
PARANORMAL
DETECTIVES
Rulebook

Introduction

You open your eyes and get the biggest shock of your life– it just ended, and you're a ghost, floating in the air! Terrified, you look down at your own body and see a strange group has gathered around your mortal remains, studying them with fascination. They're...detectives! That's good. Somehow you need to communicate with them. You need them to discover how your life ended, and who's responsible so the culprit can be brought to justice and you can rest in peace!

The Goal of the Game

Paranormal Detectives is a party game with an element of deduction.

One player takes the role of the Ghost of a recently deceased victim, while all other players work as Paranormal Detectives who are trying to discover how the victim died. Using their psychic abilities, the Detectives will communicate with the Ghost, asking questions about the details of the crime.

The first Detective who guesses all 5 key elements of the story correctly will be the winner, together with the Ghost.

Components











5 Detective screens



Investigation sheets 5



1 Ghost sheet



Quill Pen sheet 1

5 Talking Board markers

6 Pens



3 Ghost Meter markers



Wound markers 10



17 Tarot cards



2 Hangman's Knot ropes

Parental Advisory

Paranormal Detectives is a game about death. It contains some reference to violence, drugs, and sex. If you play with younger players, we suggest that an adult plays as the Ghost and chooses a story which is appropriate for the younger audience. All stories with references to drugs and sex have a PARENTAL ADVISORY icon in he upper-right corner of the card.

Set-Up

1. Place the Main Board and the quill pen sheet in the middle of the table (A).
2. Place the Ghost Meter markers, Talking Board markers, Wound markers, and Hangman Knots ropes next to the board (B).
3. Decide who will play as the Ghost. This player takes the Ghost sheet, one random Story card, the three Ghost Interaction cards, the deck of Tarot cards and a pen (C).
4. All other players choose (or are randomly assigned) one of the Detectives and take:
   - The matching Detective screen,
   - One Investigation sheet to be placed behind their screen,
   - All Interaction cards with their Detective's icon in the upper-left corner of the card.
   - A pen (D).
5. Each Detective discards to the game box all Interaction cards without the player count icon that matches the total number of players in the game (including the Ghost player).

FOR EXAMPLE: In a 5-player game, discard the cards showing the 2-3 and 2-4 icons.



NOTE: *Do not read any of the Story cards before the game! Only one Story card should be read during the set-up and only by the player who will play as the Ghost.*

NOTE: *In a 2-player game (one Detective and the Ghost), the Detective player should pick two sets of 7 Interaction cards from any two Detectives.*

The following table below shows the final number of Interaction cards each Detective should start with, based on player count:

2 players	14 cards
3 players	7 cards
4 players	6 cards
5 players	5 cards
6 players	4 cards

NOTE: *Two Interaction cards (Ghost Touch and Quill Pen) require physical contact between players. If any player in your group doesn't feel comfortable with this, they may choose to discard those cards* ***instead*** *of the ones suggested by icons.*

In 2-, 3- and 4-player games where Detectives are supposed to discard fewer than 2 cards, those players are allowed to swap those cards with any other Interaction cards from Detectives not in the game. This will mean that a player will have more than one copy of a particular card, and this is OK.

6 The Ghost player reads the chosen Story card (in secret, not out loud!). They then put Wound markers on the chalk outline on the Main Board (E) as shown on the Story card (note that in some stories there are no wounds), and one Wound marker on a victim's gender indicator (F). These markers indicate to the Detectives where the Ghost's body has **visible** wounds and their apparent gender. Finally, the Ghost reads out loud the short description of their body's appearance, written in italics at the bottom of the Story card.

EXAMPLE OF A 3-PLAYER SETUP:



Course of Play

The Detective player who most recently witnessed something scary is the first player. They take the first turn and then play passes to the next Detective player in clockwise order around the table. This process repeats until the end of the game. The Ghost player never takes a turn: their role in the game is to answer the Detectives' questions.

On your turn, perform the following two phases in order:

1. Ask the Ghost a question (mandatory).
2. Try to guess the story (optional).

Asking a Question

To ask a question, perform the following steps in order:

1. Choose an Interaction card from your hand and play it face up on the table.
2. Ask out loud any question for which the answer cannot be "yes" or "no".
3. The Ghost answers in the manner suggested by the Interaction card you played.
4. After the Ghost answers, all Detectives make notes on their Investigation sheets.
5. Discard the Interaction card you played back to the box; it cannot be used again in this game.

NOTE: *The key to this game is creativity! Detectives can come up with any kind of questions they desire. A question might simply be about one of the 5 Key pieces of information (The 5 Keys: WHO, WHY, WHERE, HOW, and WEAPON), but are by no means limited to them. Examples of questions:*

- *What was your occupation?*
- *How quickly did you die?*
- *How did you feel 5 minutes before your death?*
- *What was your relation to the murderer?*

Guessing the Story

After asking a question, you (and only you) may make an attempt to guess the Ghost's death story. To try to guess you should tell **out loud** what you believe are the 5 Key words of the story.

NOTE: *Each Detective may only try to guess the story twice during the game. After you make your second attempt to guess the story, if you have not won the game, you are removed from the investigation and may not take any more turns. The remaining Detectives keep taking their turns as normal.*

A guess should consist of five Key words written on the Story card:

WHO - Who was the person or creature responsible for the death of the victim? This is not necessarily the murderer; it may be the person whose actions led to the victim's death, but not on purpose. It might be the victim themselves. WHO usually refers to an occupation or their relation to the victim.

EXAMPLES: gangster, taxi driver, uncle, boyfriend.

WHERE - Where was the place or location where the death happened? It is usually an area, type of building, or even a specific room in the house.

EXAMPLES: living-room, bakery, beach, mine.

WHY - What was the motive or reason why the killer's (the WHO above) actions led to the Ghost's death?

EXAMPLES: jealousy, money, bullying, rush.

HOW - What was the method of the Ghost's death? Usually, it is an action or medical condition which was the direct cause of the victim's death.

EXAMPLES: stabbed, drowning, allergy reaction, shot.

WEAPON - What was the weapon, object or tool that was the direct cause of the Ghost's death?

EXAMPLES: machete, shotgun, stone, fire

On the left side of the Story card, the Ghost has a list of all phrases they should accept as the Keys to the story. But if a Detective uses a clear synonym of the word listed as a Key, it should be accepted as a correct answer as well.

EXAMPLES:

The Key in category WEAPON is an axe. The Ghost should accept hatchet or tomahawk. The Ghost should not accept machete, dagger, or knife.

The Key in category WHY is panic. The Ghost should accept scared or fear. The Ghost should not accept emotions, neurosis, or stress.

Solving the Mystery and Partial Progress

After you make a guess, there are two possibilities:

- **The Mystery is Solved:** If you guessed all five Keys correctly, the game ends and you win the game together with the Ghost.
- **Partial Progress:** If you guessed some but not all of the Keys correctly, the Ghost notes anywhere on your Investigation sheet the single number from 0 to 4. This number tells you how many Keys were guessed correctly — but not which ones! This should be done without the Ghost player speaking aloud so that you know how close you are to solving the mystery but the other Detectives only know that some progress has been made.

Then the Ghost makes a note on their Ghost sheet (also in secret) of the number of correct guesses in the row with current Detective player's icon, in the left-most empty column. This allows the Ghost to track the order and level of success of all Detectives' guesses.

EXAMPLE: Claire the Nun makes her second, and final attempt to guess the Story. She guesses 4 things correctly. The Ghost writes down number 4 in Claire's row on their Ghost sheet in the leftmost free column.



NOTE: *The Ghost sheet should be always face down on the table so that none of the Detectives can see it.*

Additional Ghost Clue

If your guess resulted in only partial progress, the Ghost gives all Detectives an additional clue by playing one of their 3 Ghost Interaction cards and giving a clue via the method described. No Detective is allowed to ask a question before the clue is offered, though all Detectives are allowed to observe the clue and may take notes. Each Ghost Interaction card can only be used once per game and is returned to the box after use.

End of a Detective's Turn

Once your turn is complete, the Detective to your left takes the next turn.

Game End

The game can end in one of two ways:

1. A Detective guesses all the Keys to the story (see Solving the Mystery.) In this case, this Detective wins the game, together with the Ghost.
2. All Detectives run out of Interaction cards or have all made two attempts to guess the story and nobody has guessed all Keys correctly. The Detective who correctly guessed the most Keys is the sole winner of the game! In case of a tie, the player who guessed the most Keys first is the winner.

EXAMPLE: This Ghost Sheet shows that in a game with two Detectives, the first attempt to guess the Story was by Claire the Nun. She guessed 3 out of 5 Keys correctly. It was followed by the first attempt made by Christopher the Scientist, who guessed 4 Keys. In the very next round, Christopher tried again and he got 4 correct answers again. Finally, Claire in her second guess was correct about 4 Keys as well. The game ends because all Detectives have had two guesses. As a result, Christopher is victorious because he was the first one who guessed most Keys correctly.



Stories and Card Sorting

Paranormal Detectives relies on its stories, each of which can only be used once. We suggest sorting used Story cards into a separate string bag to avoid using them in future games.

We invite you to download our free companion app **Paranormal Detectives** to experience many more mysterious stories!

Free application

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store



Cooperative Variant

You may play Paranormal Detectives as a fully cooperative game. In this variant, all Detectives work together to solve the mystery. They may communicate freely about their ideas and share their impressions after each clue.

The only difference in gameplay is that all Detectives as a group have only two attempts to guess the story. They have to cooperatively decide when they want to make the attempt.

All players (including the Ghost) win only if they correctly guess all five Keys. The number of interaction cards used is their score. Consult the score with the table below.

Number of used Interaction cards	Score
14+	Novice Ghost Hunters
12-13	Subtle Spirit Chasers
10-11	Determined Poltergeist Hunters
9 or less	The Ultimate Ghostbusters

Interaction Cards



Tarot Cards

The Ghost chooses up to three Tarot cards and arranges them on the table to answer the question.

The Ghost is allowed to use the back sides of some of the chosen cards to cover part of the other cards, in order to show the Detectives only a crucial part of the images.



EXAMPLE: the Ghost was asked the question "How did you die?" They use two cards face up and cover parts of the cards with the back of the third card to show a man falling from the roof of a high building.



Talking Board

The Ghost uses the Talking Board to give their answer. The Talking board consists of 9 groups of three letters each. The Ghost uses up to 5 numbered markers to spell out up to the first 5 letters of a word. The Ghost places their markers one by one, each pointing towards one group of letters (not a single letter). More than one marker can be placed on a group.

EXAMPLE: To suggest the word "poison" the ghost places markers accordingly:





Ghost Meter

The Ghost tries to answer the question by playing up to three Ghost Meter markers on different scales of the Ghost Meter:

Small - Big
Light - Heavy
Slow - Fast
Good - Evil
Silent - Loud
Cold - Hot
Young - Old

Optionally, the Ghost is allowed to put one or more of the markers on colors instead of on a scale.



EXAMPLE: The Ghost is asked about the Weapon and the answer to the question is Fire. They choose to place one marker close to "Light", one marker very close to "Hot", and one on the red color.

Quill Pen



The Ghost holds the Detective's wrist while the Detective's hand holds a pen, and attempts to draw the answer on the Quill Pen sheet. The drawing line must be continuous: When the line is broken, the Detective loses paranormal contact and the drawing ends. The Ghost can only draw shapes and symbols — words, letters, and numbers are not allowed.

Hangman's Knots



The Ghost arranges the two pieces of rope on the table in an attempt to communicate the answer. The Ghost is allowed to form shapes and symbols — words, letters, and numbers are not allowed.

Ghost Scream



The Ghost answers the question by either making a sound (that cannot be a word of any kind) or pointing with their finger to an object in the room.

Whisper of Shadows



Without making a sound, the Ghost answers the question by moving their mouth and lips to communicate a single word.

Ghost Touch



The Ghost draws the answer with their finger on the Detective's back, without revealing it to any others. The Ghost can only draw shapes and symbols — words, letters, and numbers are not allowed.

Haunted Mirror



Without making any sound, the Ghost answers the question by performing a mime of up to 3 seconds.



Credits

Game design:	Marcin Łączyński, Szymon Maliński, Adrian Orzechowski
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Rulebook editing:	Seth Johnson, Paul Grogan, Gaming Rules!

GAMING RULES!

The history of this game is quite special. The initial design came to life during a game jam event called "Games Laboratory". Lucky Duck Games team and the designers would like to express their gratitude to the team behind "Games Laboratory" led by Krzysztof Szafrański and Maciej Jesionowski and all participants of the event.

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