

Investigate & Prosecute

by Dave Chalker

- 3-4 players
- 30 minutes

Components

- Game Board
- 45 Clue Cards
- 6 Meeples (3 Police, 3 Criminal)
- Clue Sheets

The Setup & Commit Crime Phase

Choose two players to play police, and the remaining player or players to be the criminals. In four players, seat the players so that the order alternates police, criminal, police, criminal, etc. In three players, one police goes, then the criminal, then the other police, then the same criminal, then back to the first police, and so on.

Give each player a clue sheet. This can be used throughout the game to track what players know about the crime, and any other notes like particular cards in hand.

Shuffle the clue deck, and flip over cards until a Suspect (blue) card comes up. This is the murder victim. Leave him face up on the table for the entire game. Shuffle the rest of the clue cards together.

Secretly, the criminals commit the crime by flipping up cards from the clue deck until they come up with a Suspect, Motive, and Means. (You may want to have the police players leave the room for this part.) The criminals note these elements, and then keep their identities hidden for the entire game. Shuffle the revealed cards back into the deck.

After that, deal each player one clue card for their starting hand. Place the game board out, and place all six meeples in the holding cells in their appropriate spots. For spaces that have cards on the board, place those appropriately. Begin the investigation phase.

The Investigation Phase

In the Investigation Phase, the police are trying to figure out (or at least narrow down) what the cards involved in the crime are, while also building their hand with good cards. The criminals are trying to throw the police off the trail of the actual crime, while also building their hands.

The police and criminal meeples begin the game off the board in the Holding Cells area. To start the investigation phase, the police player who most recently watched a crime show takes the first turn.

To take a turn, take one of the meeples from the holding cells that match your side, and place it on any open space on the board. If the icon for the space matches your side, take the action listed on that space. Otherwise, you are just blocking the space for the other side.

There are three types of spaces: police spaces, criminal spaces, and either side spaces.

After you have placed your piece, make a CLONG CLONG noise to indicate your turn is finished. The next player (on the other side) takes the next turn, and takes a piece from the holding cells and places it. This continues until all the meeples are placed on the board.

Once that happens, return all the meeples placed this round, EXCEPT the very last meeple placed, to the holding cells. The next player then takes the next turn. This means that after the first time around, there will always be at least one space blocked on the board.

If a space says that a card goes to the player (or a player on a particular side) with the fewest cards, and there's a tie, the tie always goes to the trailing player (not the next player, the player who just took a turn.)

Ending the Investigation Phase

After completing a space, if the clue deck runs out of cards, the investigation phase ends. Take all the cards on the board, shuffle them face down, then deal them out, starting with the players with the fewest cards in their hands, until you achieve equal hand sizes. After that, deal the rest starting with a criminal player of their choice.

The police become prosecutors, and the criminals become defense attorneys. The prosecutors choose amongst themselves who will take the first lead in the trial phase.

The Trial Phase

The Trial Phase is a trick-taking game, where each side is trying to capture both the cards actually used in the crime, and also take the most cards in each individual suit.

The player with the lead plays any card. Each other player must play a card that matches that suit if they have one, otherwise, they can follow with any other suit.

Lowest card played, regardless of its suit, takes the card next highest to it. If there's a tie for lowest card played, whomever played theirs later in the trick wins the tie. If there's a tie for which card to take, the player taking it chooses which one they want.

Highest card of the lead suit takes the rest of the trick, and has the next lead. Teams share their captured cards, so each time will just have a pile of taken cards.

If a player plays their last card, it means that is the final trick of the game.

Objections

These cards do not have to be played to follow suit. When you play an Objection, it starts a new trick, starting with the Objection leading. All previous cards played to the trick are ignored for the moment for the trick to play out. The Objection counts as a 0, so it will take the next lowest card in the current trick, ignoring the set aside trick. The high card of the lead suit will take all the rest of the trick, including the set aside trick, and lead the next trick as normal.

The Objection cards cannot be part of the crime.

Motions

Motions count as the 15 in the suit they're in. Whoever plays a Motion, no matter how the suit goes, skips their next play. If they would lead the next trick, they skip the play, and also give up the lead to the next player in turn order.

The Motion cards cannot be part of the crime.

Closing Arguments

All cards still remaining in players' hands at the end of the trial phase are shuffled together, then flipped face up. The Prosecutors choose any two cards that are added to their captured trick piles. The Defense receive all other cards from the pile.

End of the Game

The criminals reveal the three elements of the real crime. Each card captured of the actual crime in the trick-taking portion is worth 3 points. If your side took the most cards of a particular suit, each majority is worth 1 point each.

If there's a tie, the side that captured the most cards wins. If there's still a tie, the game is declared a mistrial, and you must play again.

Full Game

For a full, more fair game, have each player play each side once, and total the scores together for a complete winner.

Table Talk

In the first half of the game, you can coordinate with your partner, but you cannot reveal the contents of your hand in any way, especially referring to suits or numbers in your hand. What cards have just been taken from a space is public information. You can make suggestions

about what to do based on what's on the board. In the second half of the game, you can only communicate by playing cards.

<p>Suspects 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Motives 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Means 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Specials Objections/0: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Starts a new trick, lead with Objection)</i> Motions/15: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Skip your next card play)</i></p> <p>Actual Suspect, Motive, Means taken: 3 points each Most Suspects, Motives, Means taken: 1 point each</p>	<p>Suspects 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Motives 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Means 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Specials Objections/0: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Starts a new trick, lead with Objection)</i> Motions/15: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Skip your next card play)</i></p> <p>Actual Suspect, Motive, Means taken: 3 points each Most Suspects, Motives, Means taken: 1 point each</p>
<p>Suspects 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Motives 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Means 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Specials Objections/0: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Starts a new trick, lead with Objection)</i> Motions/15: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Skip your next card play)</i></p> <p>Actual Suspect, Motive, Means taken: 3 points each Most Suspects, Motives, Means taken: 1 point each</p>	<p>Suspects 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Motives 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Means 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>Specials Objections/0: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Starts a new trick, lead with Objection)</i> Motions/15: Suspects Motives Means <i>(Skip your next card play)</i></p> <p>Actual Suspect, Motive, Means taken: 3 points each Most Suspects, Motives, Means taken: 1 point each</p>