

20-30M
1P-2P
14+

PULP DETECTIVE

BY TODD SANDERS



FIND THE CLUES AND
CONFRONT THE CRIMINAL!

COMPONENTS

The deck of 39 Pulp Detective cards:

- 27 Investigate cards
- 2 Detective cards (red band at bottom)
- 2 Police Inspector cards (blue band at bottom)
- 3 Case cards
- 1 Stamina/Clues card for each player (2)
- 1 Items card for each player (2)
- 1 Criminal card

4 **YELLOW** Investigate dice



1 **RED** Paperboy die



1 **GRAY** Underworld Connection die



8 wooden Status cubes (4 red, 4 blue)



4 Investigation markers



16 Twist markers:

- 4 Persuasion
- 4 Make the Rounds
- 4 Connect the Dots
- 4 Word on the Street



ONE-PLAYER GAME

This is, at its heart, a solitaire game; however, there are also two Two-Player variants. Even if you want to play a Two-Player game, you first need to learn the One-Player rules.

SETUP

1. *Who are you?*

Choose a Detective card (these are the cards with a red band at the bottom), and place it face up in front of you. **Note:** Each detective has a unique Special Action to help you during the game.



2. *What's the case?*

Choose a Case card, and place it above your Detective card, so that the Time track is visible. The Time track shows Nighttime and Daytime hours.



3. *How long to solve it?*

Choose the difficulty level you wish to play (Beginner , Normal , or Advanced), and place a red Status cube on the Time track hour marked with the difficulty level. This cube is the **Time marker**.

4. *Do you have what it takes?*

Place the Stamina/Clues card to the left of your Detective card. Place a red Status cube on the Stamina track space marked with the difficulty level; this cube is the **Stamina marker**. Also place a red Status cube on the 0 space of the Clues track; this cube is the **Clues marker**.



5. *So many suspects, so little time!*

Place the Criminal card in an arbitrary orientation near your Case card. The Criminal card depicts several suspects, but you don't yet know which of these is the culprit.



6. *How will you find the culprit?*

Place the Items card to the right of your Detective card. Place a red Status cube on the *Dead End*; this cube is the **Item marker**.



7. Shuffle the 27 Investigate cards (these are the cards whose backs have , , or in the lower-right corner, and an icon in the upper-right corner) to form a face-down **Investigate deck**.



- Reserve space away from the Investigate deck for the **discard pile**.
- Keep the dice and Twist markers nearby.

Example setup for a "Basic" difficulty level game



Investigate draw deck



Criminal card

Example: The difficulty level is set for a Basic game. A Status cube is placed on the 24th hour space on the Time Track



Case card on the Time Track side

Dice



Stamina/Clues card



Detective card



Items card

Status cubes are placed on the **6** space on the Stamina track, the **0** space on the Clue track and the **Dead End** space on the Items card.

GOAL

To solve the Case, find **all 4 Clues** and confront the **Criminal** to win. If **Time** or your **Stamina** runs out, the Case remains unsolved, and you lose. You may be able to replenish your Stamina, but Time is a tenacious and merciless mistress. If the Time marker ever passes the **1 hour** icon (*i.e. you have moved the status cube off the Time track*), you lose the game immediately! ☠

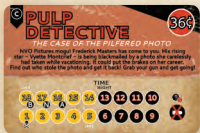
THE CASES

There are three cases provided in the game. You may choose any case to play against.




The Case of the Death's Door Damsel:

It is suggested the first few times you play the game to choose this case first. You will need **4** clues to solve this case.



The Case of the Pilfered Photo:

For this case you may not use any Persuasion Twist Markers  during the game. You will need **3** clues to solve this case.



The Case of the Bullied Banker:

For this case you may not use the **RED** Paperboy die during the game. If you gain it as an item, you may choose any other item instead. You will need **4** clues to solve this case.

ADVANCING TIME

When you **advance the Time marker** 1 space, move it to the next lower number. Time moves inexorably forward, and you have less time to crack the case!

GAME PLAY

Each turn comprises three phases:

1. Storyline
2. Investigate
3. Time Marches On

Storylines and Subplots

Over the course of the game, you will build one or more storylines (horizontal rows) from the Storyline cards, left to right. The original, top row is your main storyline. Beneath it can be any number of other storylines (rows representing subplots), each of which must start with its left edge aligned with the left edge of the main storyline; however each storyline may have **no more** cards in it than the storyline above it.



*Main Storyline
with four cards*



*Subplot
with two cards*



*Subplot
with one card*

Phase 1: Storyline

Without flipping them face up, lay out the top 3 cards from the Investigate deck in a face-down display. You will keep one, discard one, and return one (in whatever order you like) as follows:

- **Keep:** Flip one card from the display face up to reveal it as the current **Storyline card**.
- **Discard:** Place one card from the display face up on the **discard pile**.
- **Return:** Insert one card from the display back into a random location in the **Investigate deck**.

Investigation Insight

Choose your Storyline card according to what you feel you need:

- C** **Cliffhangers** cards give you a better chance of gaining **Stamina**
- F** **Follow a Lead** cards give you a better chance of getting **Items**
- I** **Informants** cards give you a better chance of finding **Clues**

Note: The icon in the upper-right corner of the card back is a reminder of what that type of card tends to provide.

A Cohesive Story

Each of the four edges of any given Storyline card **may** have one of four icons. When choosing the card for your storylines, you should additionally consider whether you can match the top and/or left icon with existing cards in the storylines, because, each such match will give you extra chances (rerolls) in the next phase.

Once you have chosen which card to keep as the Storyline card, either place it at the right end of an existing storyline, or start a new storyline on the left, below your deepest storyline (your very first Storyline card obviously starts the main storyline).



You may wish to keep the new Storyline card slightly separate from the others for now, so you do not forget which card is the current Storyline card.

Remember: A storyline cannot have more cards than the storyline directly above it. The main storyline is the only one that can have cards in it with no cards above them.

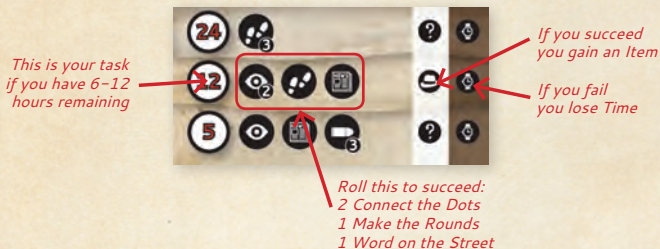
Deck Exhaustion

Whenever the Investigate deck is exhausted, shuffle the discards to form a new draw deck. If you cannot form a new draw deck, create one by discarding all subplot storyline cards in front of you.

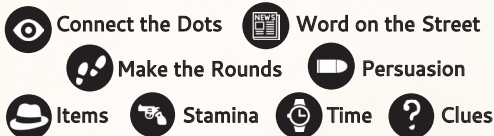
Phase 2: Investigate

Your Storyline card depicts several task rows, each associated with an hour of the Time track. Your **current task** is the first row whose depicted hour is greater than or equal to the current hour on the Time track.

To the right of the hour is a list of icons you must roll in order to complete your current task. If an icon has a small number overlapping it, you must roll that many of that icon.

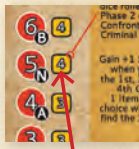


ICON GLOSSARY



Yellow Dice

The number in a yellow box to the right of your current Stamina indicates the number of yellow dice you get to roll. Note that if your Stamina is very low, you also have a once-per-turn option to lose 1 hour (advance the Time marker 1 space) for more dice; however, the extras only last for the current turn, so choose wisely!





With a Stamina of 5 you may roll 4 yellow dice

Each die has four icons on its faces, with two of the icons appearing twice. An icon that appears twice on the die is marked with an asterisk *. **Each die is different!** You get to choose which dice you roll, and in what order, and whether to spend an hour for an extra 1–2 dice, as long as you do not exceed the limitations of your Stamina.

If you are allowed to roll more than 4 yellow dice, for each die beyond 4, choose a yellow die you have rolled already, note its result (Use a Twist marker as a placeholder with the yellow side face up and place it back in the general supply when this phase is complete), and roll it as the additional die. Remember to choose a die that will maximize your chances of success!

The Red Die and the Gray Die

Each **supplemental die** is available to you if you currently have the item that grants it to you (remember: you can only have 1 item at a time):

- The **Paperboy** Item  lets you use the **red die**.
- The **Underworld Connection** Item  lets you use the **gray die**.

After you use a supplemental die, you must **either discard** any **1 Twist marker** to keep the Paperboy/Underworld Connection that you just used, **or lose the die and the item** that granted it to you (See page 11 – ‘Rewards and Penalties’ – about gaining Twist markers).

The Pieces Fall into Place

If the left edge of the current Storyline card has the same icon as the right edge of the card to its left, you get 1 reroll during this phase. If the top edge of the current Storyline card has

the same icon as the bottom edge of the card above it, you get 1 reroll during this phase. This means that, by clever storyline construction, you could get 2 rerolls this phase.

Note: Matching edges that have no icons does not get you rerolls.

Twist Markers

Not only can you discard any Twist marker to retain the Paperboy/Underworld Connection, but you can also discard specific Twist markers to help you succeed at your current task. Any task icon you have not gained with a die roll can be added by discarding a Twist marker depicting that icon.

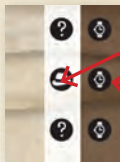
Note: Discarded Twist markers return to the supply, and can be acquired again later.

Detective's Special Action

Remember to use your detective's Special Action! As long as you follow the instructions of its effect, you can use it whenever and however you like. This can prove very helpful!

Investigation Results

- **Success:** If, between die rolls and Twist markers, you match all of the icons required for your current task, gain what is shown in the white column of that row.



*If you succeed
you gain an Item*

*If you fail
you lose Time*

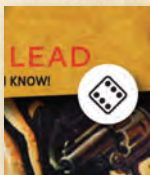
- **Failure:** If you are unable to match all of the required icons, lose what is shown in the brown column of that row; however, hard lessons are the best lessons: You may **gain a Twist marker** matching an icon you rolled on one of the **yellow** dice. You may save a maximum of 4 Twist markers at a time. There is no cost to keep 1 or 2; however, each time you choose to add a 3rd, you must lose 1 hour (Ⓜ₋₁), and each time you choose to add a 4th, you must lose 2 hours (Ⓜ₋₂). You may not discard a Twist marker to gain a new one.

Rewards and Penalties

Success Icons



The die icon in the upper-right corner of the top card of the discard pile indicates the Item you found (refer to the Items card to see what it is). You choose whether to keep the item, but remember that you can only have 1 item at a time. If you want to keep the Item you found, move the Item marker to that Item.



If the top card of the discard pile depicts a blank die, set it aside to see the next card. Repeat this until a die icon with pips is revealed. If you go through the whole discard without finding a die icon with pips, Lady Luck is not on your side: You find nothing.

Whether you find an item or not, place any discards at which you looked under the discard pile.



Move the Stamina marker up 1 space, if possible.



Move the Clue marker up 1 space, if possible. If you just found your 4th clue, skip to **Confront the Criminal**.

Failure Icons



Unless you rolled 3 of a kind on the **yellow** dice, you lose whatever Item you currently have: Move the Item marker to **Dead End**. Gain a Twist marker matching a **yellow** die you have rolled during this phase. Place it in your supply with the black side face up.




Unless you rolled 3 of a kind on the **yellow** dice, you lose Stamina: Move the Stamina marker down 1 space. If your Stamina drops below 1, you immediately lose the game. Gain a Twist marker matching a **yellow** die you have rolled during this phase. Place it in your supply with the black side face up.





Lose 1 hour: Advance the Time marker 1 space. If the Time marker passes the **1 hour** icon, you lose the game. Gain a Twist marker matching a **yellow** die you have rolled during this phase. Place it in your supply with the black side face up.



Plot Points:

Stamina determines your current health and how many **yellow** dice you will roll during the Phase 2: Investigate (as shown by the  icon). If your Stamina drops below 1, you fail to solve the Case and the game is lost immediately. Stamina can never go above 8.

Clues determine your success as a detective. Once you find the final clue, you can confront the Criminal and end the game.


Items are saved by marking a die icon on the Item card with a cube. Items with dice icons  to  are one-time use and may be used at any time. When you use or lose one of these Items, place the Status cube back on "Dead End" at the top of the card. When gaining a new item, you may choose to keep the new item or your current item.

One Step Ahead

If you succeeded at your current task, but there was at least one **yellow** die **that you could have rolled but did not roll**, you may look at the front of **one** card of the display next turn.

Phase 3: Time Marches On

If you offset the current Storyline card, go ahead and close the gap to integrate it with the rest of the story.

Advance the Time marker 1 space. Remember: If the Time marker passes the **1 hour** icon, you lose the game immediately. 

CONFRONT THE CRIMINAL

After you have found 4 clues, look at the storylines and subplots and determine which die icon appears most frequently (if two icons are tied, the player may choose which Criminal, of those tied icons, they want to confront). This die icon indicates which suspect is the true Criminal. Flip and/or turn the Criminal card so the suspect with the matching die icon is face up and upright. Do not advance the Time marker one space. You will not complete Phase 3.

Just like a Storyline, the Criminal has a row of icons depicting your current task. The task of confronting the Criminal works just like the task of Investigating: you may use Twist Markers, Items and your detective's Special Action (if the Special Action's rules permit it), except that you get an additional advantage if you have time remaining on the Time track: whenever, and as often as you like, you may spend 2 hours (advance the Time marker 2 spaces) to reroll **one yellow** die; however, your Time marker cannot go below **1**.

Succeed, and you crack the case and win the game!

Fail, and the Criminal outwits you and you lose the game!



TWO-PLAYER VARIANTS

Rivals Race Against Time: The Competitive Two-Player Variant

In this variant one player is a Private Detective and the other is a Police Investigator. You each try to solve the case, racing not only against time, but against one another. Other than the exceptions noted below, everything is the same as in the normal One Player game. If one of you runs out of Time or Stamina, that player drops out, and the other can continue collecting clues to confront the Criminal. Try to be the first to successfully confront the Criminal. If neither of you succeeds, the Criminal gets away with the nefarious deed!

CHANGES IN SETUP

0. Choose who will be the Private Detective and who will be the Police Investigator. The Private Detective is **red**, takes the **Chekhov's Gun** Investigation marker, and goes first. The Police Investigator is **blue**.



1. *Who are you?*

Each player: Choose a Detective card of your color (these are the cards with a red or blue band at the bottom; the blue cards also have a **P** in the lower-right corner), and place it face up in front of you. After you both have chosen, lay out the unselected Detective cards so their Special Actions are easily visible.



2. *What's the case?*

The Police Investigator chooses a Case card and places it between the two of you, such that the Time track is visible.

3. *How long to solve it?*

The Private Detective chooses a single difficulty level for both players (Beginner **B**, Normal **N**, or Advanced **A**), and places a red and a blue Status cube on the Time track hour marked with the difficulty level. These cubes are your respective **Time markers**.

4. *Do you have what it takes?*

Both players place the Stamina/Clues card to the left of their chosen Detective card. Place a Status cube of your color on the Stamina track space marked with the difficulty level; this cube is your **Stamina marker**. Also place a Status cube of your color on the 0 space of the Clues track; this cube is your **Clues marker**.

5. Keep the dice and **2** of each Twist marker (**8 total**) nearby. Return the other 8 Twist markers to the box.

GAME PLAY

If you were the last player to take the Chekhov's Gun marker, you are the **active player** (even if you spent it).

Phase 1: Storyline

Active player: Without flipping them face up, lay out the top 3 cards from the Investigate deck in a face-down display. You will keep one, give one to your opponent, and discard one (in whatever order you like) as follows:

- **Keep:** Flip one card from the display face up to reveal it as the current **Storyline card**.
- **Give:** Give one card face down to your opponent.
- **Discard:** Place one card from the display face up on the **discard pile**.

Other player: Without flipping them face up, add the top 2 cards from the Investigate deck to the one from the active player. You will keep one, discard one, and return one (in whatever order you like) as follows:

- **Keep:** Flip one card from the display face up to reveal it as the current **Storyline card**.
- **Discard:** Place one card from the display face up on the **discard pile**.
- **Return:** Insert one card from the display back into a random location in the **Investigate deck**.

A Cohesive Story

Player 1 builds storylines in the usual way, from left to right; however, Player 2 builds them from right to left, and the top of Player 2's main storyline is adjacent to the top of Player 1's main storyline.



Phase 2: Investigate

Active player: Contend with the current task on your Storyline card.

Other player: Contend with the current task on your Storyline card.

The Pieces Just Fall into Place

When you add a card to your main storyline, if the top edge of the card has the same icon as the top edge of the other player's "upside-down" card above it, you get 1 reroll during this phase, as if it were a normal match.

Investigation Markers


During your turn investigating, you may claim any number of **Investigation markers** by swapping the corresponding Twist markers for them. That is to say that if the Investigation marker you want is in the supply, put your corresponding Twist marker in the supply to take it; if your opponent has the Investigation marker you want, give your opponent the corresponding Twist marker to take it. To use an Investigation marker, return it to the supply.

Give To Take Investigation marker effect



A Lead – Use the Special Action of any unselected Detective that is still available, then return that Detective to the box.



Interrogate – If your current task would reward you with a Clue , this task requires 1 icon fewer (your choice).



Deus ex Machina – Flip 1 to 3 dice, which you have already rolled for this task, to their opposite faces.



Chekhov's Gun – Lose 1 Stamina or 1 Hour (advance your Time marker 1 space) to make all of your Twist markers wild for this task (i.e. they match anything).

Note: When you take this, you become the **active player**, and remain so until your opponent takes this.

Phase 3: Time Marches On

The active player advances **each player's** Time marker 1 space.

Note: Whenever the Investigate deck is exhausted, shuffle the discards to form a new draw deck. If you cannot form a new draw deck, create one by discarding all subplot storyline cards in front of you.

CONFRONT THE CRIMINAL

Whoever confronts the Criminal first has the opportunity to win the game.

Succeed, and you crack the case first and win the game! Fail, and the Criminal outwits you, and you lose the game...but, if your opponent has not already confronted the Criminal (and lost), your opponent continues to play!

Two Solve the Case: The Cooperative Two-Player Variant

As with **Rivals Race Against Time**, one player is the Private Detective, and the other is the Police Inspector; however, in this variant, you work together as a team to crack the case. If one player's Stamina runs out, that player must withdraw from the case, and the other must try to finish the case alone, because both players win or lose as a team.

CHANGES IN SETUP

Setup is the same as for **Rivals Race Against Time**, except that you share a single Time marker. It does not matter whether you use a red or blue Status cube as the Time marker.

GAME PLAY

Phase 1: Storyline

Flip the top 4 cards of the Investigate deck face up. Each player will keep one, then you will discard one, and return one (in whatever order you like) as follows:

- **Keep:** Each player must keep one card as their current **Storyline card**.
- **Discard:** Place one card from the display face up on the **discard pile**.
- **Return:** Insert one card from the display back into a random location in the **Investigate deck**.

Phase 2: Investigate

Choose which of you will go first in this phase: If one player's task risks losing Time upon failure, you probably want that player to go second.




Investigation Markers

Taking Chekhov's Gun has no effect on who goes when: It is up to you two to decide each time.







Investigation Results – Rewards and Penalties

Success Icons

-  Only you may gain an item.
-  Only you gain 1 Stamina. Move the Stamina marker up 1 space, if possible.
-  **Both players** move their Clue markers up 1 space, if possible. If you [both] just found your 4th clue, skip to **Confront the Criminal**.

Failure Icons

-  Only you must lose an item (unless you rolled 3 of a kind on the **yellow** dice, of course).
-  Only you must lose 1 Stamina (unless you rolled 3 of a kind on the **yellow** dice, of course). If your Stamina drops below 1, you immediately withdraw from the case, hoping your teammate can solve the case and win the game for all.
-  Lose 1 hour: Advance the shared Time marker 1 space. If Time passes the **1 hour** icon, you both lose the game. 

Phase 3: Time Marches On

Advance the shared Time marker **2** spaces.

CONFRONT THE CRIMINAL

You get 2 chances to confront the Criminal: First one player, then the other. Choose which of you will confront the Criminal first. You may give each other Twist markers as needed during these confrontations. If either of you succeeds, you crack the case, and you both win the game! If both of you fail, the Criminal has thwarted your efforts, and you both lose the game.

RULES TO REMEMBER

ADVANCING TIME

When you **advance the Time marker** 1 space, move it to the next lower number. Time moves inexorably forward, and you have less time to crack the case!

GAME PLAY

Each turn comprises three phases:

1. Storyline
2. Investigate
3. Time Marches On

Phase 1: Storyline

Investigation Insight

Choose your Storyline card according to what you feel you need:

- C** **Cliffhangers** cards give you a better chance of gaining **Stamina**
- F** **Follow a Lead** cards give you a better chance of getting **Items**
- I** **Informants** cards give you a better chance of finding **Clues**

Note: The icon in the upper-right corner of the card back is a reminder of what that type of card tends to provide.

Deck Exhaustion

Whenever the Investigate deck is exhausted, shuffle the discards to form a new draw deck. If you cannot form a new draw deck, create one by discarding all subplot storyline cards in front of you.

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Twist Markers

Not only can you discard any Twist marker to retain the Paperboy/Underworld Connection, but you can also discard specific Twist markers to help you succeed at your current task. Any task icon you have not gained with a die roll can be added by discarding a Twist marker depicting that icon.

Note: Discarded Twist markers return to the supply, and can be acquired again later.


Detective's Special Action

Remember to use your detective's Special Action! As long as you follow the instructions of its effect, you can use it whenever and however you like. This fact can prove very helpful!



Phase 3: Time Marches On

Advance the Time marker 1 space. Remember: If the Time marker passes the **1 hour** icon (*i.e. you have moved the status cube off the Time track*), you lose the game immediately. ☠

Plot Points:

Stamina determines your current health and how many **yellow** dice you will roll during the Phase 2: Investigate (as shown by the  icon). If your Stamina drops below 1, you fail to solve the Case and the game is lost immediately. Stamina can never go above 8.

Clues determine your success as a detective. Once you find the final clue, you can confront the Criminal and end the game.

Items are saved by marking a die icon on the Item card with a cube. Items with dice icons  to  are one-time use and may be used at any time. When you use or lose one of these Items, place the Status cube back on "Dead End" at the top of the card. When gaining a new item, you may choose to keep the new item or your current item.

ICON GLOSSARY



Connect the Dots



Word on the Street



Make the Rounds



Persuasion



Items



Stamina



Time



Clues

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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