

NIGHTMARE TALES

In Nightmare Tales, each player is a kid who has just gone to bed. The lights go out, and the darkness comes, with its terrors and unsettling sounds. Brave and determined to overcome their fears, the children look under their beds, ready to fight any nightmare or monster. But, with the Break of Dawn, only one of them will be the Bravest.

Setup

Shuffle the deck and deal four cards facedown in front of each player. These are the players' cards. The cards must be placed in a line, and players can't change their order or position during the game. Each player looks at one of their cards, memorizes it, and puts it back where it was. The first player is the most scared player from the previous game or is picked at random. Players take turns clockwise.

Once the game begins, players can't look at cards unless an effect allows them to.



Fears and Allies

Every card in Nightmare Tales represents either a monster, a fear, or an ally against the darkness. Each card has a **name** (1) on the top of the card, and a **fear** (2) level, represented by the number in the top-right corner.

Some cards may also have an **effect** (3).

The aim of each player is to end the game with the lowest total Fear score.



A SIMPLER GAME

If you or your friends are playing Nightmare Tales for the first time, and you'd like a simpler game, remove from the deck all cards with fear 10 or higher and all the beta cards you may own. If instead you just want to play a faster game, start with three cards instead of four.

The Turn

During their turn, a player draws a card, looks at it, then discards a card. A player can discard the card they just drew, or one of their cards. If a facedown card is discarded, the drawn card takes its place, facedown. Discarded cards are placed face up in the discard pile. *Pssst! You can't look at cards while choosing what to discard!*

If the discarded card has an effect, if it has this symbol, the player must use its effect. When a card is discarded, each player may discard one or more cards with the exact same name, if they have them – if they remember where they are! *Pssst! Each player means every player, including who discarded the card!*



Card Effects

If you see this symbol, the card has an effect that **must be used as soon as it's discarded**.

When a player has to choose one or more cards, they can't choose cards from the deck or the discard pile, unless specified in the effect. Each effect in the game of Nightmare Tales uses one or more of the following **keywords**:

LOOK

look at the card, **without showing** it to the other players, then put it back where it was. Take your time to memorize it.

SHUFFLE

shuffle the target cards, then put them randomly back in their **original positions**.

PENALTY



take the first card of the deck and add it to your cards, on the right end of your line, **without looking** at it.

REVEAL

turn the card face-up, so everyone can see it, then put it back where it was, **facedown**. Give all the players enough time to look at it.

HIDE

put the card on the **bottom** of the deck, then replace it with the top card of the deck. *Pssst! Don't look at them unless it's specified by the card!*

SWAP

when two cards are swapped, exchange their positions. *Pssst! Don't look at them unless it's specified by the card!*

UNCOVER

Turn the card face-up and leave it **uncovered** until it is in play. Turn it facedown again if it goes back into the deck or is shuffled.

You can look at uncovered cards. You can't Uncover or Reveal a face-up card. If you shuffle a face-up card, turn it facedown before shuffling.



*Pssst! Some cards, like the Boogeyman, are special and their effect triggers as soon as someone **reveals** them or **uncovers** them! That's why they have an eye icon!*

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The Break of Dawn and the End of the Game

The Break of Dawn declares the end of the game. All players reveal their cards and add up all the Fear levels on them. The player with the lowest total score is the winner. In case of a tie, the player with the most cards wins. If it's still a tie, the player with the card of the highest Fear loses. If it's still a tie, the game ends in a draw. Dawn can arrive in three different ways:

- If there are **no more cards in the deck**, Dawn comes suddenly, closing the game.
- If a player has **zero cards left** at the end of any turn, they've defeated all their fears. Dawn comes, and the player wins
- At the beginning of their turn, **before drawing a card**, a player can knock twice on the deck while saying "knock knock!". This gesture triggers the last round of the game. The other players can't knock anymore. The player who knocked **ends their turn, without drawing or discarding any card**. The round goes on until **every player has played one last turn**. Then, Dawn comes.
No player can knock before everyone has played at least one turn.



PENALTIES

A player receives a penalty if they **break the rules**. Specifically:



When someone looks at a card when they can't.
The card has already been seen, but the player suffers a penalty.



When someone discards a card in a moment they're not allowed to, or a card they were not allowed to discard.
*The player **returns** the wrongly discarded card to its place, then suffers a penalty.*



When someone is targeted by an effect that inflicts a penalty.
The targeted player suffers a penalty. Yeah, it's not a nice feeling.

If they receive a penalty while the deck is empty, the card is randomly taken from the discard pile.



Each Player...

Some effects require all players to perform a certain action, such as revealing cards.

In this case, the active player performs the action first, followed by the others in turn order.

If the effect says "**Each player...**", the active player participates first.

If the effect says "**Each other player...**", the active player does not participate.

If the effect says "**Each player starting with the next...**", the active player will be the last to perform the action.

All consequences of an action must be resolved before moving on to the next one.

**TIRED OF READING?
THEN STOP AND START PLAYING!**



Visit the website www.mezzocieloandfriends.com/nightmaretales-more

to discover new scenarios, optional rules and many different ways to play Nightmare Tales!

NIGHTMARE TALES is a game by Mezzocielo&Friends, written by Roberto Barrile, illustrated (and discussed) by Marco Moni and Ralf Joshua Trillana. We want to thank: Enrico Santini, for all the inspiration, the advice, the wild testing and the tireless help; Olivia Pagliarosi, for the moral support, the revision of the English cards and rules and for all the countless games; Gabriele Bitterman, for the unique support in bringing this game from our world to all your worlds; LPR (Riccardo, Prugna, Ivano, Il Grande), for the games, the support, the analysis and the laughter. Our first players: Alex and Luca, Marty and Andrea, Alessio and Alice, Andrea Vella, Niele, Spartaco and Tiziano, Mike and Troilo, Danilo, Marco and Martina, Michele and Claudia, Anna Amelie and Sara De Santis, Bally, Giulietta, Leonardo, Gabri, Matilde, Ari and Glogo, Vero and Fede, Giulia and David, Gianna and Gianni, Daniela and Nino.

Pssst! We're still reviewing the English version of the rulebook, so please be kind if you find a mistake

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