

# Night of the Thirteenth



ROPECON 2025 ASHCAN

Petri Leinonen

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Designed by Petri Leinonen

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Uses the

Vectorized Playing Cards 3.2

<https://totalnonsense.com/open-source-vector-playing-cards/>

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**This is a Ropecon Ashcan - it assumes you know something about TTRPGs and does not walk you through everything what you need to do.**

**The Director** - You are there to bring the horror. Play the killer. Describe the world. Set the challenges the cards deal.

**The Players** - 4 players. You're there to play a character of a horror movie that is quite likely doomed.

You need a standard playing card deck with two distinct Jokers. And at least one pair of a d4 and a d10. 13 tokens to represent the Genre Points. Plus pen and paper for all of you to make notes.

Generally, more Specific rules trump generic rules. And playset instructions supercede core rule instructions.

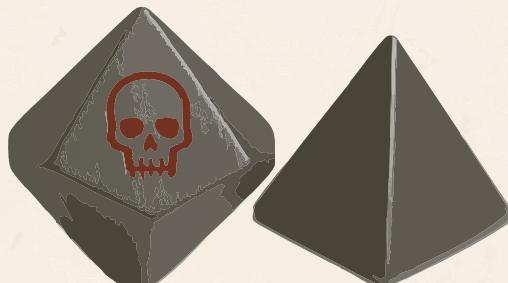
## Setting up

- 1 - Choose the playset you're going to use
- 2 - The Director builds the decks. For a faster game they can remove a random 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 from the deck.
- 3 - The players create their characters
- 4 - You can begin. Good luck.

## The d13

The game uses a “d13” dice, that is a combination of a d10 and a d4. The d10, the **Main die**, is read so that the side that says 0 is actually a zero, so it produces results ranging from 0 to 9. The d4, or the **Fallout die** produces a result between 1 and 4. These are added together to get a result between 1 and 13.

A modifier can never raise the result of a die above or below the ranges mentioned above.



# The Table Setup

**The Threat Deck:** The horror starts small. The Director shuffles the **2s**, **3s**, **4s**, and one **Jack** together. The deck is placed face down on the table. The four **Aces** are placed on top of this stack face up.

If there is a face down card on top of the **Threat Deck**, the Director will look at it and place it on top of the **Threat Deck** face up, revealing the next challenge and the **Difficulty** that must be beaten to succeed against it.

**The Reserves:** The remaining cards are set aside in five piles: the **Number Reserve** (**5s** through **10s**, in order), the **Face Card Reserves** (the remaining **Jacks**, **Queens**, and **Kings**, each in their own pile), and the two **Jokers**, kept separate for the final act.

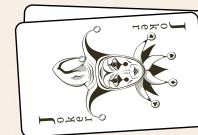
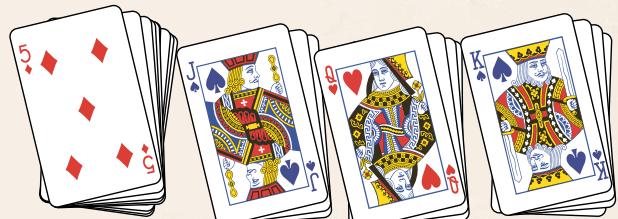
If there are no cards left in a Reserve you would need to pull from, pull from the next highest Reserve pile instead.

**The Trophy Pile:** To begin the night with a sense of dread, the Director takes the bottom card (a random **10**) from the **Number Reserve** and places it face-up to start the **Trophy Pile**. The Trophy Pile is stacked face up, so that the top card of it is always visible, and it sets the **Base Difficulty** for any **Test** against the **Killer**.

The Threat Card on top  
determines the next  
challenge.



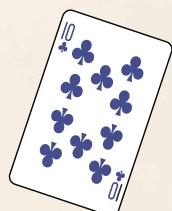
These get added to the Threat Deck as the game progresses



And these when you  
get to the Endgame



13 Genre Points for  
The Director to hand  
out



If the Threat Card is  
a face card, this is  
what determines the  
Base Difficulty



## The Suit

... of the **Threat Card** tells you something about the nature of it.

- ♠ : Power - physical challenges
- ♥ : Resolve - challenges of nerves
- ♣ : Intellect - knowhow challenges
- ♦ : Finesse - precise challenges

## The Number

... of the Threat Card tells how severe the challenge is and the **difficulty** you need to roll against to solve it.

- 1–4 : atmospheric. There is no risk of **Strikes** from this challenge.
- 5–7 : potentially dangerous **Tasks**.
- 8–10 : Difficult and dangerous **Tasks**.

# The Threat Card

The top card of the **Threat Deck** is always visible. This tells you what the next challenge and thus the next **Test** is going to be. This is the **Threat Card**.

## Face cards

... represent an upcoming confrontation with the Killer.

The suit of the **Threat Card** still sets the nature of the challenge.

The difficulty is determined by the adding the **Trophy Pile's** top card to the modifier (below) from the face card in question.

**Jack +1 / Queen +2 / King +3**



# The Test

Sooner or later, you'll try something risky. To overcome a challenge inspired by the **Threat Card**, you must make a **Test**. The Director and players narrate the events leading up to this moment through conversation and asking questions from each other.

To make the **Test**, roll a **d13**. Compare your roll to the **Threat Card's** number. If your roll is equal to or greater than the difficulty, you **Succeed**. If it's less, it is a **Failure**.

It takes some 60 Tests to defeat an average Killer, so don't spend too much time with each and every one of them. Have them be a thing that is constantly happening.



# Fallout

Success can have a price, failure more so. The number you rolled on your **Fallout die** (the d4) is the **Fallout** from the Test. It determines how you succeed or fail, and be warned: a higher roll is worse.

## Success Fallout

- 1 (Clean):** A moment of perfect execution. No sound, no trace.
- 2 (Messy):** You do it, but you're clumsy. You make noise or leave a mess behind.
- 3 (Costy):** You manage it, but lose a valuable item, twist your ankle, or give away your general location.
- 4 (Dire):** You barely pull it off, and the consequence is immediate. The Killer knows exactly where you are. When you succeed with a fallout of 4 while confronting the Killer (facing a Face Card), you gain one **Strike**.

## Failure Fallout

- 1 (Clean):** No extra hassle. You fail, but that's all.
- 2 (Messy):** You fail, and it's not pretty or clean.
- 3 (Costy):** The failure is at a personal cost as well. You lose something or hurt yourself.
- 4 (Dire):** You suffer because of your failure. You gain one **Strike**.

# Successes and Failures

After you've resolved a **Test**, the success or failure changes the state of the game.

## Number cards

On a **Success** the **Threat Card** is removed from the **Threat Deck** and placed on top of the **Trophy Pile**, setting a new potential **Base Difficulty** for when the Killer comes calling.

The Director then adds the next card from the **Number Reserve** to the bottom of the **Threat Deck**.

On a **Failure**, you stumble. The **Threat Card** is placed on the bottom of the **Threat Deck** to haunt you again later, and the Director adds the next card from the **Number Reserve** to the bottom of the deck to accompany it. If your **Fallout** was **Dire** (a 4 on the d4), your catastrophic failure earns you one **Strike**.

After resolving the **Test**, reveal the next **Threat Card**.

## Face cards (Facing the Killer)

**Success** against the **Killer** is always costly. Based on your **Fallout** (the d4), another face card from **Face Card Reserves** is added from the reserve to the **Threat Deck**. Either a random **Jack** for a clean/messy (1 or 2 on the d4) success, a random **Queen** for a costly/dire (3 or 4 on the d4) one.

If this was the **first time** a face card of its suit (**♠**, **♥**, **♣**, **♦**) was defeated (you've succeeded in a test against it), you've found a **weakness of the Killer**. The **Threat Card** is **removed from the game**. Doing this for **all four suits** triggers the **Endgame**.

If you had **already defeated** a card of that suit, the **Threat Card** is not removed, but remains in the **Threat Deck**.

**Failure** is disastrous: you gain one **Strike**, and a random **King** is added from the **Face Card Reserves** to the bottom of the **Threat Deck**.

After resolving any confrontation with the Killer, and the entire **Threat Deck** and Trophy Pile are shuffled and a new **Threat Card** and the new top card of the **Trophy Pile** get revealed.

# Creating the Cast

You are no heroes. You are just in the wrong place at the wrong time.



## Choose a Name.

Come up with a clear **Archetype**. Think of a reason “**Why are you here?**”

Select an **Aptitude** (Power, Resolve, Intellect or Finesse). When doing a **Test** matching your Aptitude's suit, you can add or subtract one from your **Fallout** dice.



## Archetype examples

Ideas for ♠ : The Jock, The Protective, The Townie, The Greaser, The Sheriff, The Father, The Rival

Ideas for ♥ : The Final Them, The Babysitter, The Pure, The Sibling, The Atoner, The New Kid, The Sheriff's Child

Ideas for ♣ : The Genre Savant, The Reporter, The Skeptic, The Loner, The Bookworm, The Techie, The Conspiracy Nut

Ideas for ♦ : The Rebel, The Class Clown, The Royal Bee, The Thief, The Rich Kid, The Cheerleader, The Slacker

**For your consideration:** It might make a more thematically balanced game if each player plays a character with a different **Aptitude**. This creates some tension from the get-go.

# Using your character to influence rolls

## Genre Points Lean on the tropes

The Director starts with 13 **Genre Points** that they can award you with for playing into the genre's tropes. You can spend one **Genre Point** to **reroll your entire d13** and **add a +1** to that roll's **main die**. You must accept the second result.

## Aptitude Do what you're good at

If in a **Test**, the suit of the **Aptitude** of your character and the suit on the **Threat Card** are a match, you can add or subtract one from the **Fallout die** result after the roll. This will affect both if the Test was a successful, and the severity of the **Fallout**.





# Three Strikes and you're out!

Everyone in Night of the Thirteenth gets two close calls with death before the end comes for them.

You get a **Strike** when you:

**Fail any Test against the Killer.**

**Fail a Test with Dire (4) Fallout.**

**Succeed in a Test with Dire (4) Fallout  
against the Killer.**

You can gain only one **Strike** from any one **Test**.

A **Strike** means something horrible either happens to the character or *almost* happens to them.

When you get your third **Strike**, the character's story is over. In a genre-fitting, gruesome fashion, of course. Come up with the most horrifying way to go with the Director.

# The Endgame

Should you survive long enough to defeat a **face card** from all **four suits**, the night reaches its bloody climax. The Director removes **all number cards** from the **Threat Deck**, leaving only the monstrous **face cards**. Both **Jokers** are shuffled into this deck of horrors.

When the Director would reveal a **Joker** from the top of the deck, it is **not shown** to the players. Its effect is triggered immediately. For any **Joker-activated Test** made during the **Endgame**, the Director first shuffles the **Trophy Pile**, and the value of its top card becomes the **Difficulty**.



**The Black Joker (The Twist):** It feels like the end. You make one last, desperate attempt to fight back. The Director reveals the top card of the **Trophy Pile** to set the **Difficulty**. **Success** removes the highest face card from the deck; **failure** adds another King. The Black Joker is then removed from the game, and the hunt continues.

**The Red Joker (The End):** This is it. The true finale. One character must make a final Test. The Director reveals the top card of the Trophy Pile to set the Difficulty.

**Success:** You've done it. You see the dawn. Any surviving characters have won.

**Failure:** The character making the Test is killed. The Red Joker is shuffled back into the deck, and the nightmare continues for any remaining survivors.

