

The Investigator

Welcome to The Investigator, a digital true crime game where you examine the clues, deduce the facts, and solve the case! You play the role of a detective working from a series of documents, images, and phone logs that were taken by technicians at the crime scene. Time is of the essence and it's up to you to recreate the events that took place, discover who is responsible, and bring them to justice before it's too late.

Here's how you'll do it...

Casefile

In the casefile, you will find:

- The *scenario*: A brief description of the setting and events leading up to the state of the crime scene.
- The *case questions*: These are the questions that must be answered to solve the case.
- The *evidence*: This is everything you have to go on, from police interviews to photos taken by the forensics team at the site. Each section of the evidence is marked and where relevant, a short narration from the technicians who reported the evidence is included.

How to Play

To start, read the scenario document to get familiarity with the case and the setting. Once you're ready to start exploring the scene, consult the case questions. These questions are meant to guide you through the process of recreating the relevant events of the scene.

The intended mode of play for The Investigator is to work your way through the evidence, gathering simple facts, building profiles for each character and their relationships, and constructing small pieces of the scene and its characters over time. A notebook or other centralized hub to keep track of what you've learned might be useful. If playing with friends, discuss theories and reasonings and always be trying to figure out how things are best connected.

The Investigator is a game of evidence and facts but also a game of deduction and reason. If you're looking for a proverbial smoking gun you might not find it. Instead, make calculated assumptions based on what you know to be true. Create theories and narratives and try them out--discard the ones contradicted by the evidence, or the ones that are least likely, and find the truth!

Scoring

Based on your investigation prowess, you will be given a rank at the end of the game. The more questions you get right, the better your rank will be. Consult the Scoring document for the possible outcomes.

A Note on the Evidence

Many of the image assets in this game were produced with ChatGPT, but great pains went into making sure those images are as accurate as possible for the point of the story. Do not get hung up on that aspect in making conclusions about the evidence. If a door is scuffed, it was meant to be scuffed. If a book's pages are shown torn out, they were meant to be torn out, etc. If an image was rendered in an unsatisfactory way, the prompts were redone or the image was modified so that the finished results would be consistent with the scene.

There is one exception worth mentioning: All of the phone numbers are of the format (203) 555-ABCD. This is meaningless, I chose the area code 203 at random and it doesn't mean every character lives in the same region or has the same cell provider. You can assume these numbers are just to give each character a distinct phone number. Also, you can assume that all timestamps on calls or text messages are local to the scene (no time zone tricks to sequence correspondence).

For Testers

Thank you so much for taking the time to test The Investigator. I've put a lot of time into it and I look forward to your feedback. Included in the release is the Test Survey. If you could take the time to fill this out and email it to me at the end of your playthrough I would be enormously grateful.

If this were "real life" there would be a digital validation of your answers to the questions, but as it stands, when you think you've solved the case, just send me an email with your answers and I will send back your score. If you decide you want to take another shot after getting your score, and you want hints or clarifications, please let me know. I have also produced a full recounting of the scene that illustrates how the correct answers were reached; this will be available to testers as well upon request.

Again, thanks so much for your time.

--Jacob