

Lanterns Light

A Survival Horror Board Game

Gameplay Walkthrough

Lanterns Light is a survival-horror-inspired board game that challenges up to four players and a game master to escape a mysterious mansion filled with monstrous threats. Players have a **lantern**, which acts as their only light source, and their health system. Throughout the mansion, players will find weapons and consumables to aid survival. There is a series of **key items** that unlock further progress towards escape. Solving the mansion's various **puzzles** will unlock the final encounter and the end of the game. During the game, players will have to manage their character's fear as it builds with each enemy encounter.

Character Creation:

At the start of the game, players will use their character sheet to create their player character. There are four archetypes to choose from: "Goth, Jock, Cheerleader, and Nerd." The archetypes have no gameplay benefits and are more for flavour for the player. Players will customise their character by picking their phobia and positive and negative perks. The GM will ask the players to roll initiative on a D20, which determines the order of play. The GM will then choose where to spawn each player on the first-floor map; they may spawn a player in a room with a key item.

Player introduction:

Coughing up dust, you awaken in a pitch black room. Your only light source is an oil lantern with an ethereal blue flame. You grab the lantern, overcome by a feeling of warmth throughout your being. The room illuminates, revealing a message carved into the wall.

"Choose your instrument."

Below the message sits a wooden chest; curiosity strikes you as you open it. Inside are three items that would make useful weapons. As you pick one of them up, the other two crumble to dust. You take the weapon with you as you exit the room. The corridor lacks any source of light, save for the one you carry, and dust cakes the air like mist. Ever since you picked the lantern up, a metamorphosis has occurred. This is no mere object; it is an extension of your very being. It is a part of you; the light is your life.

The lantern:

The lantern grants a sightline of 15ft. It is the player's light source and their health. Players have four hit points (hp) before they are downed. A down player will lose their lantern's blue flame and be out of action. There are two items which can restore the player's health. The **oil can** restore two hit points to a damaged player. If the player is down, then another player can

use the **lighter** to relight their flame. The player will revive with one hit point, alive but at risk.

Combat mechanics:

Throughout the mansion's corridors and rooms, a series of enemies will be encountered by the player. This is determined by the GM, who must roll a D8 to determine what enemy type will spawn. A D4 roll will determine the number of that enemy type in that area. The enemy will see the player within ten feet, and the player can attack the creature while undetected. When the enemy becomes aware of the player, a combat encounter begins. The GM will ask for an initiative roll. Players can use guns or melee weapons to engage.

Melee weapons operate on a rock-paper-scissors combat system. The GM controls the enemy NPC. A successful hit (i.e. rock vs scissors) removes one hp from the enemy. A failed hit (i.e., rock vs. paper) lets the enemy free-counterattack for 1 hp of damage to the player. A paper attack is a grapple or push motion.

Firearms operate on a heads-or-tails system. With any gun, the player can fire at the enemy by having the GM flip a coin. If the player calls the right side, they will successfully hit the target, dealing two damage. The player can roll for a critical hit with a D4.

Combat Encounter:

The blue flame guides the Goth forward until the light catches a grotesque humanoid figure before them. As you step closer, it turns to stare at them, a hideous creature resembling two humans fused, complete with two arms and two heads, covered in a membrane of plastic-like skin.

It lumbers towards them, its two faces pressed against its fleshy skin sac prison. Its hands reach for them.

The Goth grips their steel pipe tightly and swings at the moaning beast with a yell. The attack goes wide, and the creature counters with its claws. Goth's flame flickers and dims at the hit, and they yell in pain. The creature goes for another attack and misses. Goth swings their pipe, battering the beast and drawing blood from it.

Fears and Phobias:

Fear is a status for players to manage besides their HP. Upon encountering an enemy, the player will receive two fear points. Out of encounters, the player can use items like cigarettes, alcohol and soft toys to reduce their fear by two. Phobias affect the amount of fear the player gains during enemy encounters by five points. Should a player reach ten fear, they will be forced to use a health point to reduce their fear by five.

Players enter the game with a **phobia** determined by a D6 roll. 6 phobias in total activate under certain conditions. Chirophobia raises fear by five when they encounter a "Grabber",

aphenphosmophobia adds five fear to a player grappled by an enemy paper attack and thantophobia adds five fear when they see an ally downed (see player sheet).

Revealed in the light, the Skulker clings to the ceiling above them. Its tentacled maw tastes the air, and a vile retching noise escapes it. It spews a viscous substance at the Nerd, which coats them. The fluid burns the Nerd; they scream and try to wipe it off to no avail. Their lantern is snuffed out, and they fall to the ground immobile.

Jock raises their rifle at the beast and struggles to steady it. The sight of the Nerd lying there causes them to hyperventilate. The Jock finds the inner strength to get a shot off at the beast. The round penetrates its flesh, making the thing writhe in pain. The Jock pulls back the bolt of the rifle to chamber another round. The Skulker spews at them and barely misses its mark. The Jock returns fire, dropping the beast to the floor hard.

Observation Checks:

Players can make observation checks. These checks can be performed outside of combat. When a player is exploring the room of a mansion, they can roll a D20 to search for items, clues, or signs of the enemy. Rolling a 12 lets the player find two items, and a nat 20 lets them find three. The GM controls what weapons or items the player will receive by rolling a D100 and referring to an item's table. When an enemy is out of sight range, a player can perform a check to look for signs of an enemy nearby. These include scratches on the wall, slime and sounds.

Consumable Items:

A series of items will be encountered that have a certain number of uses. Using these items outside of combat will reduce a player's fear by two points. Consumable items include chocolate, soft toys, cigarettes and alcohol. Players will also find ammo boxes, which hold 2 shots for every firearm type.

Enemy Types:

Three main enemy types will appear throughout the mansion: **Shedders**, **Skulkers** and **Grabbers**. The GM will roll a D8 to spawn an enemy; they can appear in numbers based on the GM's D4 roll. Shedders are two beings fused and trapped inside a membrane of skin that they can never remove. Skulkers are four-legged creatures that can climb up walls and hang from ceilings and spew a dangerous substance at their victims. Grabbers are a swarm of reanimated severed hands that act as one. They will steal the player's light and try to run away with it.

Puzzles and key items:

The mansion contains puzzles and items that players need to progress. The locations of these items are detailed on the GM maps using a “Legend” to tell you what each symbol on the map is. The items and puzzles the players will find are detailed below.

Puzzle Locations:

The Library (1st Floor): Painting Puzzle

Three paintings exist in the library, hung on a wall. One depicts a man and his younger son, one of a man with his son, now older, in a military uniform, and one of a war-torn countryside. They are arranged on the wall out of order. The players must rearrange them for a schematic to drop from a compartment of one of the paintings. It is a schematic of the lever system which opens and closes the trapdoor in the main hall.

Trophy room (2nd Floor, West Wing): There is a lever inside a lock

A series of animal trophies adorns the walls of the trophy room. Three of them have key features that, when noticed, will reveal the code to unlock a cage in that room. Inside the cage is a pull lever that partly unlocks the trapdoor in the main hall.

Statue Room (2nd Floor East Wing): One of these statues in this room is a Griffin with a metal handle in its mouth/ The statue also has an indent where a hexagonal metal plate can be inserted. Inserting the plate opens the statue’s mouth, which drops the lever handle. In the centre of the room is a mechanism where the lever can be inserted. Pulling the completed lever partly opens the Trapdoor

If both levers are pulled, the trapdoor in the main hall will be open.

The Boss Encounter:

At the end of the game, the players unlock a trapdoor in the main hall by pulling two levers on opposite sides of the second floor. The players descend ladders into the boss encounter

arena, which resembles a concrete war bunker. The floor is covered in thick mud and crates of supplies. Barbed wire and sandbags adorn the room. The players spot five bodies of wriggling, fleshy humanoid figures wearing the remnants of soldiers' uniforms. When the light of the player's lantern touches them, the creatures wail in pain. This awakens the slumbering boss enemy, kneeling in the centre of the room. The hatch above the players' locks. The boss will attack the players who are near the figures lying in the mud

Known only by its officer's rank, "**Oberst**", the hulking humanoid figure wears an officer's jacket, a military hat and a gas mask over its face. The creature's stomach is a giant, toothed maw that will eat the players' lanterns on the turn after it grabs the player. Enraged by the players hurting the figures in the mud it protects, Oberst will charge at a player near one of its allies. Players will discover they cannot damage the boss with firearms or melee attacks. The rock-paper-scissors combat system will only stun the boss and release an ally from its paper attack (which grabs the player). Gun attacks will also release allies from their grip. The GM will choose the boss's attacks at their discretion. Scissors and rock are punch attacks.

When a player is near one of the boss's allies, the light will hurt it and aggravate the boss, causing it to focus its attacks on that player. This allows the other players to choose to attack the boss's allies, which only have 1 HP. Killing all five creatures will cause the boss to "lose heart" and drop to its knees, dormant. It will no longer attack the players. Defeating Oberst causes a painting on the far side of the arena to materialise a picture of the gardens outside the mansion. The players can pass through this magic painting to leave the arena and end the game.