It is the late 1890s. The British Empire stretches around the globe. London has grown to become the greatest city in the world. It is a time of innovation, prosperity and expansion.

But every paradise has a snake.

In the heart of the capital, something terrible is rising. You can hear it in the voice of the madman crying out his psychotic visions into the night. Feel it in the cold, relentless rain. Smell it in the noxious fumes that seep from a thousand grinding factories.

Darkness is coming. There is no hiding. The only way out is through.

You pray your companions have the minerals to follow you to the end. There’s no need to speak. You know the questions that grind inside their troubled minds.

Will you live through the night? Will you survive the London Dread?

The World of London Dread

London Dread is an expanding world of Victorian horror. Inspired by the works of Edgar Allan Poe, Joseph Conrad, H. P. Lovecraft, Sean Phillips, Ed Brubaker, and many others, it sets the scene for investigate stories of murder, madness and apocalyptic heroism in which a few determined individuals face off against the horrors of the Great Unknown.

Game Overview

In London Dread, 2-4 players take on the roles of Victorian characters investigating a number of stories which come together to form an overarching narrative.

The game is fully cooperative which means you all play against the game and win or lose as a team. The goal of each story is to reach the final showdown and bring down the Story’s Antagonist.

Gameplay Breakdown

Each game of London Dread is a Story and the main part of each Story is called a Chapter. Most Stories have two Chapters. The only exception is the first story, The Letter, which is a single-Chapter experience designed specifically for players new to the world of London Dread. Each Chapter has two Phases: a timed Planning Phase and an untimed Story Phase.

In the Planning Phase you will find 24 cards scattered face down across the city of London. If you leave them face down, bad things will happen. If you turn them face up, even worse things might happen. Turning cards face up, however, is the only way you can deal with them and remove them from the board. Your task in the Planning Phase, therefore, is to strike the right balance between revealing cards – not too few, not too many – and planning your future investigations as effectively as possible.

During the Planning Phase, you have 12 minutes as a team to flip cards and plan your 12 Actions.

Once the 12 minutes are up, you move on to the Story Phase. In the Story Phase, you go through your planned Actions one by one to see how they actually play out. You will learn that sometimes planning and outcome are very distant cousins.

Finally, at the end of the 2nd Chapter (or at the end of 1st when playing your first game), you will confront the Story’s Antagonist in the Endgame. Your chances in the Endgame will be intimately connected to the way you played through the Chapters.

If you win the game, you unlock the next story in the overall narrative.

Timer

A timer is required to play London Dread. You can use a phone or watch, though we strongly recommend you download the free London Dread app (available for Android or iOS) or get the free audio files available at Greyfoxgames.com. The soundscapes and voiceovers greatly add to the immersion and feel of the game.
Game Contents

- 1 Game Board
- 1 Story Guide
- 48 Dread Cards
- 6 Goon Tokens
- 54 Action Tokens
- 48 Investigation Tokens
- 4 Action Clocks
- 32 Item Cards
- 6 Modifier Tokens
- 6 Character Sheets
- 6 Plastic Stands
- 6 Character Medallions
- 6 Plot Placeholder Cards
- 36 Personality Cards
- 6 Antagonist Cards
- 24 Endgame Challenge Cards
- 16 Action Dice
- 1 Trauma Die
- 6 Goon Cards
- 24 Confidence Cards
- 1 Dread Track Marker
- 1 Large Action Marker
- 3 Small Action Markers
- 8 Condition Cards
- 6 Card Organizers
- 24 Confidence Cards
- 12 Red "Card" Tokens
- 12 Virtue Tokens
- 2 Yellow "Item" Tokens
- 20 Green "Clear" Tokens
- 12 Virtue Tokens
- 4 White "Virtue" Tokens
- 1 Modesty Tokens
- 16 Personality Cards (6 per character)
Setting Up the Game

Your First Game
For the first game, you will be playing the introduction Story named “The Letter”. It is a single-Chapter experience specifically designed to teach you the rules as well as introduce you to the world of London Dread. It will take about an hour to play.

Setting up

1. Find all Story cards associated with the Story you will be playing. All other Story cards may be returned to the box.
2. Check the Story Guide for any Story specific rules.
3. Place the Story’s Antagonist face up in the Antagonist Box.
4. Place the Story’s 6 Endgame Challenge cards face down in the Plot Box with the Endgame Divider card on top. Then, take all the Story’s Plot Cards (artwork up) and stack them on top of the Endgame Divider card in a way so that when you work your way through them, you do so alphabetically. If the Story has two Chapters, you should stack the Chapter 1 cards on top of the Chapter 2 cards and use the Chapter II Divider card to separate them.
5. Place the Dread Track Marker on 0 on the Dread Track.
6. Lay out the different Card Organizers and stack the appropriate cards next to them.

(Note: The “Story” organizer is only used in story 4 “London Dread”. This story has many more story-specific card decks than any other story.)

Keeping track of everything

London Dread has quite a few cards, many of them with the same backs. To help you keep everything nice and tidy, we have provided the card sorters. These should be used to keep the many decks of cards in London Dread labeled and distinct from one another. When applicable, decks of face-down cards should be placed to the left of the organizers, while the right side of the divider acts as the discard pile for that card type. Card organizers and their associated cards can be placed anywhere space allows, but our preferred setup is shown on the next page.

7. Give each player a character of their choice along with the corresponding Character Medallion and Personality deck. Place the Character Medallions in the Streets Location of the West Area. (If players cannot agree on characters, or for a greater challenge, characters can be randomly assigned).
8. Give each player one Virtue token to be placed on their Character sheet.
9. Give each player an Action Clock as well as 12 Action Tokens. Every player should have two of each number. Line up the tokens in piles of two along the top edge of your Action Clock.

10. Place one of each Action token in the Action Token Stash at the top right corner of the board, covering the skulls.
11. Place the Investigation tokens, Modifier tokens, Virtue tokens and Condition cards near the board, where players can reach them.
12. Shuffle the Items deck and deal one Item to each Investigator as a starting Item. Then, draw three additional Items to fill up the Supply. Place the Item deck in the indicated space on the board.
13. Shuffle the the Confidence cards. Take the top three cards and place them face down in the Investigation deck box. Place the rest of the Confidence cards next to the appropriate card Organizer.
14. Fill up the 24 Locations with a mix of Dread and Plot Placeholder cards, following the procedure described below. Note: if you are playing with 2 or 3 players there is a slight variation to the setup described at the end of the rules. Regardless of the number of players, you should first read the 4-player setup.

1. Take as many Plot placeholder cards as the Chapter has Plot Cards (that will be 5 for “The Letter”). Use 4 of them to start 4 piles of cards.
2. Take any remaining Plot placeholder cards into your hand and draw random Dread Cards until you have a total of 20 cards in your hand. (For “The Letter” you should have 1 Plot placeholder card and 19 Dread cards in your hand.)

(Note: except for “The Letter”, a Story contains two Chapters. Be sure to always use Tier I Dread cards for the first Chapter and Tier II for the second Chapter, as indicated by the icon on the lower left corner of the card.

3. Shuffle all the cards except the 4 Placeholders you have marking your 4 piles, and, then, deal them out equally among those 4 piles.
4. Finally, shuffle these piles individually and use each pile to fill up the 6 Locations of each Area.

The end result is that each area of the city contains at least 1 Plot Card. Depending on the Chapter, some areas of the city may contain more.

Not knowing which cards are which, we simply refer to the 24 facedown cards as Location cards.

5. Finally, ready the soundscape that corresponds to the Chapter you are playing using the app, or set your timer for 12 minutes.

Note: 12 minutes is the normal length for the game. The app will give you the choice to raise the difficulty by using a 10 or even 8-minute timer!

You are now ready to begin!
The Story’s Antagonist grows stronger as Dread rises. Your goal is to gain as little Dread as possible. You do that by investigating the Location cards.

Investigation is a 3-step process:

1. Reveal a card. (Planning Phase)
2. Plan which Characters should investigate the card by placing Action Tokens in your personal Action Clock. (Planning Phase)
3. Investigate the Location. (Story Phase)

Revealing Location Cards
As soon as the 12 minutes begin, any player may turn any of the 24 Location cards face up at any time.

Revealed cards will either be Dread cards or Plot Placeholder cards. Dread Cards remain face up at the location where you find them. Plot Placeholder cards are immediately covered by the next Story card visible in the Story Box.

As you reveal Location cards, a puzzle consisting of Dread and Plot cards will begin to take shape before you. (In the 2 or 3-player game, you will also find Allies. Their rules are covered later in the rulebook). To most effectively deal with this puzzle, you will need to have Characters investigate the Locations they are best suited for. In case more than one Character is investigating a Location, you will also need to coordinate the hour at which you perform the investigation.

This is the heart of the Planning Phase.

Moving Around London & Planning Your Investigations
To plan a move, use your Action Clock and Action tokens.

The city has 4 Areas: North, South, East and West.

Each Area has six Locations numbered 1 through 6 and a single, unnumbered Location called ‘Streets’. This makes for a total of 28 Locations, e.g., North 1, North 2, South 3, West 6, East Streets, South Streets, etc.

As a group, you must plan investigations of specific Locations at specific hours.

To investigate a specific Location, your Character must be present at that Location. Action tokens are used to indicate the location a character will investigate or move to a different area to access different Locations.

The Action Clock is the tool you use, in combination with your Action tokens, to plan your movements and investigations for the day. Action tokens should fit loosely in the slots and be easy to remove between Chapters. The execution of Action tokens is described below.

To indicate that a Character will investigate a Location, place an Action token corresponding to that location’s number in your Action clock.
Basil Sterling is in the West. He places his Action token 1 in the 6 a.m. slot of his Action Clock. This indicates that at 6am his Character will move to Location 1 and Investigate that Location.

Often a Character will need to move around the city to access different Locations to investigate. This is achieved by flipping an Action token to its reverse side (depiicting an arrow) and placing it in an Action Clock slot. Notice that the Action Clock boards have a compass at their center. Placing an arrow moves a character from wherever they are to the Streets Location of the direction indicated by the arrow. Arrows can be rotated in any direction so that any Action token can be used to move to any Area.

It does not matter where you are moving from or where you sit. The only thing that matters is the direction the arrow points relative to the compass on your clock.

Basil Sterling wishes to investigate a Location in the North. He takes any one of his Action tokens and flips it to the arrow side, placing it in the 6 a.m. slot pointing toward the top of his Action Clock (NORTH, as indicated by the compass in the center of the Action Clock). Next, he places Action Token 4 in the 10 a.m. slot. Now, Basil has planned to Investigate Location West 1 at 6 a.m., move to the North Streets at 8 a.m., and Investigate Location North 4 at 10 a.m.

Investigation tokens: Planning is hectic, and players will want every advantage in order to make sure their investigation goes smoothly, which is why we have included Investigation tokens. These optional tokens are a valuable tool for keeping track of your plans as you make them. Tokens can be placed on Dread or Plot cards during the planning phase to indicate that a Location is already being encountered and is taken care of. Sometimes players make plans that require the use of Investigation cards, Items, or Virtue tokens (discussed later in these rules). As such, we have provided color-coded tokens which players can use to mark the various ways they intend to succeed at an investigation:

- Green: Solved
- Yellow: Solved with the use of an Item
- White: Solved with the use of a Virtue Token
- Red: Solved with the use of Investigation Cards

End of the Planning Phase

During the 12 minutes of planning you may reveal cards and place Action tokens in any order you like. You may even take back tokens, rearrange them or leave Action Slots empty. However, as soon as you hear Big Ben strike for the third time the 12 minutes are over and you must immediately stop placing or adjusting the tiles in your Action Clock.

Whatever tokens are in your clock at that point are final.

It is possible that a player wants or needs more than two Action tokens of the same value. If you have spent both your Action tokens of a particular number and would like a 3rd, the Action Token Stash on the game board holds one of each number. Any player may take tokens from the stash as long as there are any left. Each token taken will result in 1 Dread being added to the Dread Track at the end of the Chapter—but this often saves you significantly more Dread. This is the only way in which players may gain additional action tokens—tokens can not be traded or shared.

Tokens taken from the Action Supply must be returned to the Action Supply between chapters.
The Story Phase

Once the Planning Phase is over, you move on to the Story Phase. This is where the narrative comes to life and you discover how your planning actually plays out.

At the beginning of the Story Phase, choose one player among you to be the Investigation Leader. The Leader’s role is to guide all the players through the 12 Actions on their clocks. Generally, the most experienced player should take on this role for the game.

The Investigation Leader takes the Large Action Marker and places it on the 6 a.m. slot of her Action Clock. The Investigation Leader then announces the first Action. (E.g., by saying: “It’s now 6 a.m., everybody move your medallions!”)

All players then move their Character Medallions according to their Action token in the Action Clock at the time being resolved. Players who have no token placed for the Action will wander the streets of the Area they are already in. Move their Character Medallion to the Streets Location.

Once all Characters have moved, Characters who find themselves at a face-up Location card will investigate it.

Investigations

Investigations happen after all Characters have moved and in an order decided by the players.

Investigating Dread Cards

Dread cards represent a threat in the city which must be resolved through the actions of your investigators. Investigating a Dread Card results in either success or failure. To succeed, you must provide enough Action Points to beat the Dread Card’s Difficulty.

Understanding how to investigate Dread cards requires understanding both your Character Sheet and the Dread Card you are facing.

Ability Icons

London Dread has six Primary Abilities and three Secondary Abilities:
When Investigating, you bring 1 Action Point for each Ability Icon on your Character Sheet that matches an icon on the Dread card (this is referred to as your Action Point Total.) If the sum of all players’ Action Point Totals meets or exceeds the Dread card’s Difficulty, the investigation is successful. Remove the Dread card from the Location and put it on top of the Investigation Deck. This represents picking up a clue or simply being bolstered from taking down a powerful foe.

If, however, the sum of the Action Point Totals among the Characters investigating the Location is lower than the card’s Difficulty, the investigation has failed. Leave the Dread card at the Location.

Note that, since all Characters have a 🎳 icon, everybody brings at least 1 Action Point to an Investigation.

Jacqueline Degas and Jack Murphy investigate the Dread card ‘A Tough Bargain’ together. The card has a Difficulty of 4. Comparing the Ability icons on her Character Sheet with the icons on the Dread card, Jacqueline counts 3 Action points (1 for 🎳, 1 for 🎳, and 1 for 🎳). Murphy, on the other hand, brings only 2 Action Points (1 for 🎳 and 1 for 🎳). Adding their Action Points together, the two investigators provide 5 Action Points, which is enough to beat the card’s Difficulty. They put the Tough Bargain card on top of the Investigation deck.

Gaining Additional Action Points
If you are short the required number of Action Points required to successfully investigate a Dread card, there are three ways of gaining extra Action Points:

1. Drawing cards from the Investigation deck
2. Using Items

Each of these methods always only counts for the Action where you use them and never carries over to future Actions.

Drawing from the Investigation Deck
If you find yourself at an investigation and happen to be one or more Action Points short, you may try your luck drawing from the Investigation deck. Shuffle the entire deck. Then, draw from the top. You may draw as many cards as you want, adding ALL applicable icons drawn to your Character for the duration of the investigation. When the investigation is concluded, permanently discard all cards drawn in this way. If you intend to use this method at a particular location, mark it with the Red Investigation token – This corresponds to the card backs of the Investigation deck.
**Using Items**

An Item can be activated in one of two ways: Use or Deplete. To Use an Item, tilt the card 90 degrees to the right. You then gain the Use Effect. Alternatively, when you tilt it, you may Deplete the Item by placing it on the Item Discard Pile. You then gain the more powerful Deplete Effect. If you intend to use this method at a particular location, mark it with the Yellow Investigation token – corresponding to the card backs of the Items deck.

Note that Depleting an Item requires you to tilt it, you cannot Deplete an Item that is already tilted.

You can not Use or Deplete Items during Planning Phase.

**Readying an Item**

Readying an Item means un-tilting it, thereby allowing it to be either Used or Depleted. All Items are readied at the beginning of each Chapter, the Beginning of the Endgame and immediately before the Final Showdown.

**Spending a Virtue Token**

You may discard any Virtue token you have on your Character Sheet. For each token discarded in this way gain the effect described on your Character Sheet. If you intend to use this method at a particular location, mark it with the White Investigation token – This corresponds to the Color of the Virtue token.

Jacqueline Degas decides to investigate the Dread card ‘A Tough Bargain’ alone. The card has a Difficulty of 4. Comparing the Ability icons on her Character Sheet with the icons on the Dread card, Jacqueline counts 3 Action points (1 for , 1 for and 1 for ). She is 1 Action Point short of success, in order to gain the additional Action Point, Jacqueline could do any one of the following:

1. Draw 1 or more additional cards from the Investigation deck in hopes of matching more icons to bring her AP total to 4+

2. Use the Gambler’s Dice Item adding 1 Guile and bringing her AP Total to 4.

3. Use her Virtue token triggering her “Add 1 Wild icon” ability and bringing her AP Total to 4.

**Investigating Plot Cards**

Every story has its key moments. In London Dread, those moments are represented by Plot cards.

Plot Cards tie each Story together and drive the narrative forward. They are crucial to investigate. **If you fail to investigate all of the Plot Cards of any Chapter, the trail runs cold and you lose the game.** Luckily, Plot Cards are also your primary way of gaining resources to help you on your quest.

The Time Code on a Plot card tells you when it can be investigated. A card with can be investigated from 6 a.m. onwards. A card with can be investigated from 2 p.m. and onwards. A card with from 10 p.m. onwards. If you fail to investigate a Plot card during a Time Segment where it could have been investigated, the card will raise Dread according to its Dread Value. Note that your Action Clock is broken down into clearly-delineated Morning, Day, and Night sections for easy planning.

Plot cards also have a Letter Code (A, B, C etc.) They must be investigated in strict order. In other words, you cannot investigate Plot B before you have investigated Plot A. Note, however, that since players decide the order of investigations happening at the same hour, it is possible to investigate multiple Plots during the same time slot.

Plot Cards are investigated differently than Dread cards. Rather than resulting in either failure or success, Plot cards have tiered outcomes (usually three) depending on how prepared you are when you investigate them. To investigate a Plot card, follow these steps:

1. First, all Characters present shuffle their deck of six Personality cards and draw one at random. Resolve the effect of any Talent or Trauma cards flipped.

2. Add the icons from the Personality card flipped to your Character sheet.

3. Resolve the investigation one Character at a time in any order you choose. Characters may use Items, spend Virtues or draw from the Investigation deck exactly as with Dread card investigations, in order to add to their Action Point Total. For each Action Point a character brings, they will roll 1 Action die.

4. Once all Characters have rolled, add the total number of together, consult the short table on the Plot card and resolve the effect.

5. Finally, flip the Plot card. Read the general story as well as the short section that corresponds to the tier you reached.
Effects of Plot Card Investigations

Though Plot cards can hurt you if you fare poorly, they are also your primary way to gain resources to help you on your quest.

Gaining Resources

Whenever you gain resources, they must be distributed as evenly as possible among the Characters present at the Location responsible for the gain.

Example: Two Characters are present at a Plot card and roll enough successes to earn 3 Items. One Character will get 2 Items while the other will receive 1. It’s not legal to give all 3 Items to one of the Characters. If there were 4 Characters present for the same event, 3 Characters would each receive 1 Item and 1 Character would have to go without any.

Impeccable Investigation

For a Plot card investigation, it may happen that you roll more \( \geq \) than you need to hit the maximum tier. This represents an impeccable investigation, bolstering the team’s faith that you might actually live through the night. For each additional \( \geq \) rolled in this way, gain 1 Confidence card.

Walking Away from an Investigation

Note that investigating a Location is optional. Sometimes you don’t want to, either, because you realize you are in too deep, or because you realize your companions have planned to investigate the Location at a later hour. In that case, you may choose to walk away. Simply let the card be. At a Dread card, you may walk away at any time, even after you have used Items, sacrificed Virtue tokens, or flipped cards from the Investigation deck. If you decide to stop after pursuing these courses of action, you do not get any of the spent resources back. At a Plot card, as soon as any player has flipped their Personality card, the present investigators are committed and cannot walk away.

Triggering the Endgame

The last Plot card of a Story’s 2nd Chapter (the 1st Chapter in the case of “The Letter”) says: Begin Endgame. This is an automatic outcome of the investigation as long as at least 1 investigator goes to the Location. Be careful. As soon as you complete this investigation, the Chapter immediately ends and you must perform the steps described in the End of a Chapter below. In other words, any Actions planned later are wasted, so be sure to coordinate this final investigation with your teammates.

Also note that, even though only 1 Character is required to trigger the endgame, your team gains 2 Confidence for each player who helps. So, it is often valuable to send more than 1 Character to this final location.

End of an Action

When all investigations for the Action are complete, the Investigation Leader calls out the next Action.

Repeat this process until all 12 Actions have been executed or until you trigger the Endgame. In either case, move on to the End of Chapter Step.
A player can never have more than one of the same Condition (but they can have one of each condition). If a Character ever receives a duplicate of a Condition they already have instead of taking a token, something bad happens. The exact penalty depends on whether you are in the Endgame or not.

**Defeated**

If a Character is Defeated, he or she is out of the game. What?! Can that really happen? Yes. You are playing London Dread, not London Picnic. If your Character is defeated, you as a player, can still win with the other players posthumously.

**A Note on Timing**

Sometimes multiple things would take effect or happen at the same time. In those cases, players choose the order in which to execute them. A common example is multiple investigations happening in the same Action. Another example would be a Character taking his second wound AND at the same time being able to discard a Condition (e.g., as a result of Depleting the Tonic Item). In that case, it is perfectly legal to activate the effect at the moment where you would suffer the second Condition. Since both effects happen at the same time, you choose the order – allowing you to remove the first Condition before you get the second one.

**Conditions**

The London Dread base game has two Conditions: Injured and Unhinged. These are represented by small Condition cards. Characters may have to take a Condition card as the result of a Plot card or as the result of Rolling the Trauma die.

When a card says “You are injured” or “You are unhinged”, you must take a corresponding Condition card and place it face up near your character card. You can also gain these results by rolling the Injured Result or Unhinged Result on the Trauma die.

**End of a Chapter**

When a Chapter ends, either because you executed all 12 Actions or because you triggered the Endgame, you must perform the following steps:

1. For each Location card still face down on the board, raise Dread by 2.
2. For each Dread card still face up on the board, raise Dread according to the card’s Dread Value (the number of skulls on the card).
3. For each Action token taken from the Stash, raise Dread by 1 (if you ever exceed 50 dread, you immediately lose the game. It’s a mean city after all).
4. If the last Plot card has not been investigated, the trail runs cold and you lose the game.
5. Discard all Location cards from the board.
6. Return Action tokens to the Stash and organize your own 12 tokens.
7. Ready your Items.
8. Set up for the next Chapter or begin the Endgame.

**Endgame Setup**

The Endgame uses the Endgame mini-board (south quadrant of the main game board). The entire mini-board is considered one Location.

Shuffle the six Endgame Challenge cards and place the deck in the Challenge box.

Shuffle the Investigation Deck and, beginning at the Investigation Leader, deal out the cards contained therein among the players one card at a time. Each player takes the cards dealt to them into their hand. They are now personal resources.

Finally, give each player 1 Action Die to be placed on their Character Sheet.

Leading up to the Final Showdown, the investigators will encounter 3 Endgame Challenges. These are encountered individually and one at a time and represent the build-up to the Final Showdown. In each of these Challenges, players may gain Action dice to bring to the Final Showdown.

All players participate in the Endgame, regardless of whether they helped encounter the final Plot Card or not. You might want to imagine they make it to the showdown in the nick of time.
**Gameplay**

During the Endgame, you will encounter up to three Challenges, individually, one challenge at a time.

Before each challenge the following steps are followed:

1. Players ready all of their Items.

2. Before drawing the Challenge, each player must decide individually whether they are in or out. Players who wish to stay in, leave their Character Medallion in the Character box on the Endgame board. Players who wish to bow out place their Medallions back on their Character sheet.

Once out, a player stays out until the Final Showdown. This protects you from taking penalties but prevents you from gaining more rewards. Players should think carefully about when the right moment to bow out has arrived. From a story perspective, this represents a Character falling back and gathering strength for the Final Showdown under the cover of their companions.

3. When all players have made their choice whether to stay or withdraw, reveal the top card of the Challenge deck and place in the first available Challenge box (1st, 2nd or 3rd) on the Endgame board.

4. Each player who did not withdraw (i.e., their Medallion is still in the Investigators Box) must now encounter the Challenge and try to beat its Difficulty.

5. When all players have met the Challenge and either earned the reward or suffered the consequences, return to Step 1. After resolving the 3rd Challenge, proceed to the Final Showdown.
Gaining Confidence during the Endgame

If you gain Confidence in the Endgame (e.g., by Depleting Brandy or flipping Stürmer’s Talent card), the cards go directly into your hand. Note that this is an exception to the general rule that resources are distributed evenly among Characters at your Location.

The Final Showdown

The Final Showdown is a single, fateful roll-off against the Antagonist. Either you will prevail or you will perish and all hope will be lost. The Dice you bring for this winner-take-all encounter are only those which you earned as a result of facing Endgame Challenges.

The number of $\text{F}$ you need to defeat the Antagonist is dependent on the current Dread level. You always need at least one $\text{F}$. Additionally, you need one $\text{F}$ for each 5 Dread on the Dread track. This is indicated by the blood splatters on the track.

One Character at a time, roll all the Action dice you have accumulated during the Endgame. All players roll their dice individually but add their $\text{F}$ together. If the total number of $\text{F}$ rolled equals or exceeds the target number, you bring down the Antagonist and win the game. If you don’t make the roll, the Antagonist defeats you and you lose.

Remember: Items in your possession are readied one final time before the Final Showdown. This means that items which give automatic successes or allow you to reroll are very valuable in the Final Showdown. Though these items may have been less useful in preventing the Dread from rising during the chapter, you will find them immensely useful in defeating a powerful Antagonist. Do not ignore these abilities!

If you win, take a moment to congratulate your team members. Then, listen to the Victory audio track! If you are not using the App, you may simply read the Endgame text aloud to the group from your Story Guide. Also, you may now play the next Story.

If you lose, well, better luck next game. You can now listen to the Defeat audio track to motivate your rematch. We strongly encourage you to replay the Story and beat it before you move on to the next Story.

Scoring

London Dread comes with a scoring system which allows you to compare your individual performances against each other. You can use the League of Extraordinary Investigators Sheet provided with the game to record your plays.

Points are scored AFTER the Final Showdown and only if you win the game.

- Each surviving Character is worth 4 points.
- Each FIST rolled in excess of those needed to win the game is worth 3 points.
- Each Item you have not Depleted is worth 3 points.
- Each unused Virtue token is worth 2 points.
- Each unused Investigation card in your hand is worth 1 point.
- Each Condition is worth 1 point.

Setting up a 2 or 3-player game

We know that you don’t always have 4 investigators ready to take on the London Dread. In a 2 or 3-player game, you will use the Ally cards to make up for the missing Character(s).

Example: You are setting up a 2-player version of ‘The Letter’. Having placed a face-down Plot Placeholder card in each of the four piles, you are left with 1 Plot Placeholder card in your hand. In a 4-player game, this would require you to take 19 Dread cards. However, since you are only two players, nine of those 19 Dread Cards will be replaced by Ally cards. Shuffle the one Plot Placeholder card, the 10 Dread cards and the nine Ally cards together and deal them face down onto the 4 piles, exactly as described in the 4-player setup.

Gameplay

Ally Cards:

Moving to a Location with a face-up Ally allows you to bring that Ally along for the rest of the Chapter. Collect the Ally card and place it beside your Character sheet like an Item card.

An Ally adds its Icons to yours for as long as the Ally is with you. Note that flipping a Trauma does not negate your Ally’s icons.

An Ally may be sacrificed (depleted) for the effect described on the Ally card.

In a 2-Player game, each Character may have a maximum of three Allies at any given time.

In a 3-Player game, each Character may have a maximum of two Allies at any given time.

Face-up Allies left on the board at the end of a Chapter produce no dread. But remember that unrevealed Location cards produces two Dread, regardless of type.

Add one Confidence card to the deck for each Ally in a player’s possession at the end of a Chapter. All Allies are then discarded.

The game is then set up as follows:

Setup

In a 2-Player Game, you will use all 9 Allies in every Chapter.

In a 3-Player Game, use 6 random Allies in each Chapter.

When setting up each Chapter, shuffle the Ally cards and take the required number into your hand before adding the necessary number of Dread cards to set up that Chapter.
Endgame:
In a 2 player game, each player begins the Endgame with 2 Action Dice instead of the normal 1 Action Die. Additionally, each player may face up to 6 challenges. After the first 3 simply discard the competed Endgame Challenge cards continue facing the next three until both players have either opted to withdraw or have been defeated. In this way, they may still earn up to 16 Action Dice between the two of them for the Final Showdown.

In a 3 player game, each player begins the Endgame with 2 Action Dice instead of the normal 1 Action Die. They players face a maximum of 3 endgame Challenges as normal. In this way, they may still earn up to 15 Action Dice Between them for the Final Showdown.

Alternative 2 and 3-Player Variant

Some players prefer the game without Allies.

To play without Allies:
In the 3-player version, two players will each control one Character, while one of you will control two. In the 2nd Chapter, swap so that another player controls the 4th Character. Finally, the player who hasn’t yet will control the extra Character during the Endgame.

If you are two players, you control two Characters each for the entire game.

Scaling The Difficulty of London Dread

London Dread has three levels of difficulty: Normal, Hard, and Dread.

Take our advice and begin at Normal. If you can win all four stories on that difficulty, move on to the next.

Each level of difficulty has a different time limit for the Planning Phase.

- Normal: 12 minutes
- Hard: 10 Minutes
- Dread: 8 Minutes

Additionally, you may use the following tweaks to slightly adjust the difficulty without adjusting the timer.

Impeccable Investigations:
Increased Difficulty: Collect no reward for more successes than required at Plot cards.

Investigation Deck:
Increased Difficulty: Begin with 0 Confidence cards in the Investigation deck.

Decreased Difficulty: Begin with 5 Confidence cards in the Investigation deck.

Virtue Tokens:
Increased Difficulty: Players do not begin the game with a Virtue token.

Decreased Difficulty: Players begin the game with two Virtue tokens each.

Items:
Increased Difficulty: Each Character begins the game with no Random items.

Decreased Difficulty: Each Character begins the game with 2 Random items.

(This adjustment yields the most drastic results and is only recommended if you are finding the game much too easy, or much too difficult!)
“If you ever win all 4 Stories back to back on the Dread difficulty, please let us know. Happy gaming!” -Snorre and Asger

Credits

Game Design: Asger Johansen
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