THE DRESDEN FILES COOPERATIVE CARD GAME

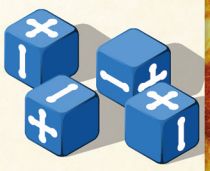
OVERVIEW

The Dresden Files Cooperative Card Game is a cooperative game in which the players take on the roles of Harry Dresden and his allies to work as a team against the game itself. Each game takes the players through one of the stories of the **Dresden Files**, investigating cases and defeating foes. Players share a common pool of action points, called Fate points, and must choose between taking actions or generating more Fate points each turn. At the end of the game, the solved cases must outnumber the Foes left standing for the players to win.

COMPONENTS

- 1 **game board**
- 154 cards comprised of:
  - Five 12-card **player decks** (**Harry**, **Susan**, **Murphy**, **Michael**, and **Billy & Georgia**)
  - Five 13-card **book decks** (**Storm Front**, **Fool Moon**, **Grave Peril**, **Summer Knight**, **Death Masks**)
  - One 29-card **Side Jobs** random scenario deck
- 77 counters comprised of:
  - 13 **Fate point** counters
  - 24 **one-Clue** counters
  - 24 **one-Hit** counters
  - 8 **five-Clue** counters
  - 8 **five-Hit** counters
- 8 **Fate Dice**
- 1 **rule book**









SETUP

Place the game board in the middle of the table. Choose 1 of the available **Book** decks, or create a random selection of 12 cards from the **Side Jobs** deck (see **Side Jobs**).

Place the **Showdown** card in its designated space on the board. **Shuffle** the other 12 Book cards and deal them face-up in 2 rows of 6 cards in the designated Range 1-6 spaces on the board.

If the card at Range 6 in either row is an **Obstacle** or an **Advantage** card, then swap its position with that of the **Foe** or **Case** card at the highest Range in the same row.

Obstacles and Advantages can't start at Range 6! Swap positions for these two.

Showdown card goes here

Book cards go in these two rows

Fate points, Hits, and Clues go here



Give each player 1 Character deck at random. If players wish to choose their Character decks instead, then the seating order around the table should be randomized after Character selection. **Always include the Harry Dresden deck** with any number of players.

Players should **separate their Talent and Stunt cards** from the rest of their deck, placing these 2 cards face-up on the table in front of them with the Talent card on the left. Players shuffle the rest of their deck and then place it face-down on the table in front of them.

Each player then **draws a hand of cards**:

5 players	4 players	3 players	1 or 2 players
Draw 4	**Draw 5**	**Draw 7**	**See page 15**

Place the supply of **Fate points (FP)**, **Clues**, and **Hits** on the board in their designated supply spaces. Use all the supplied Hit and Clue tokens. **Use 13 total Fate tokens.** Make sure every player has a few **Fate Dice** within easy reach.

Players can choose an amount of Fate points to start with to set the difficulty level of the game. Choose 1 of the following:

Apprentice (Easier)	Wizard (Standard)	Merlin (Challenging)
13 FP	**8 FP**	**4 FP**

Place the starting amount of Fate on the **Available Fate** board space, and the rest of the supply on the **Spent Fate** space. (So, Apprentice starts with 0 FP in Spent, Wizard with 5 FP in Spent, Merlin with 9 FP in Spent.)

The player with the Harry Dresden deck chooses which player goes first. Players may wish to have a brief discussion before this choice is made.

NORMAL GAME DISCUSSION RULES

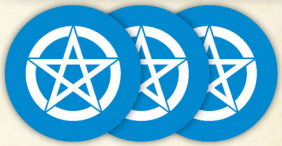
Players are not allowed to show each other the cards in their hands before they are played. Players may discuss the types of cards in their hands and describe their effects in a general way, as long as they do not state any specific numbers or card names. For example, a player *may not* say "I have 2 Attack cards" or "I want to play an Attack card that costs 5 Fate points." However, a player *may* say "I have a few Attack cards" or "I want to play an Attack card with a high cost."

The purpose of these restrictions is to keep the discussion from slowing the game down. If players are new to the game, or are having difficulty learning, these restrictions can be relaxed. Players can discuss the game freely, or show each other their cards. As an additional challenge, highly experienced players may want to try playing the game with no discussion at all.



VARIANT START RULE

This variant rule makes the game slightly easier. Players may name a particular card type before drawing (Attack, Investigate, Take Advantage, Overcome); if the player draws none of the named card type, she may choose to reshuffle her deck and draw again. This procedure is repeated until she draws a hand with at least 1 of the named card type.



FATE POINTS (FP)



CLUES



HITS









GAME START

At the beginning of the game, players should look over and briefly discuss the text effects on the Book cards in the two rows. The text effects on the **Obstacle** cards may limit the players' actions in a variety of ways until the players target and remove them with Overcome cards. The text effects on **Advantage** cards may convey benefits that will be key to the players' success in the game. **Foe** and **Case** cards may have text effects that create play restrictions, benefits, or difficulties for the players. Often the text effects on Book cards will require or encourage you to target the Book cards in a particular order.

When Book cards have effects that **interact** with one another, one or more letters may appear in **circles** on the upper left of the card. If the letter has an **inbound arrow**, as with A, the card is affected by other cards with that same letter. If they have an **outbound arrow**, as with A, they affect other cards with that same letter. How these cards affect each other is explained by the card's text.

Players may want to discuss and briefly review the powers of their **Stunts** and **Talents**, noting which players have particular action card types in their hands, and discuss how to prioritize targets within the rows. Since **The Dresden Files Cooperative Card Game** is supposed to be a short game, don't spend more than a couple of minutes on this.

NOTES ON CARD NOTATION

When a card shows a number followed by another number in a white box, such as [2], it means that you need to roll a specified number of **Fate dice** to determine the value. The value is the first number, plus the result of a roll of the number of Fate dice indicated in the white box. **When rolling Fate dice**, each ⊞ counts as **+1** and each ⊟ counts as **–1**.

Example: *Harry Dresden is discarding his "Forzare" card to generate Fate points. The card generates 2[1] Fate points, so Harry rolls 1 Fate die. He rolls a* ⊞*, so the card generates 3 Fate points (a base of 2 plus 1 for rolling* ⊞ *on the die).*

☆ When a card has a star on it, that's an indication that special circumstances are afoot! Make sure to check the card's effect text for the full explanation of what the card does.

TURN SEQUENCE

As her turn, the active player must do 1 of the following:

- **Discard card for Fate:** The active player discards a card from her hand to create Fate points by moving Fate point tokens from **Spent Fate** to **Available Fate**. She moves the amount of **Fate points** indicated in the upper left, rolling dice if needed to determine the value, and applying any modifiers from **Obstacle** cards as needed. Whenever a player discards for Fate, she may use the power of her **Talent** card. Talent powers have a wide variety of effects.

- **Play card to take an action:** The active player plays a card from her hand to take its action. She spends the amount of **Fate points** shown in the upper left, rolling dice if needed to determine the value, and applying any modifiers from **Obstacle** cards as needed. Spent Fate point tokens are moved from **Available Fate** to **Spent Fate**. There are four types of card actions: **Attack, Investigate, Overcome,** and **Take Advantage** (see **Card Actions**).

  Whenever aspects of the action involve a dice roll, the player rolls dice first, then chooses the target Book card for her action. However, once dice are rolled, she must take the action, even if it can't legally target any cards.

  If a player plays an action card with a variable Fate cost, and rolls a cost that is higher than the currently available supply of Fate points, this immediately ends the player's turn and triggers the **Showdown** (see **Showdown Phase**).

- **Use Stunt:** Each Character has a **Stunt** card, which can be used just once per game. The player enacts the Stunt card's effect, and then turns the card face-down. The Stunt may only be used in circumstances in which it will have an effect; in other words, you may not just use it to pass on a turn when its power would not be applicable.

- **Pass:** The active player must spend **1 Fate point** in order to pass. Players who are out of cards and cannot use their **Stunt** must spend a Fate point to pass, or end the game and trigger the **Showdown** (see **Showdown Phase**).

Play then passes clockwise to the next player (a few card effects may temporarily change player order). **Check the sidebars on this page** for information about **card drawing** and **discarding**!

WHEN DO I DRAW CARDS?

Players do not draw cards after playing or discarding. There is no regular draw-up phase in the game. Players only get to draw cards when a card effect allows them to do so, and these effects are rare. Your card supply is quite limited, so play wisely!



WHERE DO MY CARDS GO?

Each player's played and discarded cards are placed in the player's own discard pile, which is kept face-up next to her deck (keeping it turned sideways helps avoid confusion). In the rare event that a player needs to draw cards and her Character deck is exhausted, she reshuffles her discard pile to form a new face-down draw deck.

DISCARD FOR FATE



Discard a card to move Fate points to the players' Available Fate equal to the card's Fate value, and to activate your Talent.

PAY TO PLAY ACTION



To play a card, pay Fate points from your Available Fate equal to the card's Fate value.

PAY TO PASS



Yep, passing isn't free. After all, when has Harry ever caught a break?

FLIP TO USE YOUR STUNT



You can't use your stunt if it won't have any effect. No free passes!

CARD ACTIONS

All 4 types of Character cards have a Range, which can be a specific number, variable, or unlimited (indicated by ∞). This is the **maximum Range** of cards, counting up from the Range 1 position in each row, which can be targeted by that Character card. Thus the first card in each row is Range 1, the second is Range 2, and so on. **If a Book card is removed** by a player action, **the cards behind it move 1 Range closer**, to close the gap left by the removed card.



A Range 2 card can reach a target at Range 1 or 2.





VARIABLE RANGE?

Don't forget, when a card uses dice, **you don't have to decide on a target until after you've rolled them.** And keep an eye out for the worst case scenario here—if Harry rolls on the dice for the card above, he can only Overcome an Obstacle at Range 1!

Some Character cards have special text effects found in a black box near the bottom. These effects are triggered when the card is played to take its action. Some text effects will only activate under certain conditions. Other text effects may limit the circumstances in which the card can be played.

When you see a ☆ in a field on a Character card, such as the field for Attack or Investigate values, it indicates that you need to read the card text to see how the effect is implemented.

Note that the word "adjacent" in card text effects always refers to the cards on either side of the target card in its row; cards in the other row are **not** adjacent.

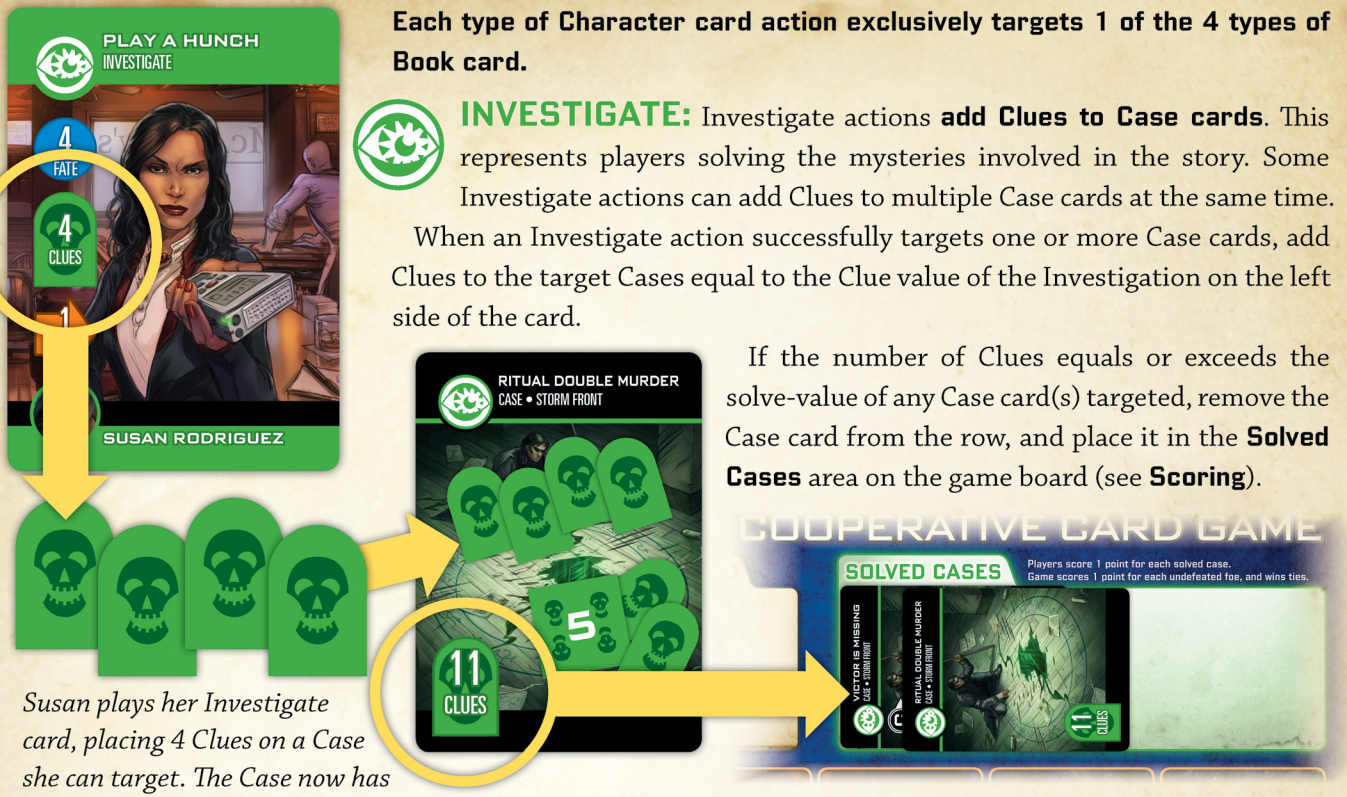


Each type of Character card action exclusively targets 1 of the 4 types of Book card.

INVESTIGATE: Investigate actions **add Clues to Case cards**. This represents players solving the mysteries involved in the story. Some Investigate actions can add Clues to multiple Case cards at the same time.

When an Investigate action successfully targets one or more Case cards, add Clues to the target Cases equal to the Clue value of the Investigation on the left side of the card.

If the number of Clues equals or exceeds the solve-value of any Case card(s) targeted, remove the Case card from the row, and place it in the **Solved Cases** area on the game board (see **Scoring**).



Susan plays her Investigate card, placing 4 Clues on a Case she can target. The Case now has 11 Clues on it, matching its solve-value of 11, so it is moved to the Solved Cases file.

ATTACK: Attack actions **add Hits to Foe cards**. This represents players battling the antagonists of the story. Some Attack actions can add Hits to multiple Foe cards at the same time.

When an Attack action successfully targets one or more Foe cards, add Hits to the target Foes equal to the Hit value of the Attack on the left side of the card.

When the number of Hits equals or exceeds the value of the Foe card, remove it from the row, and place it in the **Book card discard** pile.

Any Foe cards that are **not** removed from the rows by the end of the game count as points against the players (see **Scoring**).



10 Hits exceeds the defeat-value of 9. Off to the Book discard pile!



Harry uses his card to Overcome the Obstacle, but the Obstacle still affects that die roll before it goes!

OVERCOME: Overcome actions **remove Obstacle cards** from the board, as described in the text effect at the bottom of the card.

Obstacles create ongoing adverse effects for the players until they are removed.

If an Obstacle is in Range of an Overcome card when it is played, then the Obstacle is removed and placed in the Book card discard pile.

The Obstacle's effect **persists** until the end of the current Overcome action, and **still applies** to any effects of the Overcome card that was just played.

TAKE ADVANTAGE: Take Advantage actions **remove Advantage cards** from the board, as described in the text effect at the bottom of the card.

Advantage cards provide positive effects for the players when they are removed, on a one-time immediate basis.

If an Advantage card is in Range of a Take Advantage card, then it is removed from the row, its text effect is enacted, and it is placed in the Book card discard pile.

Karrin uses her Take Advantage card to grab a beer & some rare, valuable card draws. Thanks, Murph!





Solved Cases go here. All other Book cards go to the Book discard.



HARRY EFFECTS

Some Book card effects refer specifically to Harry Dresden, or all the players except Harry Dresden, since Harry is the only Character who is included in every game.

REMOVING CARDS FROM THE ROWS

Foes and Cases are removed whenever their defeat or solve value is reached, which is not always during an Attack or Investigate action. Clues and Hits can also be added to Book cards by Stunts, Talents, or text effects on Character and Book cards.

Cases are solved and **Foes** are defeated whenever their solve- or defeat-value is exceeded, not just when the players use Attacks and Investigations.

Advantage and **Obstacle** cards may also sometimes be removed by an effect without being directly targeted by a Character card action.

Place your solved Case cards sideways and spread out in the Solved Cases area on the board, so that players can easily see what their current score is (see **Scoring**).

When a Book card is removed, all the cards behind it move 1 Range closer, following the arrows on the board to close the gap left by the removed card. All Hit or Clue tokens on the removed card are returned to the supply.

Text effects on cards will often put restrictions on how players may target or otherwise affect Book cards.

- If a card restriction states that players(s) "**cannot Attack**" or "**cannot Investigate**," that means that players cannot play Attack or Investigate cards in the circumstance the card restriction dictates, but it may still be possible to use Talents, Stunts, or other card effects to add Clues or Hits.
- If a card restriction states that a target card "**cannot receive**" Clues or Hits, or that Clues or Hits "**cannot be added**" to a particular card, then Clues or Hits cannot be added to the designated card in any manner, until the restricting condition has been dealt with; the restriction in this case limits all Character cards, Stunts, and Talents.

Book card restrictions take precedence over player's actions, Talents, Stunts, and other Book card effects unless otherwise specified.

- When a card effect, Stunt, or Talent states that it allows all players to impact "**any**" target, this means any target that has **not** been restricted by a Book card effect.
- When a Talent power would only allow a player to target a card in a **particular position**, such as the card of a particular type at the **shortest** or **longest Range**, and the card in that position is restricted, then the Talent cannot be used.

EXAMPLE OF PLAY

It is a 3-player game of **Storm Front** with **Harry Dresden**, **Susan Rodriguez**, and **Michael Carpenter**.

As luck would have it, all 4 of the Foes in the game happen to be in the top row, which gives Harry a perfect opportunity to use his **Pyrofuego** card. The card costs 4 Fate points to play, which uses up all of the available Fate points. The **Pyrofuego** card adds 2 Hits to each of the Foes in the row, except **Kalshazzak, Toad Demon**; this is because Kalshazzak cannot receive Hits until the **Who is the Shadowman?** Case has been solved. While the team has been investigating the **Who is the Shadowman?** Case, which is at Range 1, it still only has 9 of the 10 Clues needed to solve it.

Michael's Stunt **Amoracchius** allows him to add 3 Hits to a Foe that does not have any Hits on it, and then move that Foe to the longest Range in its row.

Because there are no Fate points in the supply, Michael would like to use his Stunt this turn. However, he **cannot** because it is illegal to use his Stunt on Kalshazzak, who cannot take Hits, and the other Foes all have Hit counters on them as a result of Harry's attack.

Michael cannot choose to pass because there are no available Fate points, and so passing would end the game.

His only option is to discard a card for Fate points. He is reluctant to do this because he feels his remaining cards are all valuable, but them's the breaks. He discards his **Divine Revelation** card and generates 5(1) Fate points. Michael rolls a ■, but the effect of the **Three Eye Drug War** Obstacle turns this roll into a ▬, so Michael generates just 4 Fate points.







Discarding for Fate points allows Michael to **ready** his **Holy Knight of the Cross** Talent, so he flips his Talent card to the Ready side. On a later turn he will have the option to flip the Talent card to the Unready side to take an action with +2 Range.

As mentioned before, the **Who is the Shadowman?** Case only has 9 of the 10 Clues needed to solve it.

On her turn, Susan wants to solve the **Who is the Shadowman?** Case so that Michael will be able to use his Stunt on Kalshazzak.

She has 1 Investigate card, **Play a Hunch,** which would add 4 Clues to a case at Range 1; this would be overkill for **Who Is the Shadowman?** since it is only 1 Clue away from being solved.

Instead of playing the card, she **discards** it for 4 Fate points and uses her **Arcane Reporter** Talent.

Susan's Talent allows her to add 1 Clue to the Case at the shortest Range, which solves **Who is the Shadowman?**

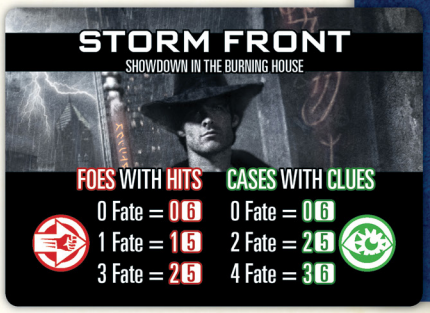
Now it is legal to add Hits to Kalshazzak. Michael reminds Harry not to add any Hits to Kalshazzak on his turn, because Michael wants to be able to use his Stunt.

SHOWDOWN PHASE

The **Showdown** is the final phase before the game end. It can be triggered in 3 ways:

- A player employs an action card with a **variable Fate cost**, and rolls a cost that is **higher** than the supply of Fate points currently available.
- A player is **out of cards**, needs to pass, and there are **no Fate points** in the Available Fate pool.
- **Players may decide as a group** to trigger the Showdown phase at the end of any player's turn. If at some point during the game discussion indicates that players cannot usefully add more Hits to Foes or Clues to Cases, then players should try to use their remaining cards to generate as many Fate points as they can for use in the Showdown phase. This is how the Showdown is most often triggered.

As indicated on the **Showdown card**, Players get one last chance per Case or Foe to roll some dice to try to solve any **Cases that already have Clues** on them and defeat any **Foes that already have Hits** on them. Players **do not** get a Showdown roll on Foes without any Hits, or on Cases without any Clues on them.



Players may spend leftover Fate points on each legal target to get better odds for these final die rolls, according to the terms of the Showdown card for the current Book deck.

Players only get to roll once for each legal target, and should decide together how to spend their remaining Fate points on each die roll. If the roll is a positive number, add that number of Hits or Clues to the card.

Any text effects on Foe, Case, and Obstacle cards that remain on the board will **remain in effect** during the Showdown phase.

SCORING

The players' score is the number of Cases they solved. **The game's score** is the number of Foes that are still on the board at the end of the game.

If the players' score is **higher** than the game's, **they win**. Otherwise, **they lose**. Any ties go in favor of the game. Because *of course* evil wins ties. Harry can't ever catch a break!

PLAN WISELY!

It is important to plan for the Showdown phase. The Showdown may be useful for players to add Hits to Foes and Clues to Cases, even if they cannot add enough to remove the Foe or Case during play.

That said, **the odds of adding Clues and Hits during the Showdown are always worse** than the odds of adding Clues and Hits with player actions.

Most of the time, it is not advantageous for players to pass up the chance to Attack or Investigate in order to have a large pool of Fate points during the Showdown.





CAMPAIGN GAME

To play a campaign game, a group of players starts by playing the first Book deck, **Storm Front**, and replaying that deck as needed until they win a game. Then they move on to the second Book deck, and continue in this fashion until they have won once using each of the Book decks in the game. Players may choose to change which Characters they use over the course of the campaign game.

For maximum authenticity and fun, read or re-read the Dresden Files novels as you go through the campaign, and include the Characters who appeared in the corresponding Book deck you are playing.



SIDE JOBS

(THE RANDOM BOOK DECK GENERATOR)

For additional variety, players may generate a random Book deck using the Side Jobs cards. Some of these have been themed around various Dresden Files short stories, while others just feature common elements of the "Dresdenverse."

Players should start by randomly selecting one of the Side Jobs Showdown cards. Then roll 2 dice and consult the Side Jobs deck chart card to determine how many of each type of card (Advantages, Cases, Foes, and Obstacles) to include in the deck.

Shuffle the supply of each type of card from the Side Jobs cards, and draw the appropriate number of each type at random. Shuffle these 12 cards together, and then set up the Book card rows as usual.

EVEN MORE RANDOM?

Eventually you may want to experiment with mixing cards from the regular Book decks with cards from Side Jobs to create randomized games. If you use cards from the regular Book decks with letter icons, be sure to use all the cards from that deck with the same letter(s) so that you don't split up sets of cards that are contingent upon each other.

CARD CLARIFICATIONS

- **Michael Carpenter**: The **Amoracchius** Stunt can't be used on Foes that are restricted from taking Hits.
- **Sanya (expansion character):** The **Words of Hope** Stunt cannot be used on Cases that are restricted from taking Clues.
- **Anastasia Luccio (expansion character):** The **Strategy** Investigation and the **Pyromantic Precision** Attack can still be played, even if there is a restricted target card within their Range. The card effect skips the restricted card and adds tokens to all the unrestricted target cards within its Range.
- **Molly Carpenter (expansion character):** The **Apprentice Wizard** Talent cannot be used when discarding a card for Fate. It also cannot be used in the Showdown phase.

2-PLAYER RULES

2-Player Changes to Setup: Each player takes 2 Character decks. Players put the Stunt and Talent cards from both decks face-up on the table in front of them. Players shuffle the rest of the 2 Character decks together and draw a hand of 9 cards, mixed between the 2 decks.

2-Player Changes to Gameplay: When a player discards a card from her hand to generate Fate points, she can use the Talent power of either of her Characters, regardless of which Character's card she is discarding. Talents that have to be readied, such as Michael or Molly Carpenter's, can be used when playing a card from the deck of the other Character.

She can use each Character's Stunt card once, at any time at which its ability would have an effect.

A player's 2 Characters are not treated as separate "players" for purposes of text effects.

When a card text states that something applies to another player, the active player must choose the other player.

When a Book card effect puts a modifier or restriction specifically on Harry Dresden, that effect always applies to the player with the Harry Dresden deck, even when she is not using her Harry Dresden cards, Stunt, or Talent.

Book card effects that refer to all players but Harry do not apply to the player with the Harry Dresden deck, regardless of which cards she is playing on any given turn.

In all other respects, the rules of the game are the same.

1-PLAYER RULES

1-Player Changes to Setup: Use 3 Character decks and set them up similarly to a 3-player game, except that the 3 players' tableaus should be set up in 3 rows, between yourself and the game board, with the hands of 6 Character cards laid face-up beside the Character's Stunt and Talent, so that you can see all 3 hands of cards easily.

1-Player Changes to Gameplay: Starting with the uppermost Character, you must take a separate turn for each Character.

For purposes of card text and other effects, you must treat each Character as if it were a separate player.

Book card effects that put modifiers or restrictions on Harry Dresden specifically only apply during Harry's turn.

In all other respects, the rules of the game are the same.



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STRATEGY TIPS

Use Harry's Talent, but make sure Harry gets a chance to play too: Harry Dresden's Talent is **key** to success in the game. Harry should discard as needed during the early turns of the game to move key Obstacles and Advantages into position for other players to target them. Once all the Obstacle and Advantage cards are removed, Harry's Talent will become ineffective; it is important that other players make the needed Fate points from then on so that Harry can play some of his powerful Attack and Investigate cards.

Don't force the same player to discard for Fate points every turn: Selfish play usually ends up hurting the team. If a player has to make Fate points for one or two rounds, the other players should plan to make enough Fate points to enable this player to take an action next time around.

Plan for all players to use their Stunts: Some Stunts, like Susan's, can be used anytime. However, Stunts like Harry's need particular conditions to arise before they can be used, and Stunts like Michael's may not be useable if they aren't played early in the game. Stunts are particularly valuable because they do not cost any Fate. If one player is unable to play her Stunt at all during the game, it can make the difference between winning and losing.

Consider carefully whether to play or discard your expensive cards: While all the expensive cards are powerful, some can only have maximum effect under certain conditions. If the conditions for playing your powerful card are wrong, it may be better to discard it for Fate points.

Look for instances when your Talent power is more useful than an action would be: Clever use of Talents is key to winning the game. Adding 1 Clue and generating 2 Fate points can be a lot better than adding 2 Clues and spending 2 Fate points!

Good strategy changes from Book to Book and Character to Character: It is possible to win any book with any set of Characters. However, each book is a different logistical puzzle, and changes with each random card order. The optimal path through a given book also changes depending upon what Characters are in play.