

# ARKHAM RITUAL



You are a freelance journalist working in the city of Arkham. One day you hear about a mysterious ritual taking place in the underground cellar of the city's prestigious Miskatonic University. You and your team decide to infiltrate and investigate the ritual anonymously, in the hope of securing the next exclusive. Without much thought you step into the cellar, but it doesn't take long before you come to regret your decisions. The cellar is a shrine to ancient god and the horrifying ritual is tearing apart the minds of those who participate, causing them to go insane!

In the dark and musty cellar, worshipers are passing around artifacts. The light is dim so you can't quite make out the artifacts you are passing around. However, further away in the distance you get a glimpse of what others are holding. You can see the effect these magical artifacts are having on their bearers. You will need to deduce what you're holding by studying the other worshipers.

Preserve your sanity and escape from the ritual alive!

## 1. GAME OVERVIEW

In Arkham Ritual, you don't see the card you are holding. Instead, you see the cards other players are holding. You must guess the card you are holding by looking at other players' cards and the cards that have already been played.

The game is played over multiple rounds where each round consists of multiple turns. During each turn, one player draws the top card of the deck, looks at it, and passes it to another player. The player who receives the card has a choice either to a) discard the card he / she is holding face up and take the new card without looking at it, or b) pass the card to another player without looking at it. After a player takes a turn, another player takes his / her turn.

The round continues until one of the round end conditions is met, at which point all players reveal their cards. At this time, if you are holding a cursed (red) card, then the card corrupts your mind and you lose your sanity. If you are holding a sane (blue) artifact card but some other players are also holding the same artifact card (regardless of their color), the artifacts create an unpleasant resonance, corrupts your mind, and you will lose your sanity. You successfully survive the ritual only if you are holding a unique sane (blue) card.

Players lose their sanity by discarding sanity markers. New rounds continue until one or more players have lost all their sanity markers. All players who still have sanity markers survive the ritual. Will you successfully investigate the ritual and come out alive!?

## 2. COMPONENTS

- (1) Artifact Cards - 15 cards
  - 5 types: 2 Sane (blue) cards and 1 Cursed (red) card each.
- (2) Event Cards - 5 cards
  - 5 types: 1 card each. They are all Sane (blue) cards.
- (3) Character Cards - 4 cards
  - 4 types: 1 card each. They are all Sane (blue) cards.
- (4) Great Old One Cards - 4 cards
  - 4 types: 1 card each. They are all Cursed (red) card.
- (5) Sanity Markers - 30 tokens
  - 16 "1" denominations
  - 14 "3" denominations
- (6) Play Sheet - 1 sheet
- (7) Player Aids - 7 cards
- (8) Doom Track Board and Marker - 1 each

### 2-1. Card Anatomy

#### 1. Card Type Symbol

Indicates what type of card this is.



Artifact Card



Event Card



Character Card




Great Old One Card

#### 2. Card Name

Name of this card.

#### 3. Cursed Artifact Card Symbol

Cursed (red) Artifact cards have  symbol here.

#### 4. Card Color



Sane cards have Blue background.

Cursed cards have Red background.





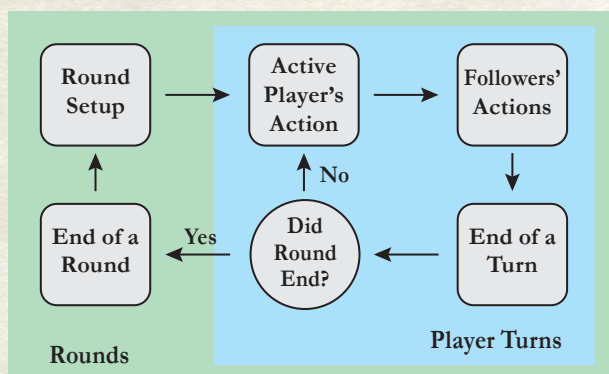
### 3. GAME SETUP

- Each player takes 7 **Sanity Markers** from the supply. Keep them visible to all players.
- Take 22 cards **not marked with**  symbol on the card. See [section 10](#) on how to use cards with  symbol.
- Remaining tokens and cards are returned to the box and are not used in this game.
- Place the Play Sheet at the center of the play area.

### 4. GAME FLOW

The game is played over a course of multiple rounds. Each round consists of multiple turns. At the end of each turn players check if the round is over. If it is not, then the round continues.

If the round is over, then players compare their hand and determine whether they lost sanity. Then new rounds continue until one or more players have lost all their sanity.



### 5. ROUND SETUP

Perform this setup once before each round.

- Shuffle all 22 cards and **deal 1 card** to each player face down. The remaining cards become the Deck and are placed in the center of the play area.
- Each player takes the dealt card and holds it so that **other players see the face of the card** (in other words, **you only see everyone else's cards**).

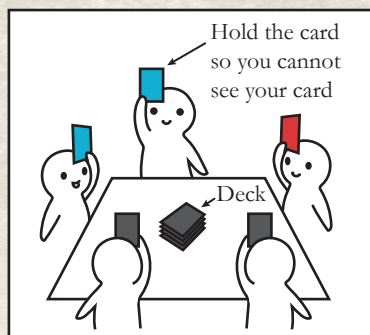


Figure 1: Round Setup



**During the round you may never look at the face of the card you are holding!**

### 5-1. Choosing the Initial Active Player

If this is the **first round** of the game:

- The player who understands the game rule the most becomes the Active Player. Choose randomly if everyone has an equal understanding of the game rules.

If this is **not the first round** of the game:

- The player with the **lowest sanity** becomes the Active Player. In case of a tie for the lowest sanity, the player closest clockwise from the last Active Player in the previous round becomes the Active Player.

The Active Player takes the Deck and places it in front of them. The round is now ready to begin.

### 6. PLAYER TURNS

In a round there are multiple player turns. Each turn begins with the Active Player's Action and is followed by a Followers' Actions. At the end of each turn, the next Active Player is determined and a new turn begins.

Players continue taking turns until one of the Round End Conditions is met (see [section 6-3, End of a Turn](#) for more details).

#### 6-1. Active Player's Action

- 1) The Active Player announces the beginning of a turn. All other players **place one of their hands on the table** (these players are referred to as the **Followers**).
- 2) The Active Player draws the top card of the Deck and **secretly looks at the face of the card** (no other player may look at the face of the card).
- 3) The Active Player passes the card **face down** to any Follower.

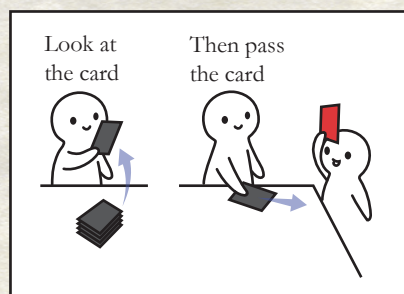


Figure 2: Active player's action



**Active Player must pass the card to a Follower. They may not keep the card!**



## 6-2. Followers' Actions

When a Follower receives a card:

- They **take their hand off the table**.
- The player then decides **without looking at the card** to:
  - a) take the card (see [section 6-2-1](#)) -or-
  - b) pass the card (see [section 6-2-2](#))

### 6-2-1. Taking the Card

If the player decides to take the card, then they:

- 1) Discard the card they are currently holding **face up** at the center of the play area. If it is an Artifact Card, then place it on the Play Sheet at the designated spot. Otherwise place it next to the Play Sheet visible to all players.
- 2) Take the new card into their hand **without looking at it** and hold it so that other players see the face of the card.
- 3) If the discarded card was an Event card, then resolve its special effect. (see [section 10-2 Event Cards](#) for more details on the Event Card).

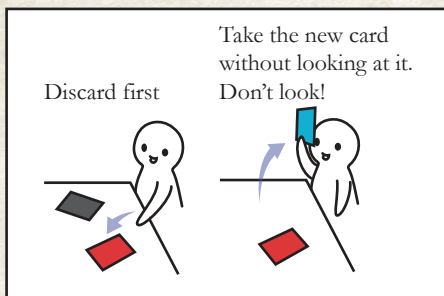


Figure 3: Follower takes the card



**Always remind yourself not to look at the card when passing it or taking it into your hand.**

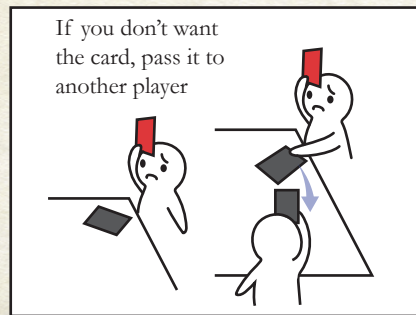


Figure 5: Follower passes the card

## 6-3. End of a Turn

At the end of each turn before proceeding to the next turn, check if the round is over.

### Round End Conditions

- 1) All players have passed the card (see [section 6-2-2](#))
- 2) Special effect of an Event card (see [section 10-2](#))
- 3) There are no cards left in the Deck

If the round is over, proceed to [section 7. End of Round](#).

Otherwise, prepare for the next turn.

- The Active Player **passes the Deck to the first player clockwise who still has their hand on the table**. If no player has their hand on the table, then pass the Deck to the first player to your left.
- The player who received the Deck is the **new Active Player**.
- The new Active Player announces the end of the turn. **All players take their hand off the table**.
- Go back to [section 6-1 Active Player's Action](#) to start a new turn.



Figure 4: Keep the discarded cards visible to all players.

### 6-2-2. Passing the Card

- If the player does not wish to take the card, **then without looking**, they pass it to another player **with their hand on the table**.
- If all players pass the card without taking it (in other words, there are **no players** with their hand still on the table) then the card is discarded without triggering its effect and **the round ends** (see [Round End Conditions in section 6-3](#)).



### Example 1: Passing the Deck

Player A is the Active Player and the turn has just ended. Player B does not have his hand on the table. Player C has her hand on the table. Therefore, Player A passes the Deck to Player C and she becomes the new Active Player.

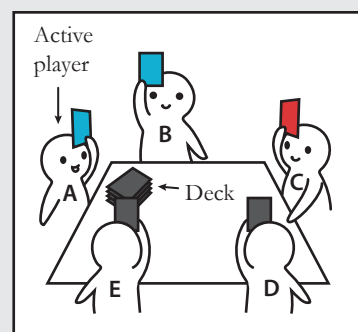


Figure 6: Preparing for the next turn



## 7. END OF A ROUND

At the end of a round all players reveal their cards. Each player compares the card they were holding with the cards other players were holding to see if they successfully survived the ritual. If you successfully survived the ritual, then you keep your sanity. If you did not survive the ritual, then you lose your sanity.

### 7-1. Determining if you Survive

You successfully survive the ritual if:

- You have a **Sane (Blue) Card** -and-
- If you have an Artifact Card, and no other players have the **same Artifact Card**, regardless of the card's color.

In other words, you do not survive the ritual if:

- You have a **Cursed (Red) Card** -or-
- You have the same Artifact Card as another player, regardless of the card's color.



#### Example 2: End of a Round

Players had the following cards when the round ended:



Player A    Player B    Player C    Player D    Player E

Players D and E had Cursed (Red) cards, so they do not survive (they lose their sanity). Player B had a Sane (Blue) card, but it is the same Artifact Card as Player E (they both had the Candelabra). Therefore, Player B also does not survive, and loses his sanity. Player A and C are holding Sane (Blue) cards, and no other player has the same card. Therefore, these two players survive the ritual!

### 7-2. Exceptions to the Rules: Cultist

If any player has the Cultist card at the end of the round, then the **rules mentioned in section 7-1 are changed** as follows.

You successfully survive the ritual if:

- You have a **Cursed (Red) Card** -and-
- If you have an Artifact Card, and no other players have the same Artifact Card, regardless of the card's color.

In other words, you do not survive the ritual if:

- You have a **Sane (Blue) Card** -or-
- You have the same Artifact Card as another player, regardless of the card's color.



**The “Cultist” itself is a Sane (Blue) Card so the holder is guaranteed to not survive the ritual.**



#### Example 3: Cultist

Players had the following cards when the round ended:



Player A    Player B    Player C    Player D    Player E

Since Player C had the Cultist card, all players with Sane (Blue) cards do not survive the ritual. Player A, B, and C had Sane (Blue) cards so they do not survive. Player E has a Cursed (Red) card, but it is the same Artifact Card as Player B. Therefore, Player E also does not survive. Player D is the only one with a Cursed (Red) card that does not match any other player's Artifact Card. Therefore, Player D is the only survivor of the ritual!

### 7-3. Losing Sanity Markers

If you do not survive the ritual, then you lose your sanity. Mark the loss of your sanity by discarding Sanity Markers.

- All players that do not survive the ritual discard Sanity Markers **equal to the number of players that do not survive**.



#### Example 4: Losing Sanity

In Example 3, Player D was the only player who survived. Since there were 4 players that did not survive (Players A, B, C and E), these 4 players discard 4 Sanity Markers each.

## 8. END OF A GAME

Additional rounds are played until **one or more players have lost all their Sanity Markers**. If all players have one or more Sanity Markers, then start the next round by going back to **section 5, Round Setup**.

If one or more players have no Sanity Markers left, then the game is over.

- All players without Sanity Markers are consumed by the ritual and lose the game.
- All players who have 1 or more Sanity Markers left successfully survived the ritual. They are all winners of the game.


#### Variant Rule

If you prefer a more competitive game, then you may change the rule above to:

- The player with the most Sanity Markers left is the winner. In case of a tie, all tied players share the victory.



## 9. ALTERNATE CARD SETUP

While Arkham Ritual comes with 28 cards, only 22 are ever used at once. During the Game Setup (see [section 3](#)) players may decide to exchange some of the base cards with cards bearing a  symbol. See Detailed Card Descriptions ([section 10](#)) below on which cards to exchange.


## 10. DETAILED CARD DESCRIPTIONS

Some cards have special effects that change the game rules.

### 10-1. Artifact Cards (15 in Deck)



For each artifact type, there are 2 Sane (Blue) Cards and 1 Cursed (Red) Card. There are 5 different artifact types. None of these cards have any special effect.

The Cursed (Red) Cards have the  symbol on the card.

### 10-2. Event Cards (4 in Deck)



These cards trigger a special effect when they are discarded during a player's turn (see [section 6-2-1 Taking the Card](#) for more details). All of these are Sane (Blue) Cards.



#### Elder Sign

The round ends immediately when this is discarded. See [Round End Conditions](#) in [section 6-3 End of a Turn](#) for more details.



#### Gate

If a player is holding a Great Old One when this is discarded, then their effect is immediately resolved (see [section 10-4](#)). If no one has the Great Old One, then nothing happens.



The two “Gate” cards are NOT considered the same card when determining whether the player survives the ritual.

Add 1 of the following to your deck:



#### Magical Orb

The player who discarded this looks at the top card of the Deck. They then have the choice of either returning the card to top of the Deck or removing it from the game face down.



#### Shining Trapezohedron

The player who discarded this looks at the top card of the Deck. If it is a Sane card, then gain 1 Sanity Marker, up to a maximum of 7. Otherwise lose 1 Sanity Marker. This loss may also cause the game to end immediately, if the player has no remaining Sanity Markers.

### 10-3. Character Cards (2 in Deck)



Each of these trigger special effects when held by a player at the end of a round, **except when the round ended by the effect of a Great Old One card.**

All of these are Sane (Blue) Cards.

Add 1 of the following to your deck:



#### Investigator

The player holding this card gains 1 Sanity Marker, up to a maximum of 7, if they survived the ritual at the end of a round.



#### Wary Student

The player holding this card never survives the ritual at the end of a round. However, they will only ever lose 1 Sanity Marker.

Add 1 of the following to your deck:



#### Cultist

The rules for surviving the ritual at the end of a round have changed. See [section 7-2 Exceptions to the Rules: Cultist](#), for more details.



#### Mad Professor

In addition to the normal rules in [section 7-1](#), all players holding anything other than an Artifact Card fail to survive the ritual at the end of a round (including the player holding this card).

### 10-4. Great Old One Cards (1 in Deck)



The round ends immediately if any player is holding a Great Old One when a Gate is discarded. **Skip the normal End of a Round** (see [section 7](#)) and resolve the Great Old One card instead.

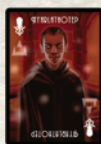
All of these are Cursed (Red) Cards.

Add 1 of the following to your deck:



#### Cthulhu

All other players lose Sanity Markers equal to the number of players minus 1.



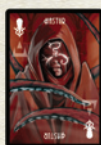
#### Nyarlathotep

The player with the most Sanity Markers, except the player holding this card, fails to survive the ritual and loses the normal amount of markers (see [section 7-3](#)). In case of a tie, all tied players lose sanity. Then the player holding this card gains Sanity Marker equal to the amount lost by all players (not exceeding the maximum of 7).



#### Yog-Sothoth

All players, except the player with the least remaining Sanity Marker and the player holding this card, lose all of their sanity and are consumed by the ritual. However, if there is a tie for the player with the least remaining sanity, then the player holding this card loses all but 1 Sanity Marker. All other players lose 1 Sanity Marker.



#### Hastur

All players with an Artifact Card do not survive the ritual. They lose the normal amount of Sanity Markers (see [section 7-3](#)) plus the number of players with a Cursed card (including this card).



## 11. TABLE TALK

Table talking during the game is encouraged. However there are few restrictions.

- Players may not say the exact card or the color of the card another player is holding.
- Players may not reveal the face down card being passed around or say what that card is.

Otherwise you are free to say anything. Be creative and have fun with your friends!

## 12. FAQ

Q1: I am the Active Player. Can I keep the card myself?

A1: No, you must pass it to another player.

Q2: I discarded the Elder Sign so the round ended. Which card do I compare to determine whether I survive?

A2: Compare the card that was given to you when you discarded the Elder Sign.

Q3: I accidentally looked at my card when I was not supposed to. What should I do?

A3: Place your card on top of the Deck and shuffle it well. Then draw the top card without looking at it. Finally, lose 1 Sanity Marker. Remind yourself never to do this again!

Q4: I discarded a Gate when I took Cthulhu into my hand. Does it trigger its special effect?

A4: Yes, you were an avatar of Cthulhu! You trigger the card effect and everyone else loses their Sanity!

Q5: Can I ever have more than 7 Sanity Markers?

A5: No, you may never have more than 7 Sanity Markers.

## 13. DOOM TRACK MINI EXPANSION

The Doom Track mini expansion changes the way players lose their sanity. The rules from Losing Sanity in section 7-3 are ignored and replaced with the following:

- Start the game with the Doom Track marker on the first spot.
- At the end of a round, all players that do not survive the ritual lose Sanity Markers equal to the current spot of the Doom Track marker.
- After players lose their Sanity Markers and before starting the next round, advance the Doom Track marker by 1 spot.

## 14. 3 AND 4 PLAYERS RULE

Although this game is best with 5 or more players, it can be enjoyed with 3 or 4 players.

When playing with 3 players, there are **2 dummy players**.

When playing with 4 players, there is **1 dummy player**.

- Each Dummy Player is dealt a card face up in front of them during section 5. Round Setup.
- A Dummy Player may never receive a card from another player.
- A Dummy Player may never become the Active Player.
- A Dummy Player does not have any Sanity Markers.
- At the end of a round, include the Dummy Players' cards when determining who survives the ritual.
- Count Dummy Player as a player when counting the number of players (e.g., Cthulhu card effect).



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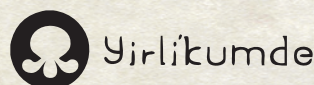
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