leave for another room, and a new round of play begins. Players under House Arrest cannot be murdered.



## ENDING THE GAME

At any time, a free and alive player, who feels they have solved the murder(s), can announce a Final Accusation Phase. They call all players together to the same room and make their case, as per an Accusation Phase, with the following additions:

1. Multiple players can be accused, but they must be accused together.
  2. The vote decides if all or none of the accused players are placed under House Arrest.
  3. If the vote passes, the game ends. If it fails, the game continues.
- If the vote is deadlocked, and the Partygoers unanimously agree that the votes are tied between Partygoers and Killers, the suspected Killers are all arrested and the game ends.

Alternately a player can declare that all Killer(s) are already arrested or dead. If a majority agrees, the game ends.

Once the game has ended, everyone reveals their Identities and the winner(s) are declared. The events of the game are reconstructed and the truth is determined. Players should confess to any crimes they have committed.



## Winning

Only players who are free and alive at the end of the game can win.

- The remaining Partygoers win if all Killers are arrested or killed.
- If the game ended with a deadlocked vote, and the Partygoers correctly identified that the other players are all Killers, the Partygoers win.
- A Killer who has murdered someone, including the BODY, wins.
- If at any time, other than an Accusation Phase, the Killers outnumber the Partygoers, they overpower the survivors and win.
- If a Killer murders one of the last two remaining Partygoers and can reach the last Partygoer (in another game room) before the victim is discovered, the Killer wins. If the Partygoer discovers the victim and starts an Accusation Phase, the Partygoer wins.
- It is possible for no one to win.

## Setting Up The Next Game

After the game is over, for the quickest setup to play another game of **DEATH OF THE PARTY**, each player should gather all the Clues for their Persona and prepare that Persona Envelope. Other players can also prepare the tables in each room while the Staff for the next game prepares the Identity Envelopes.



## ADVANCED RULES

Some or all of these rules can be added for an experienced group:

- The Partygoers cannot win if they make a "false arrest" by placing any Partygoer, who has not committed a crime, under House Arrest. This is particularly recommended for two room play.
- All crimes involve leaving a Clue, including using Lock Picks to remove a Weapon Card Set from a Lockbox. Do not leave a Clue when using a Key.
- If a player is under House Arrest, they cannot take a turn during play, but if they are in a room, they can be asked Suspicion Questions and choose to answer with a card or make an excuse.
- If a player is under House Arrest, they can still be murdered by other players. All the usual rules for murder apply. When a player is placed under House Arrest, they must turn over all Weapons to a member of the Staff, who should put the cards aside. (If that member of the Staff is a Killer, they may choose to keep the additional Weapons.)
- If a player is under House Arrest, and ends the game with Lock Picks, they are considered to be free.
- A player can choose whether or not to call out to other players upon witnessing or discovering a murder, depending on their motives.
- If a player is killed by Poison, they do not die immediately. The victim goes to another room, starts a round of play, and dies on their turn in Step 2.
- If playing during a storm, and there is a thunderclap while resolving a murder, the victim does not scream or announce a gunshot with "bang".
- If two killers are alone in a room with two victims, they can attack at the same time to perform a double murder. If the victims can identify one attack resolving before the other starts, then the first murder is witnessed and an accusation phase begins before the second murder is attempted.

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