



Core Rules Booklet

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Writers

D. Cobb
Rebecca Mooney
Jye Nicolson
David J Prokopetz

Editor

Scott Vandervalk

Graphic Designer

Cassandra McKown

Illustrators

Esme Baran
Miranda Harrell
Sasha Gallagher
Kiyo
Louise Leung
Istefany Macedo
Lis Razo
Nicole Sexton
Marie Torres
Louise Kay Uy
Hollie Williams

Playtesters

Emily Jackman
Ben Leong
Louise Leong
Jye Nicolson
Scott Vandervalk
Bp3500
dkellis
Municipal
Shadowjack
ShadowWhispers
Unka Josh



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Note: This document is a PLAYTEST DRAFT of currently in development. Final product may differ.

THIS IS NOT A COMPLETE GAME

In order to play *Costume Fairy Adventures* Quickstart Edition, you will also need:

- The pregenerated PC playbooks.
- The print-and-play Quickstart Costume Deck.
- The demo Playset, *The Big Pie Caper*.

All of these items can be downloaded from the Penguin King Games website at penguinking.com.

Fairies. In Costume. Having Adventures.

Use the awesome powers of these immortal nature spirits for whimsical ends in *Costume Fairy Adventures*! Gain special abilities by donning costumes and playing the role to the hilt. (Your fairy isn't bright enough to know that shouldn't work.) Warp reality by wishing really hard in service to the prank of the moment. And most importantly, get up to shenanigans.

Fairy adventures usually involve a small clique of friends dressing up to invade an otherwise sensible situation and unleash its potential for hilarious mayhem with pranks, stunts and nonsense. Using their innate sense for shenanigans or just doing whatever seems funny at the time, your fairies can make even the most boring village, ball or space fleet into the most interesting place in the universe. The inhabitants might not appreciate the brilliance of your efforts, but who cares so long as it's fun?

Costume Fairy Adventures Quickstart Edition allows you and your friends to take on the role of these tiny troublemakers and get up to proper mischief clad in fabulous costumes. While the full game packs in so much more – extended rules, more Costumes and a variety of Playsets – the Quickstart Edition has all you need to commit your first shenanigans and get a taste for the mayhem to come.

What's All This, Then?

Costume Fairy Adventures is a tabletop roleplaying game (RPG) for 2–7 players. It combines elements of traditional board games and group storytelling. One player serves as a referee called the Game Master (GM), while everyone else takes on the role of a particular character, called a Player Character (PC). You take turns to describe what you're doing, and the GM – with the help of the game rules – decides what happens. You'll use cards, dice, tokens and other props to help things along.

This Quickstart Edition assumes that you have a basic idea of how to play a tabletop RPG. For a more detailed explanation, try Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tabletop_roleplaying_game

What You Need To Play

In order to play *Costume Fairy Adventures* Quickstart Edition, you'll need a few things before you start:

- Characters. This edition doesn't include character creation rules; however, pregenerated PCs are provided with this download. Let folks pick their characters, or just deal them out at random.
- For face to face play, everyone will also need a pencil with a good eraser to record values that change during play. For online play, the relevant sections of your character sheets are form-fillable.
- You'll also need a handful of six-sided dice (around 5–7). For online play, the forum or chat program you're using may have a dice-roller utility, otherwise just let the GM handle the dice rolls.
- Print and cut out a copy of the Quickstart Costume Deck. For online play, physical Costume cards may be useful for ease of reference. The GM should always have a copy in order to keep track of the Costumes.
- Finally, you'll need tokens to represent Magic points (about ten per player). You can use glass beads, poker chips, or even small candies, like gourmet jelly beans. We recommend using Magic tokens – edible or otherwise – even if you're playing online since we find that the tactile element of handling (or eating) them adds to the experience.

Rules For Players

Costume Fairy Adventures is a fairly freeform game. Often, you'll simply say what you're doing, and the GM will describe what happens. Sometimes, though, you'll want to do something that a fairy might mess up. (Note: there are a lot of things that a fairy might mess up.) That means it's time to bring out the dice.

Making Tests

Any time you roll the dice and there *isn't* someone rolling against you, that's called a **test**. There are five basic steps for making a test.

1. Pick Your Facet

Decide what **Facet** you're rolling against. If you're making a test because of something you decided to do, you'll pick your Facet. If you're making a test to *stop* something from happening to you, the GM will usually pick.

The five Facets used are:

- **Moxie:** For courage, competitiveness, or getting up in someone's face.
- **Focus:** For careful attention or the ability to shut out distractions.
- **Craft:** For cunning, trickery or dealing with complicated concepts.
- **Grace:** For smoothly navigating a hazardous situation, whether physically or socially.
- **Shine:** For anything that involves pure, dumb luck.

When picking a Facet, your choice has to make *some* sense, but you can probably justify using your best Facet in most situations. This is totally okay; if you want to use Moxie in a situation that really calls for careful tact just because it has the best score, go for it!

2. Gather Up Your Dice

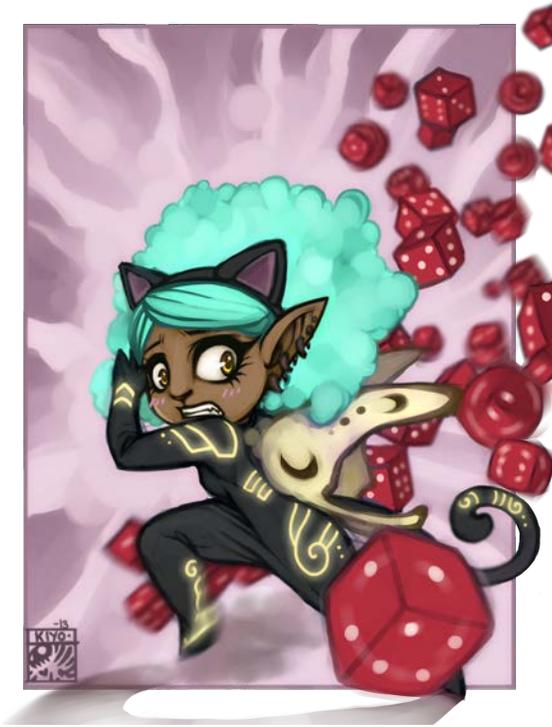
So how many dice should you roll? Start with one die; for every **Quirk** that applies to your action, you get an extra one. You can also spend a point of Magic for an extra die at this stage.

Quirks are skills, traits, or circumstances that might help or hinder a roll. You have a couple of Quirks on your character sheet based on your character's personality. Your Costume has more Quirks on it, based on what that Costume is good at. Your current Location may also offer helpful Quirks. You can even sometimes borrow other characters' Quirks to help out!

Generally, a Quirk must help in order for to grant bonus dice, but this is more of a guideline than a hard rule. Especially for personality Quirks, simply working them into the description of your action will usually be enough to claim a die from it.



The only restriction is that you can't use more than one Quirk from the same "source". Your personal Quirks count as one source, as do Costumes, current Location, and even your friends' Quirks, if they can find a way to help. You can roll five dice at most.



3. Roll and Determine Your Result

Once you've picked your Facet and rolled your dice, discard any that show a value *greater than* your Facet. Set the 6s aside – you'll need these in a minute. If you have any dice left, you succeed. If not, you fail.

Each roll also produces a Result. On a failed test, your Result is always 0, while on a successful test, it's equal to the value of the highest remaining die. (i.e., the highest roll that's less than or equal to your Facet.) This number indicates how well you did, though in contests it also breaks ties.

In short, it's a bit like blackjack: you're looking for the highest die that doesn't "bust" by going over your Facet.

4. Apply Effects

Decide on the outcome of your test. For most tests, the GM will simply describe what happens: a positive outcome if the test succeeded, and a negative one if the test failed. There may also be effects in terms of Stress or Temporary Quirks (to your target if you succeeded or to you if you failed).

Finally, if you rolled any 6s in step 3, collect one Magic token for each 6 rolled. That's good! However, the GM also gets to add one Trouble Die to the Trouble Pool for each 6 that you rolled. That's bad. See the GM rules section for more details on Trouble Dice.

Participating In Contests

Sometimes, two or more characters end up rolling dice at the same time. They might be fighting each other, competing for the same prize, or they might simply be trying to accomplish mutually exclusive things. When this happens, it's called a **contest**.

Contests are similar to regular tests, with a few basic changes:

- You can claim a die from an opponent's Quirk, if it helps you more than it helps her. You have to know about her Quirks in order to do this, but you're allowed to make reasonable guesses.
- Everybody has to decide on what they're doing before any Facets are revealed and before any dice pools are gathered up.

Proceed as you would for a test. If multiple participants get successful rolls, use your Results to break ties: the highest Result wins. If there's *still* a tie, then everybody loses!

All losing participants in the contest suffer Stress equal to the winner's Result. This is not optional, and the winner cannot choose to forego causing this Stress. Some Powers might modify the amount. In the event of a tie, everyone takes Stress equal to the tied Result, and the GM decides what happens.

Edge

In some contests, participants may have an advantage called **edge**. Edge usually comes from Powers, though other situations – like a tiny fairy trying to arm-wrestle a human – can confer edge as well.

Edge is expressed as a number, like +1 or +3. When you have edge in a contest, add it to your Result *only* for the purpose of determining who wins. It doesn't affect your Result for any other purpose, like causing Stress. Edge also doesn't modify a Result of 0: failure is always failure.

Scuffles

A **scuffle** is a contest that represents a physical fight. There are no special rules for scuffles – they play out like any other contest. However, they're set apart because some Powers apply specifically to scuffles.

Surprise Attacks

If you get the drop on your opponent in a contest, she doesn't even get to roll, and receives an automatic Result of 0. This is usually a matter of GM judgment, though Powers can allow or prevent surprise attacks in specific situations.

Contests and Persuasion

It's possible to use a contest to persuade another character of something. Some games don't allow you to influence the actions of other PCs, but in *Costume Fairy Adventures* it's both permitted and expected. Fairies are inconstant and easily confused at the best of times; being talked into doing something deeply unwise is just part of the fun!

Keep in mind when using contests for persuasion:

- It's always up to you how you roleplay being persuaded. You can go along with it reluctantly, indifferently, or with entirely too much enthusiasm.
- If you try to persuade someone and lose the contest, they get to persuade you right back! (i.e., with Stress or Temporary Quirks)

Stress, Magic and Temporary Quirks

Up until now, we've talked about traits that mostly stay the same over the course of the game: Facets and Quirks. Some traits change frequently, usually as a result of tests and contests.



Stress and Stressing Out

Stress represents how much physical, mental and emotional strain you're carrying around. The more Stress you have, the closer you are to snapping. When your current Stress exceeds your **Stress Limit**, as recorded on your character sheet, you **Stress Out**.

Stress is usually suffered as a result of tests and contests. If you fail a test, the GM may assign Stress, depending on what you were trying to do. If you lose a contest, you take Stress equal to the winner's Result.

Stressing Out removes you from play for a little while. In game terms, this is equivalent to an enforced Break (see below). You might faint, storm off in a huff, or just sit down and cry. If nothing else springs to mind, you can always explode in a cloud of glitter; fairies are unstable in more ways than one! You also have to discard whatever Costume you were wearing when you Stressed Out.

Don't worry! You'll get better as soon as you get bored with not existing.

Stress is recovered in two major ways. First, when you come back from Stressing Out, your current Stress is reduced to zero. Secondly, if you eat something – at least equivalent to a full meal for a human – you recover 1d6 Stress. In spite of their size, fairies are prodigious eaters: you can eat a full meal quickly enough that only one roll is allowed to try and stop you! Some Powers may also allow you to recover Stress.

Magic and Magic Tokens

Magic is the chaos-fuelled enchantment of the fae. It's measured in points, which are in turn represented with **Magic tokens**.

You start each game with five Magic tokens. Each time you roll a 6 on a test or contest, you receive another token (and the GM receives a Trouble Die). Some Powers offer other ways to gain Magic, as do the GM rules.

There are four common ways to spend Magic:

- Spending one Magic per roll gives you an extra die.
- To activate some Powers.
- To perform a Quick Change.
- To engage in Wishful Thinking.

See relevant sections for more details.

If you're using small candies, whenever you spend Magic, you get to eat the token! This will help you get into the proper mindset for fairy magic.



Temporary Quirks

Some Quirks are picked up during the game. You'll typically gain them as a result of failed tests or contests, while winning a contest may allow you to impose a Temporary Quirk of your own. Some actions may result in automatic Temporary Quirks, without any rolls being involved.

Temporary Quirks can represent just about anything. Being thrown into a lake might give you the Temporary Quirk "Cold and Wet", while getting into the innkeeper's special stash will probably make you "Tipsy".

Temporary Quirks go away in whatever timeframe makes the most sense for that particular Quirk. “Cold and Wet” obviously requires you to dry out. If no other remedy suggests itself, a Temporary Quirk goes away after your next Break.

Otherwise, Temporary Quirks work exactly the same as regular Quirks. You can even claim dice from them, if you can figure out how to make them work in your favour.

Breaks and Intermissions

Costume Fairy Adventures doesn’t have a framework of turns or scenes, but it does have a couple of timekeeping rules: Breaks and Intermissions.

A **Break** is any time that your character is “off camera” for a little while. Some actions or special rules only occur while on a Break. Formally, a Break is five minutes long; in practice, it’s however long it takes you to refresh your snacks, hit the bathroom, or just stretch your legs a little. If you’re on an enforced Break, usually because you Stressed Out, you may as well take the opportunity to do any or all of the above.

If you haven’t done anything in play in a while, you can declare that you were on a Break retroactively. Maybe your character wandered off when no-one was looking?

If you’re playing online, the length of a Break is measured in posts rather than minutes. The exact number of posts will depend on the pace of your game; we recommend five to start with.

An **Intermission** is when everyone is on a Break at the same time. This usually can’t happen unless the GM calls for one. If the GM time skips or elides how you got from one Location to the next, that’s an Intermission, as is a mid-session break.

Powers

Powers are special rules-based tricks that only you can perform. Every character has a couple of basic Powers, and you’ll get more from your current Costume.

There are several special icons that appear in Power descriptions. Their meanings are as follows:

-  This represents Stress. “Recover” or “restore” means to reduce the target’s Stress by the stated amount, while “suffer” or “inflict” means to increase it. If there’s a plus or minus sign, that means to adjust the Stress recovered or inflicted by some other effect.
-  This represents Magic. “Spend” means that the Power costs Magic to use, while “gain” means that the Power yields Magic tokens when activated. If the icon is not accompanied by a number, it means one Magic token.
-  This represents Trouble. Activating the Power gives the GM more Trouble Dice. If there’s a plus or minus sign, adjust the amount of Trouble produced by some other effect.

Costumes

By putting on a **Costume**, a fairy gains skills and Powers that reflect the role that Costume represents. If you put on greasy overalls and a pair of goggles, you’ll suddenly know how to fix mechanical devices! If you change your Costume, this knowledge goes away. You can remember having once had it, and maybe fake your way through if you really have to, but it’s no longer in your nature.

Choosing Costumes

At the start of the game, draw three cards from the Costume Deck. Discard and redraw any, all or none of them; if you do, you have to stick with whatever comes up in the second draw.

If you're playing online or otherwise don't have a physical Costume Deck handy, the Costume cards are numbered. Just roll d66 (i.e., roll two differently-coloured d6s, designating one as the "tens" place and one as the "ones" place) and look up the appropriately numbered card. Re-roll if you get a Costume that someone is already wearing.

Once settled on your Costume, pick one that you'll be wearing when the game begins.

Discarding and Redrawing

Sometimes you'll be instructed to discard a Costume. You don't get to draw a new one though, at least, not right away.

If you ever end up with more than three Costumes, immediately discard back down to three. You can't discard your current Costume unless you're in a situation where you'd normally be allowed to change Costumes. Quick Changes (see below) can occur whilst drawing a new Costume in order to get around this limitation. Wait and see what Costume you've drawn before deciding whether you want to change into it.

Scrounging

The most common way to obtain a new Costume during play is by **scrounging**. Tell the GM that you want to search for a new Costume, and make a roll against your chosen Facet. This will usually be a test unless there's an NPC around to interfere.

If your roll succeeds, draw a new Costume from the Costume Deck, and discard as required. You can explain how you found the Costume if you wish, but it's not required – especially if you get a Costume that doesn't make much sense. (A space suit in an enchanted forest, for example?) Failing a scrounging roll has the usual consequences.

You can also scrounge while on a Break. No roll is required in this case.



Changing Costumes During Play

There are three ways to change Costumes in the middle of a game:

- While on a Break, you can change to any Costume you possess. This can be combined with a scrounging roll to swap out your current Costume.
- At any other time, you can pay one point of Magic to perform a Quick Change. This lets you change into any Costume you possess, even if you're being watched or restrained. As above, this can be combined with a scrounging roll to swap out your current Costume.
- When you return to play after Stressing Out, you can choose any Costume still in your possession to wear.

Costume Effects

Wearing a Costume gives you new Quirks and Powers to play with. Costume Powers work just like other Powers, but always take precedence over Powers from any other source.

Normally, a Costume's Quirks and Powers are available only while you're wearing it. Some Costumes have Powers that take effect simply from having them. The description will state whether this is the case.

Wishful Thinking

Wishful Thinking is the highest expression of fairy magic: the ability to make stuff happen just by wishing for it really hard. This isn't a conscious power and it comes with some fairly strict limitations, but it's still amazingly powerful. It's a good thing the vast majority of fairies don't realise what they doing – they could be dangerous if they ever got a handle on it!

Indulging in Wishful Thinking

Wishful Thinking involves the following steps:

- Say what you want to happen. This must be stated in character, in a form like "I sure hope that...", or "it would be really handy if...".
- Spend three points of Magic.
- Test your highest Facet. You can spend an additional Magic to add a die to this roll, and any applicable Quirks add dice as usual.

The Effects of Wishful Thinking

If the test succeeds, whatever you wanted to happen happens, within reason. The result has to be something that could at least conceivably be the result of pure, dumb luck, but other than that, there are few limits. Describe the outcome, subject to the GM's veto.

If the test fails, the GM gets to describe the outcome. It must be at least somewhat related to whatever you asked for. The GM is encouraged to be fiendishly inventive!

The Limits of Wishful Thinking

In addition to the previous guidelines, Wishful Thinking can't be used inflict Stress, control the actions of another character, or remove someone from play. Also, anyone who objects to your Wishful Thinking can test an appropriate Facet to resist the effect (for herself only). This is a test, not a contest, so she doesn't need to beat your test result.

Costume Powers can relax these limitations. Some Powers allow blatantly supernatural effects as long as your Wishful Thinking sticks to a particular theme. Some Powers also offer a Magic discount when indulging in appropriate Wishful Thinking.

Rules For GMs

It's the GM's job to describe the people and locations that the PCs meet, determine the outcomes of PC actions, and to take on the roles of non-player characters (NPCs). The GM also reveals and judges the PCs' success at achieving Shenanigans, and keeps track of the resulting Mischief Motes (see below).

Setting Up the Game

It's the GM's job to make sure everyone has:

- Selected a character.
- Selected three Costumes (redrawing any if necessary).
- Five points of Magic (plus Magic tokens if you're using them). If your Magic Tokens happen to be edible, it's also the GM's job to remind everyone not to snack on them during the game. (But it's not her fault if you forget!)

Non-Player Characters

The GM takes on the roles of any **NPCs** encountered. NPCs work like PCs, with a few major differences:

- NPCs usually have only one or two Facets, reflecting their role in the game. A brash, aggressive NPC might only have a Moxie rating, for example. NPCs never voluntarily take actions involving Facets they don't have, and automatically fail with a Result of 0 if forced to do so.
- NPCs can have up to three Quirks. These can reflect skills, reputations or unusual physical features as well as personality traits. Unlike fairy PCs, NPCs don't have separate personal and Costume Quirks, so they can only claim dice from one Quirk per roll.
- NPCs don't have Magic pools. The GM can spend Trouble on an NPC's behalf to do anything that would cost Magic for a PC, such as adding a die to a roll, or paying the activation cost for a Power.
- NPCs cannot use Wishful Thinking. However, some NPC Powers give the GM additional options when invoking a Disaster (see below). These Powers have the normal cost for invoking a Disaster, and take effect in lieu of a normal Disaster roll. They have the "Disaster" keyword in their descriptions.
- NPCs can have Stress Limits as low as 0. Most NPCs don't blow up like fairies do when they Stress Out. It just means that they can no longer make rolls to oppose your mischief.



Activating NPCs

Some NPCs – particularly hostile or troublesome ones – can be “activated” by the GM by paying Trouble Dice. This causes them to immediately show up, no matter how improbable their presence is. If an NPC

appears as the result of a Disaster roll, the GM doesn't have to pay twice. Their Trouble cost is covered by the Trouble spent to invoke the Disaster in the first place.

Hazards

A **Hazard** is an element or obstacle that the GM has chosen to handle as though it were an NPC. Hazards follow the same rules as NPCs, save that they always have exactly one Facet; a thunderstorm might have Moxie because it's big and loud, for example.

Hazards suffer Stress normally from contests. This doesn't necessarily mean you're "damaging" it in any way – it's just a pacing mechanism to help keep track of how long the Hazard sticks around. A thunderstorm might have a Stress Limit of 10, which means that after the PCs accumulate a Result of 10 while avoiding or dealing with it, the storm breaks.

Locations

A **Location** is simply a place you can be: a forest clearing, a village square, or a bustling tavern.

Locations typically only have Quirks, though some have Powers too. PCs and NPCs have access to a Location's Quirks while present there. Unless otherwise noted, only the GM can activate a Location's Powers. Disaster Powers and Powers that affect scrounging are common for Locations.

Trouble

Fairies live and breathe chaos. Not big, Earth-shaking chaos (not usually, anyway), but they make the world a less tidy place just by being around. In game terms, this is represented by the **Trouble Pool**. The Trouble Pool grows over time, and the GM spends Trouble Dice to complicate the fairies' lives.

Starting Trouble

Trouble starts equal to the number of players, including the GM. For example, three players plus one GM equals four Trouble Dice.

Gaining Trouble Dice

Whenever a player rolls a 6 on a test or contest the Trouble Pool gains a die. Multiple 6s mean more Trouble!

Rolls made by NPCs don't grow the Trouble Pool. However, some NPCs might have Powers that allow them to add Trouble in other ways.

Spending Trouble Dice

When the GM spends Trouble Dice, things go badly for the players. The GM has the following options.

- **Invoke Quirk (1 die):** Any time you make a roll, the GM can spend a Trouble Die to turn a Quirk against you. This might be a Quirk of your current Location, though merciless GMs might turn personal Quirks against you as well. This reduces the number of dice you roll by one. If you're reduced to zero dice in this way, you automatically fail with a Result of 0. There's no specific rule against the GM invoking a Quirk that you're already using for bonus dice, but it usually won't make sense to do so.
- **Add a Die (1 die):** The GM can spend a Trouble Die to add a die to an NPC or Hazard's roll in a contest.



- **Activate NPC or Hazard (1+ dice):** The GM can spend an NPC or Hazard’s Trouble cost to immediately bring it into play.
- **Trigger Disaster (3 dice):** The GM can spend three Trouble to roll on a Playset’s Disaster Table. Some NPCs or Locations may have Powers that offer the GM options in lieu of a Disaster roll.

Why Trouble Dice?

The purpose of the Trouble Pool isn’t to impose limitations upon the GM. It actually plays two related roles. The first is primarily psychological: the players can see Trouble Dice piling up, and they know that those dice are going to be used to make something horrible happen sooner or later. It’s a mechanism for building tension. When large numbers of Trouble Dice are spent, it means bad news, but it’s also a relief for the fairies. In online games, the GM should frequently announce the current size of the Trouble Pool in order to maintain this tension.

Secondly, the Trouble Pool can be thought of as a license to railroad. The Trouble Pool smooths over any potential recriminations for something ridiculous or unfair happening by giving the GM a currency with which to “buy” permission to blow things up for no reason. The GM should practice her best evil smirk for the occasion.

Shenanigans

Fairies have an innate sense for how to cause the most chaos in any given situation and for most it’s both an unconscious and intuitive thing. There’s a little voice in the back of their heads whispering: “Hey... you

know what would be *awesome*?” And that voice is almost never wrong. **Shenanigans** are the in-game representation of this sense.

Detecting Mischief

Most Shenanigans are attached to Locations and NPCs. In order to detect them, you have to interact with the Location or NPC in question. For Locations, this usually means poking around and looking for trouble. For NPCs you have to at least talk to them.

These Shenanigans are revealed after you’ve made at least one roll involving that Location or NPC. It doesn’t matter whether this roll succeeds or fails.

The demo Playset has a set of printable Shenanigan cards for each NPC and Location. When you’ve discovered a set of Shenanigans, the GM will reveal that card (or announce its contents, in online play).

Shenanigans In Play

Each Shenanigan has an objective: this might be a goal to achieve, a particular action to perform, or even something to avoid. When you reach this objective, you receive points called Mischief Motes.

Typical Shenanigans are worth 1–10 Mischief Motes (5 being average). Some Shenanigans award all their Motes at once, while others yield Motes every time you perform a particular action, up to a set maximum.

Achieving Shenanigans

When the GM thinks a Shenanigan has been achieved, it’s done. The GM is encouraged to be open to creative solutions and clever twists of wording.

In general, a five-Mote Shenanigan requires two or three successful rolls or just one successful use of Wishful Thinking.

A ten-Mote Shenanigan should take four or five successful rolls; the GM should try to arrange things so that every player gets a chance to contribute. Alternatively, two successful uses of Wishful Thinking should be enough to sort out a ten-Mote Shenanigan, or a single use of Wishful Thinking supported by two or three other successful rolls.

Core Shenanigans

When a Playset has a built-in “adventure”, this is reflected by **Core Shenanigans**, which start already revealed. Core Shenanigans are worth 5–15 Mischief Motes (10 being average).

In our sample playset, the Core Shenanigans have a tiered structure, with each “layer” automatically being unlocked once the previous set is dealt with. They have a branching structure, like a Choose Your Own Adventure novel, in order to account for the possibility (i.e., certainty) that you’ll blow up something important along the way.

Mischief Motes

Mischief Motes are a game-rules representation of the ruckus you’ve caused. The fourth wall being what it is, you might refer to them in-game, or even pull one out of your pocket, but they’re really a rules abstraction, and can’t be directly interacted with by rolls or Powers.

In addition to serving as a means of keeping score, Mischief Motes trigger special effects as they’re accumulated. One effect is to award bonus Magic: for every ten Mischief Motes accumulated, everyone gains one Magic token. Each Playset will specify other effects to be triggered at particular totals; see the sample Playset for details.