The following are the rules for The Society of Ethical Liches, a real-time, real-space roleplaying game sponsored by the Stanford Gaming Society. You are responsible for knowing these rules. Many of them are nigh-impossible to enforce and rely upon the honor system. Do not cheat. Do not abuse loopholes. Play fair. Be your own harshest critic.

The **gamemasters** (**GMs**) run the game. If you have any problems or questions concerning the game, contact a GM. Rulings they make are final. They may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. The GMs promise to be as fair and reasonable as possible. Neither they nor these rules are perfect.

This game is intended to be fun. Getting into character, roleplaying, being dramatic, and playing competitively can all increase the fun of the game. Do not take the game too seriously. Even if you are losing, keep a good attitude. When the game is over, the real winners are the players with the best stories.

This is only a game. Everyone involved should act with courtesy, sportsmanship, patience, and taste. The GMs may expel anyone they believe to be violating the spirit of the rules or the game. Emotions may run high. If you think things are crossing the line from game to reality too much, or if you are just getting too stressed, calm down and maybe take a break. Stay in control. Use common sense. Always, play safely, then play to have fun.

This game is a work of fiction. Although it may refer to things in the real world, it does so only for the sake of the scenario. It does not represent the opinions of the GMs or the Stanford Gaming Society. These rules are modifications of those used in previous games. This game and all materials thereof are copyright 2016 by Oishi Banerjee and the Stanford Gaming Society.

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE STANFORD GAMING SOCIETY**

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# 1   Scenario

Liches have always had an unsavory reputation among the many magical creatures who co-exist on Earth and the demiplanes connected to it. You belong to a new brand of liches attempting to redeem your species. Tonight, you attend a convention of the Society of Ethical Liches– a boring, bureaucratic affair with positively no foul play.

**Game Times:**   Game runs from 2pm to 6pm on **June 2, 2017**, in the basement of building 200 (History corner). Surviving PCs are expected to be in-game for the entirety. Cleanup and Wrapup will immediately follow the end of game. Please plan to arrive by **1:30 pm** to get situated before the game starts. **If you will be late, you must CALL the GMs and let us know. Oishi: (408)-930-1216. Acata: 650-690-5628.**

**Game Spaces:**   We will be playing on the second floor of the Education Building. Please meet in room 210 at 6:30 pm.

# 2 Getting Started

## 2.1 Character Packets

Your character packet is a big manila envelope. It contains your role: who you are, what you're up to; everything about your part as a **player-character** (**PC**) in the game. Read all the contents and generally keep them with you during the game. If you are missing something or find something which doesn't seem to belong to you, tell one of the GMs. Character packets and their contents are confidential. Game materials which cannot be given to other players are marked "Not Transferable," whereas things which can be given to others are marked "Freely Transferable" or "Game Item."

Your Character Packet would normally contain:

**Name-Badge:** A name-badge with your player name, character description, and **badge number** on it shows that you are in the game; wear it visibly while you are playing. Badge numbers are not in-game information. See the *Character Bodies* and *Badge Numbers* sections for more details. Since we do not specify character genders, please write your character's preferred pronouns on the badge.

**Character Sheet:** Your character sheet describes who you are and what you are up to. It contains a list of everything else that should be in your character packet. Do not show or read your character sheet to other players.

**Bluesheets:** A bluesheet describes general information, or information common to members of a group. When in conflict, specific character sheet information overrides bluesheet information. Do not show or read a bluesheet to other players.

**Greensheets:** A greensheet describes and expands abilities, mechanics, or in-game knowledge. Do not show or read a greensheet to other players.

**Stat Card:** Your stat card lists your statistics. You might not know what all of your stats mean. Do not show your stats to others. The reverse side is a **death report**; fill it out and give it to the GMs when your character dies.

**Ability Cards:** An ability card explains a special ability your character has. The front side describes the effects; show it to players when you use the ability. The reverse is the rules of use and must not be shown to other players.

**Memory/Event Packets:** A memory packet is an envelope or stapled piece of paper with a **trigger** (or set of triggers) which describes when to open and read it. If the trigger is a number, open the packet when you see something with that number. If it's a quoted phrase, open when you hear or read it in-game. If it's a symbol, open when instructed. Do not take game action based on an unopened trigger. Do not show or read a memory packet to other players.

**Items:** In-game items may be transferred from character to character, and should be marked as such. See the *Items Etc.* section for more details.

## 2.2   Reality and Game Reality

There is a big difference between reality and game reality. Players must treat each other with courtesy and explain to each other what their characters perceive in confusing situations; e.g. "My character's hands are covered in blood," an **out-of-game** statement. Characters are under no such restrictions, and may do what it takes to further their goals; e.g. "Uh, hi Bob. Just got back from the butcher shop," an **in-game** statement.

**Metagaming** is inferring in-game knowledge that is inappropriate for your character from out-of-game information. Do your best to not metagame and especially to prevent the risk of metagaming. Be your own harshest critic.


**Halts:**   A halt pauses game action. To call one, say "game halt" in a clear and audible voice; other players around a corner should hear you, but you shouldn't scare some poor grad student. End a halt by saying "three, two, one, resume." Call a halt for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, for safety and similar out-of-game issues (see Non-players section below), or to pause game and fetch a GM (which you should normally avoid doing).


**Not-Here:**   You may go not-here by turning your name-badge around so the "I'm Not Here" side is showing (or by removing your badge entirely, if you are leaving game). Putting a hand on your head, visible from a distance, helps if you're near other players. Go not-here for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, to leave game, or to fetch a GM while in a halt (which you should avoid).

When you are not-here, your character is not there. Your character cannot see, hear, or remember any game actions or information you (the player) happen to encounter. Avoid other characters, common game areas, game signs, or any sort of game interaction.


**Non-Players:**   Use tact and common sense when dealing with non-players (**NPs**). You are encouraged to spread the gospel of real-time, real-space roleplaying; however, many NPs prefer to sleep, study, or work undisturbed.

NPs may not knowingly affect the game. They and their rooms may not be used to hold items or information. They may not help you kill. Do not use the presence of NPs to hide from rampaging mobs that want your blood.

Avoid conspicuous or threatening game actions in front of NPs. Shooting your friend outside of a classroom one minute before class lets out is a bad idea, as is screaming bloody murder down a hallway. If, despite your most valiant efforts, some NPs do get upset, call the GMs who will help calm them down.

If you are about to take an action that would likely upset a nearby NP, you may call a game-halt. This is considered an out-of-game issue.


**Observers:**   An observer is someone not playing the game who has agreed to watch. They generally wear an observer headband or an observer name-badge. They should stay out of the way; you can always ask an observer to leave. If a friend who is not playing wants to observe game, send them to the GMs.

**Mechanics:** Many actions your character can take, such as walking, talking, and general interaction with other characters, are represented by you doing them. Others, like combat, are performed via abstract mechanics, which are described in ability cards, greensheets, and rules. The abstract information for mechanics (like badge numbers) may not be discussed in-game. If you want to do something special for which there is no mechanic, ask a GM.

Become familiar with your mechanics before game starts, especially those which occur under time-pressure (like combat). Game action will not stop for memory packets, greensheets, or such.

A **kludge** is something impervious to logic and cleverness, usually for purposes of maintaining game-balance. You can't affect a kludge without a specified mechanic.

**Zone of Control** (**ZoC**) is a rough distance measurement. You are within ZoC of someone if your outstretched fingers can touch their outstretched fingers. Double-ZoC is twice this distance, triple-ZoC is three times, etc.

An **interruptible** mechanic has some duration, and may involve continuous roleplaying. It is stopped if you are attacked or if someone within ZoC says **"I stop you"** or an equivalent phrase. All mechanics that are not instantaneous are interruptible in this game.

**Safety:** This is a game. Real violence is unacceptable. Game action should cause no real-world damage, either to people or property. If something dangerous is happening, call a halt. Stay in control, use common sense, and do not endanger yourself or others. You should not run or otherwise force your way into or through someone else's ZoC, and you should not make physical contact with another player without permission.

## 2.3 Basic Strategy

Make sure you understand the rules. If you are completely confused, get a GM who will try to help you out. Make sure you know enough about your character to role-play them when you start talking to other people. Read through your entire packet a couple of times, and skim through it again right before game starts. If you don't know or don't understand something about your character, ask a GM.

As a character, your first priority should be to open lines of communication. Contact people, show up at discussions, and chat. Try to be easy to get in touch with. Ask people questions on relevant subjects. They'll probably lie, but you may find something out.

There are no guarantees that you can trust anyone, but since cooperation is the key to accomplishing things, you will be forced to trust people anyway. The most trustworthy people are probably those who need you.

# 3   Items Etc.

Many in-game items are represented by little white cards with a number and description. Item cards may be shown to others, passed around, stolen, etc. The **item number** on the card is not in-game information and may not be discussed. Items cannot be destroyed unless you know otherwise. You can conceal up to 5 items on your person, and you can carry additional items in your hands. Be reasonable– you cannot carry three swords in a single hand.

**Written Information:**   If you write in-game information down on a piece of paper, that paper is now an in-game item and must be clearly marked as such. Don't write in-game information on out-of-game documents (character sheet, etc.). Don't write out-of-game information (like memory packet triggers) on in-game documents.

**Envelopes:**   Some items and locations may have an attached envelope (or just be a labeled packet or folded paper). The envelope may include directions for when to open these ("open packet if you press the big red button" or "open packet if you eat this"); otherwise you may only open them if instructed. Close them when you are done. Open and close packets gently.

There will be an envelope marked "Phylacteries." This is out-of-game. Do not touch it unless specifically instructed to do so by a GM or a mechanic.

**Signs:**   Some locations and other game materials are represented by signs or packets posted throughout game area. You may read any signs and must follow any rules printed on them. If a sign or packet doesn't have some sort of in-game description (it only has out-of-game mechanics information, like a number or just a colored dot), then your character doesn't even see it or know that anything unusual is there.

**Character Bodies:**   A body is heavy. One person can carry a body slowly, while two people working together can carry it easily. A body must be willing or unable to resist for you to carry it. Carry the badge conspicuously. Onlookers can't tell if a body dead without close examination, unless it would be obvious (like headless).

## 3.1   Searching and Stashing

**Places:**   To search a place, search it. Normal items can be stashed in any reasonable, legal place. Don't put items behind locked doors, inside ceilings, in construction sites, or in hacking locations; consequently, don't go rummaging through such places for game items. Don't stash or search in places that are not in-game; see the *Game Areas* section for more information.

**People:**   All searches of characters or their belongings are conducted via player dialogue. Someone must be willing or unable to resist for you to search them. You need at least one free hand to search someone. Searching is interruptible (see above).

You can perform a **pat-down search**, which will only reveal the presence of weapons. This takes as much time as it takes your victim to tell you what you find. If you're the victim, do this at a reasonable pace.

A **total search** is an invasive, complete search of a character's clothing. This reveals all in-game items, and takes as long as your victim spends handing over possessions. If you're the victim, hand over items at a reasonable pace.

**Bags:**   Don't hide in-game materials in out-of-game bags.

# 4 Violence, Damage, and Death

## 4.1 Health States

Characters have three possible states, concerning health and damage. When you are **fine**, you may act freely. When you are **knocked out**, you will wake up in five minutes. When **dead**, you are dead.

When knocked out, fall down and drop anything you are holding. Just lie there. You won't be doing much of anything until you wake up. Do not listen to conversations going on.

Dead men tell no tales. If dead, do not give out any information about your character or death to any players. You may remain on the scene to play the part of your corpse for fifteen minutes; describe obvious information to onlookers ("I have a gunshot wound in my back"). Usually, any spellcaster's body is reclaimed by magic and disappears after fifteen minutes, along with their lifeforce. When you finish your fifteen minutes, stack your items where you died, and come see a GM.

## 4.2 Weapons

Weapons do not exist in this game, and cannot be used (unless you know otherwise).

There are items in game that do not directly deal physical damage but have other troublesome effects on those who touch them. Because all the characters in this game have extraordinary reflexes and speed, no character can be hit with or forced to touch an item against their will, provided they are conscious.

# 5    Miscellaneous

**Headband Colors:**    Differently colored head bands are used in this game to represent obvious aspects of a players appearance. They are also used to delinate GMs and observers.

1. A black or patterned headband represents the GMs.

2. A white headband represents an observer

**Badge Numbers:**    Some packets and effects in-game may refer to a character's badge number. This is a four-digit number that accompanies a character's name on their badge. A character's badge number is not in-game information, but it is freely available as out-of-game information and cannot be concealed.

# 6   Closing Notes

These rules are imperfect. The GMs may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. We hope these rules are reasonably clear, but if you have any doubts about your interpretation, talk it over with us in advance. We should also add, as much as we hate to admit it, we GMs are human: when all of our carefully laid plans are going haywire, we may lose our cool. The best way to deal with people is remaining calm and friendly, especially when everyone is tired and hungry.

We hope you have lots of fun. Good luck.