


Within Walls

RULEBOOK



A glass of water with a yellowish tint and a fountain pen are visible in the top left and top right corners of the page.

These hallways are alive. With cold, moldy walls seeping with malice and the stench of ruined lives.

These hallways... are alive. The rooms, tiny and decrepit, holding lost souls hostage, until they all merge into one screaming, decaying entity. Sometimes, when it's late at night, I take a stroll down these sad halls, observing it all, trying to find at least a tiny fragment, a spark of life in all these lifeless eyes. But they all disappoint.

Well... All but you.

While others come here to forget, you came here seeking. Sometimes I wonder if this is what you wanted to find? Does this satisfy your curiosity? Does it calm your spirit or soothe your mind? Are you like me? You certainly aren't like them. You don't belong here, yet you willingly came. Your thirst for knowledge is admirable. Thrilling even. In your quest you are able to endure horrors other's couldn't even dream about.

I want to push you further. Show me where your breaking point is. Then, if you pass my little test, well...



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I. GAME COMPONENTS



Story Progression Board



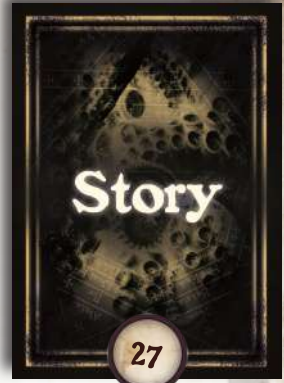
Investigation Focus Die



Event Cards



Profession Cards



Story Cards



Insanity Cards



Mind Sheet



Alcohol Cards



Drug Cards



History Cards



Agenda Cards

2. SETUP CHARACTER CREATION



* The 'Bodyguard' profession is recommended only for 5+ player games, and the 'Detective' profession is recommended only for 3+ player games.

** In a 6 player game, use 2 Cultist cards and 4 Agent cards.

*** If there is a Doctor, they get 1 additional Drug card, according to their profession card.

Open the box and remove the board, all cards, the rulebook, and the story book.

Shuffle the Insanity, Drugs and Alcohol decks, then place them in a convenient, easy-to-reach place.

Shuffle the profession cards.

Each player picks one at random and reveals it face-up.*

Return the remaining cards to the box.

Shuffle a number of agenda cards equal to the number of players (one Cultist agenda with the rest being Agent agendas).

Each player picks one at random and keeps it hidden.**

Return the remaining cards to the box.

Distribute 2 light and 2 dark History cards to each player.

Each player keeps the combination according to their agenda and discards the remaining card face-down.

Return the remaining cards to the box, taking care not to look at any of the discarded cards.

Distribute the Mind sheets to all players.

Return any remaining sheets to the box and place the board on top of it.

Deal 2 face-down Alcohol cards to each player.***

You may not look at these.

Shuffle the Event deck and place it at a convenient location.

Shuffle the Story deck and place it on the board in the appropriate place.

3. INTRODUCTION

Within Walls is a **paranoia-driven hidden traitor game with social deduction elements** set in the early 20th century.

The players take the role of Agents (and Cultists) that were sent to investigate an incident in a local sanatorium. The agents are not officials from any recognized organization, do not necessarily know each other, and were chosen by the secretive 'Agency' based on some unknown criteria. After arriving at the sanatorium, the Agents realize there are more Agents than expected, and one (or more) of them must be a Cultist...



Note:

*for a 2 player game,
see Chapter 13
for additional rules.*

4. STARTING THE GAME

To choose the starting player, each player thinks of a number from 0 to 10. On the count of 3, each player holds out their hands with a number of fingers raised. The player with the highest unique number of fingers on their hands goes first.

This starting player reveals Story cards from the top of the Story deck until an Act 1 Story card is revealed. They then place this card on the current story location and become the Lead Agent for the first round and place the investigation focus die in the start of the investigation slot (0).

5. OBJECTIVE

An Agent's objective is to survive and discover the traitor within their number (the Cultist) before any of the witnesses are eliminated (Revealing any Act 5 story will result in the death of a witness, which means the Agents lose).

A Cultist's objective is to survive and eliminate one of the crucial witnesses or eliminate the Agents. A Cultist can also win if the number of live agents is ever equal to or less than the number of Cultists.

6. OVERVIEW

Within Walls is played in rounds, and each round has a planning phase and an investigation phase.

During the planning phase, the Lead Agent leads the rest of the players through the steps of this phase.

During the investigation phase, each player takes their turn, starting with the Lead Agent. Players use Event cards to progress through the Story cards, activating Spying options, and discovering useful items. Along the way, you'll have to choose between various bad options. Progressing through the Story is required to discover the Cultists, but progressing too fast can help the Cultist win by reaching the Act 5 undiscovered.

After a round is complete, the investigation focus die rotates clockwise, and the next player becomes the Lead Agent for the next round.



the Story deck

the active Story

Resolved acts:

Silent patient story

Mad Nurse story

Cruel Doctor story

Investigation focus set to the "Doctor" story.
Investigation progress 2 within act 3 (Silent Patient story)



the Events hand

Mind sheet with Insanity Cards



Agenda
(hidden from other players)
-revealed only if eliminated or game finished.

History cards
(hidden from other players)
-may be spied



Profession card
(revealed)



Drugs and Alcohol
(hidden from all incl. owning player)
-revealed only when resolved.

7. ABOUT THE DECK AND CARDS

As you play, you'll see references to different types of hands:

The Events hand is kept in your hand, and contains the Events you'll use as you play.

The Investigation hand is made up of cards from the Active Event deck. You will receive 3 cards each round from the Lead Agent during the planning phase.

You will also have a few different types of cards placed in front of you:

Your Agenda card is secret to all other players (you can peek at it anytime). It is placed face down in front of you and cannot be shown to other players until you are eliminated or the game ends.

Your 3 History cards are selected according to your agenda. This should be either 1 light and 2 dark cards, or 2 light and 1 dark card. Either way, these are kept face-down in front of you, and can be Spied upon.

Your Profession card is placed face up in front of you and always known to all players.

Your Inventory is made up of face-down drugs and alcohol cards in front of you (you cannot peek at them anytime). They are only revealed when used.

8. THE GAME SEQUENCE

You may trade any items, talk or discuss, or use Drugs or Alcohol at any time during the round.

Planning phase: the Lead Agent leads this phase.

STEP 1 - The Lead Agent decides on the Investigation focus this round by placing the die with the chosen side showing on top:



Rat - Silent Patient requires 1 less progress to complete

Key - Cruel Doctor requires 1 less progress to complete

Blood - Mad Nurse requires 1 less progress to complete

Infinity - All investigation paths require 1 less progress to complete

X - All investigation paths require 1 more progress to complete

Blank - all paths require the normal 3 progress to complete.

STEP 2 - The Lead Agent deals 3 cards to each player from the event deck, starting with themselves. This hand of cards each player receives is called the Investigation Hand.



Investigation phase: each player takes a turn during this phase, starting with the Lead Agent and continuing clockwise.

STEP 1 - Upkeep

Rotate any Drug or Alcohol cards on your mind sheet clockwise 90 degrees, and resolve any Drug or Alcohol effects.

Turn any Insanity counters on your mind sheet, and resolve any Insanity effects.

Check your Insanity level and reveal any Insanity cards required.



Step 2 - Investigation

You must play one card from your investigation hand on top of the current story card face-up. If this is not possible, show your investigation hand to all players, then return it to the bottom of the event deck.

Event cards can only be played if their requirement (shown at the top of the card) is met. If there is no requirement, the Event card can be played at any time. The effect is described in the top half of the card (in the rules section).

Place the remaining cards from the investigation hand to your Events hand. You may play any number of additional cards if possible.



Step 3 - Discard

If you have more than 3 cards in your Events hand at the end of your investigation phase, remove the excess cards and place them on the bottom of the event deck.

During the investigation phase: players may call for an elimination vote or use a Profession skill as specified.

The elimination vote may be voluntarily initiated by a player on their turn after an Act 3 story is revealed.

You may not voluntarily call for an elimination vote before an Act 3 story has been revealed.

Elimination voting is limited to once per player's investigation phase.

If you use the Bodyguard's ability, you must call an additional vote on the same turn.



The player calling for the elimination vote must be the first to select one other player to vote against. All other players in turn order then cast their vote to eliminate a player, or abstain from voting.

If any player gets more than 50% votes against them, they are eliminated and must reveal their agenda. Otherwise, no one is eliminated.

If the Cultist is eliminated, and there are no more surviving cultists, the surviving Agents win.

In a 6 player game: If one Cultist is eliminated, but there is another surviving Cultist, the game continues.

If an Agent is eliminated, the story continues (move the investigation focus one step forward). If the requirement for the act is achieved, the player currently taking their turn reveals the story, even if that player was just eliminated.

When the last player completes the investigation phase, the round ends. The next player clockwise takes charge as the Lead Agent for the next round.



9. REVEALING THE STORY

When the Story progress reaches the requirement located on the top of the current story card, the player currently taking their turn proceeds to reveal the story cards. When the requirement is met, the consequence of the card is also resolved and the investigation focus die is placed in the start of the investigation slot (0).

Players use the investigation focus die to mark the progress of the current story act. Note the symbol on the top modifies the requirement to complete the current act (see step 1 of the Planning phase for what all the different symbols mean).



The cards from the current story location are then placed in the appropriate slots on the board.

*Example:
the "Mad Nurse" card on page 18 is played. Since the Blood symbol was chosen by the Lead Agent, the Mad Nurse is complete with 2 progress instead of the 3 at the top of the story card.*

STEP 1: Secret move - The player draws the top card from the Story deck and may choose to play it if possible.

STEP 2: Public move - The player draws the top card from the Story deck, reveals it, and must play it if possible.

Repeat Step 1 and Step 2 until next Story card is played and placed in current story.

A story card can be played if it matches the current act, the next act, the requirements are met, or it's a special card.



This is an Act 4 card. It can be played if the act just completed was Act 3 or Act 4.



There are no requirements at the top of the card, so it can be played at any time.

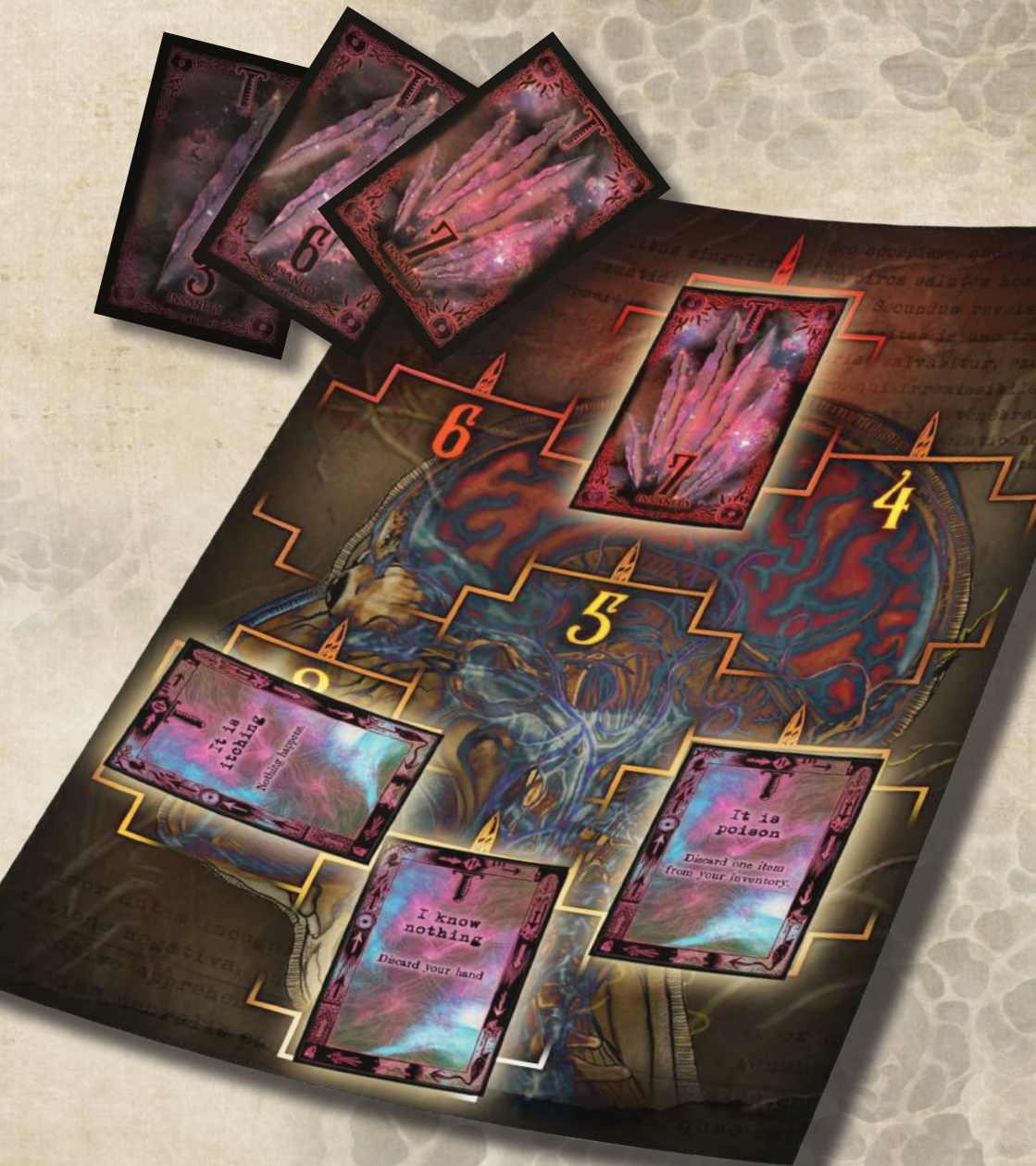


This card says Act 3+. It must be played during or after Act 3.

The investigation focus also marks the progress within the current Act with the various slots



10. THE MIND SHEET AND INSANITY



The mind sheet is a visual representation of characters failing sanity.

Insanity represents the mental degradation of players as they are exposed to stressful situations and maligned outside influences.

Gaining Insanity

Whenever a rule or effect makes you gain one Insanity, draw one Insanity card from the bottom of the deck and place it in the corresponding location (1-7).

If you draw a card for an already filled location, you must continue drawing cards until you can place one on an empty location

- this insanity is now inactive.

Discard unused cards to the top of the deck.



Breaking your mind

If all your Insanity slots are filled and you gain an additional Insanity, you must choose and activate (and reveal) one inactive Insanity immediately. This can be prevented by using Drugs or Alcohol, if allowed.

Revealing Insanity

Your total Insanity equals the number of Insanity cards on your mind sheet that are not treated with (covered by) Drug or Alcohol cards.

If an Insanity card is covered by Drugs or Alcohol, it can only be revealed if the Breaking Mind rule is activated. If this happens, remove and resolve any Drug or Alcohol cards covering that Insanity, then reveal and resolve the Insanity card. You can avoid resolving the Insanity card by placing another Drug or Alcohol card to cover it up.

An Insanity card must be revealed if during your upkeep step your total Insanity is higher or equal to the card tier (the 1, 3, or 6 scratches).

To reveal an Insanity card, flip it vertically and place it in the starting position for the card. This is where the icon on the card (the blade of the sword) matches the one on the sheet (the hilt, or handle, of the sword).



Activating Insanity

Insanity is activated when the card is turned to the final position (180 degrees from the starting position), or when you must activate an Insanity card because of the Breaking Mind effect.



In the example, slots 1,2,3 and 7 on the Insanity board are already filled.

1 and 2 have been revealed (2 turns remaining).

3 is counting down (1 turn remaining).

7 is not revealed, because it requires an Insanity level of 6. The total Insanity of the character is 4.



In the example, slots 2,5 and 6 on the Insanity board are already filled.
2 has been revealed and is counting down (1 turn remaining)
5 is treated (covered) by an alcohol card
6 is not revealed, because it requires an Insanity level of 3. The total
Insanity of the character is 2.



II. USING ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

ALCOHOL

Alcohol may be used instantly and at any time to reduce your total Insanity, or to prevent an Insanity card from being revealed.

Alcohol may only be used on unrevealed Insanity cards.

To use Alcohol, place the Alcohol card in the starting position on an unrevealed Insanity card.

This Insanity card cannot be revealed as long as the Alcohol card is covering it.



Resolving Alcohol

On your turn during the upkeep step, rotate each alcohol card by 90 degrees clockwise. If the Alcohol card has reached the final position, you must reveal it and resolve its effects, then discard it. (The Breaking Mind rule may force you to resolve Alcohol out of order, though.)



DRUGS

Drugs may be used instantly and at any time to reduce your total Insanity, or to prevent an Insanity card from being revealed. **Drugs may be used on any Insanity card, whether it is revealed or not.**

To use Drugs, place the Drugs card in the initial position on an Insanity card. This Insanity card cannot be revealed or activated, and the counter on the card does not change as long as the Drugs card is covering it.



Resolving Drugs

On your turn during the upkeep step, rotate each drug card by 90 degrees clockwise. If the Drugs card has reached the final position, you must reveal it and resolve its effects, then discard it. (The Breaking Mind rule may force you to resolve Drugs out of order, though.)



12. VICTORY, SPYING, AND DISCOVERING THE TRAITOR

Victory conditions (for 3-6 player games)

An agent wins if they survive, all the cultists are eliminated, and no Act 5 story card is played.

A Cultist wins if they survive and either all the Agents are eliminated or any Act 5 story card is played.

Spying and discovering the traitor

Players have different methods of finding hints on the agenda of other players.

No player may ever reveal their agenda or history card willingly until after you are eliminated or the game is completed. You may say anything you like about your agenda, and you may lie when talking about your agenda.



Spying lets you find out hidden facts about a History card of a Target (another player of your choice). You may be able to Spy either as a consequence of an Event or Story card, or as a consequence of Alcohol or Insanity.



The Target shuffles their History cards. The Spy chooses one of the Target's History cards at random, takes a look at it, and returns it to the Target.

The Target cannot look at the card the Spy saw (unless the Target is a detective) and shuffles their History cards together.

How players behave in different situations will need to be carefully observed. There are a large number of cards with bad consequences, and many of them must be played. As a result, it is difficult to guess a player's intent behind why they played a card. They might be a Cultist, or may have some very bad luck.

As you proceed through the story and reveal new Acts, you will find more chances to Spy along with stashes of Alcohol and Drugs. Going too fast may result in revealing Act 5 and the agents losing the game. Stalling the game is a cautious strategy, and could be the behavior of an Agent wanting to find the Cultist. This strategy also increases the Insanity of all players, which could be a dangerous gamble by the Cultist.

All means of discovering the traitor only give you a probability or a more educated guess on the true agenda of any player. In other words, there's no way to know anything for certain. A player is eliminated from the game if removed by an elimination vote or any other effect.

13. SPECIAL RULES FOR TWO PLAYER GAMES

Playing Within Walls with just 2 players requires different rules and victory conditions to maintain the hidden traitor element.

Additional rules:

- A non player character (NPC) is added to the game. This player:
 - Receives an agenda and a Profession (for naming purposes only), but does not receive any other cards or items.
 - Does not interact with players or the game.
 - Has the role of a silent observer unless eliminated or any Act 5 is revealed.

CHANGES FROM STANDARD RULES:

AGENDA AND HISTORY:

*3 agenda cards are used
2 Agent and 1 Cultist.*

*Each human player picks one
at random and the
remaining is for the NPC.*

*All Spy event cards are
removed from the game.*

ELIMINATION VOTING:

*The only elimination vote that
can happen is between the
human players deciding if the
NPC is the traitor.*

*Human players cannot be
chosen or voted against.*

The NPC does not vote.

GAME AND VICTORY CONDITIONS:

If any Act 5 is revealed:

The NPC is an Agent – Agents win.

The NPC is a Cultist – Agents lose.

If the NPC is eliminated:

The NPC is an Agent – Agents lose.

The NPC is a Cultist – Agents win.

If any human player is eliminated:

The NPC is an Agent – Agents win.

The NPC is a Cultist – Agents lose

14. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND STRATEGY GUIDE

Q: What information can be shared between players and when?

A: Players can share any information at any time verbally only.

Q: What items can be shared between players and when?

A: Players can share any item at any time.

Q: Do I have to shuffle History cards before being spied on?

A: Yes, each time.

Q: When can I use Alcohol or Drugs?

A: Alcohol or Drugs can be used at any time even for example when the same kind of card was removed from the target insanity.

Q: When turning the Alcohol or Drugs counter does the Insanity card beneath turn as well?

A: No.

Q: Why are Insanity cards drawn from the bottom of the deck?

A: Both sides of Insanity cards contain information that must be concealed before drawing the card.

Suggested strategy for Agents:

Focused on teamwork and reducing the effects of insanity on all the players. Agents are suggested to proceed at a steady pace until Act 3 when more Spying options are made available.

Discovering who is the cultist is only part of winning as other players must be persuaded to eliminate the same player. Early and unfounded accusations usually suggest that the accusing player is actually the cultist.



Suggested strategy for Cultists:

Going for Act 5 - The game will progress regardless of players intentions so remaining undiscovered until Act 5 is a good option, however during Act 4 Agents will be pressed to discover the Cultist and will usually start accusing each other.



Eliminating other players:

Managing to eliminate all other players except for one is difficult to achieve as starting frequent elimination votes may lead to becoming the prime suspect. If another player can be influenced to start with elimination votes that makes the Cultists task much easier.

Letting insanity win for you:

Slowing down the game progress may leave the impression of being a cautious Agent that wants to prevent the Act 5 from being revealed while causing the teams insanity rise quickly and reducing spying options.

15. CREDITS

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