

Orc Lawyers

A Role-Playing Game of Improvisation and Legal Mayhem For 3-5 players.

Long after humanity comes to an end due to nuclear annihilation, ORCS take over the planet. Very little of the civilisation that came before has been recovered, and Orc “Scholars” can make sense of little sense of what has. It hasn’t stopped them trying, though, as the best-preserved literature from the age of man, and the ones they obsess over the most, are CASE LAW HANDBOOKS.

The equipment you will need for this game:

- A 52-card deck of playing cards.
- Notepad/ paper
- Table or playing surface
- Law degree (Optional).

Overview

In this game, 3-5 players take the position of a legal “professional” in the Orc world, and over several stages, will develop, negotiate, and argue their perspectives on a legal case. They will use cards from a regular deck of 52 to add new details through evidence and witnesses, as well as modify the already standing evidence to change the narrative to their client’s favour. There is a competitive aspect to this game, but it is important that while also doing their best to argue their case, some room is added for pure silliness, as that is the intended heart of this game and where the most fun can be had!

Player Roles and Teams

There are a small handful of roles players can take up in this game: The chief of which is the JUDGE (The Game Master), and the remaining players are divided between the DEFENCE and PROSECUTION. You can use whatever method you like to split up the players (player choice, spin wheel, etc.), but ensure the teams are no more than two players, and that there is only one judge. If you are playing with more than one player on a team, they must designate one of the players as the LEAD COUNCIL of their team.

Cards and Their Purpose

This game uses playing cards to represent characters and effects that build the story of the case. Some of these will be straightforward, but many will be outright absurd. A card you play may represent a witness that blows the case wide open, the next? The opposition may play a card that causes the witness’s pants to spontaneously combust. Their testimony can hardly be trusted after that, can it?

When a witness is played, give them a name and say a little about them.

On pages 3 to 5 of the rules, you will find the LEGAL TABLES that will list all of the different cards available

The Golden Rule, Sidebars

The most important rule of Orc Law is that the law is sometimes vague, with grey areas that can be interpreted in different ways. If a rule or card is invoked, and the way that this should take effect is in dispute, a player can request a “sidebar” where both sides get a chance to argue how they believe the rule or effect should apply. After both sides have spoken their piece, the judge makes a final decision as to which interpretation should take effect.

Table Setup

The setup for this game is incredibly simple: Shuffle a 52-card deck and place it in the centre of the table.

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The Stages Of Trial (How to Play)

Trial round process

This game is played through acts comprised of trial round sessions and discussion. The trial rounds work as such:

For legal teams comprised of one player, the process is simple. They draw three cards and choose one to play, explaining the effect the card has or what evidence or witness has been brought to trial.

For legal teams comprised of more than one player, the lowest ranking member of the team draws some cards equal to the number of players on their team plus one, and chooses one card to discard before passing them to the next lowest ranked player, who also chooses one card to discard before passing them on. Once the cards reach the lead council, they choose a card to play and describe its effects.

In each stage of the trial, the prosecution will always take its turn before the defence. Once both teams have placed a card, the round is over.

Defendant selection

To begin the game, the Judge will set the scene by creating a fictional crime for the defence and prosecution to argue over. Usually, this is as simple as selecting a fake profession, assigning a wacky name, and selecting a fitting place for the crime to have taken place. The Judge will randomly find a face card from the deck and place it in the centre. This is the Defendant. If you'd like, you can add more detail to the character, but leave most of the work to the cards and the other players; more detail will be added and uncovered through the course of the game.

Opening statements (Act One)

In opening statements, the teams will seek to add their own parts to this current blank slate of a trial. Both teams will undergo a trial round (placing one card each) before being allowed one minute each to speak, laying out a roadmap of how they intend to prove the defendant's guilt/ innocence and how the upcoming evidence will show the true nature of the events.

Witness examination (Act Two)

This stage is comprised of two trial rounds, each separated by a cross-examination of the witnesses by the respective teams, so the order of this act should be: Prosecution trial round, prosecution, defence trial round, prosecution cross-examination, defence cross-examination. This should be repeated twice before moving on to the next act. In this phase, cards collected in the trial round **DO NOT HAVE TO BE PLAYED IMMEDIATELY** and can instead be played **DURING** either team's cross-examination.

While being cross-examined, the characters must be played by a member of the team that played them (with the defendant being played by the defence). You are encouraged to make up stories to defend or explain away the case made against the character, but unless evidence cards back up your claims, your words are classed as hearsay, and the judge will only take them to be as believable as you make them. Once each team has introduced their evidence and witness cards and examined as many of the witnesses as they would like, the game moves on to the final phase.

Closing arguments (Act Three)

In this third and final stage, no more cards are to be played. This is the chance for the prosecution and defence to summarise their cases for/against the defendant, summarising how the evidence does/does not prove their innocence. After both teams have taken their time to speak, the Judge chooses which team they believe presented the best argument and has, in turn, won the game.

Congratulations, the case is finished. You may now hold your head high as a successful lawyer of the orc world.

Effect Cards Table



OBJECTION! THAT WAS A LIE. The piece of evidence that was just presented has been “proven” false. The Judge must consider it untrue. (Your accusation is very convincing).



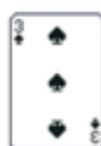
OBJECTION! THAT PERSON'S PANTS ARE ON FIRE. I mean, you can hardly trust them after that, can you?



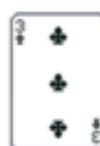
STEALTHY SCOUSER. It is discovered that one of the characters is scouse. From this point onwards, they must speak with a Scouse accent or risk outright mistrust.



MIME MALFUNCTION. One of the character cards can now only communicate in mime.



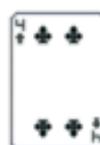
KAREN, MY EX WIFE?! One of the character cards is revealed to be the Judge's ex-wife in disguise... Awkward.



GOLDFISH BRAIN. This character now has short-term memory loss and struggles to remember things they just said.



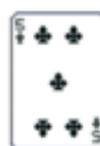
POWER OF FRIENDSHIP. A character has a sudden positive change of heart. The affected witness is handed to the team that played this card.



WORLD'S #1 HATER. A character has a sudden negative change of heart. The affected witness is handed to the team that played this card.



TIPP-EX. The text on an evidence document (digital or physical) suddenly changes to say something else. You can choose what it says now.



JUST BRIBERY. You slip a fresh \$20 bill to a character. Choose ONE thing for them to say in your favour. (cannot be an admission of guilt from the defendant)



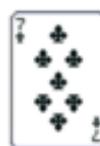
TRICK-E SITUATION. Play this on a character, they can no longer use the letter E while speaking.



REBRAND. Change the name of a character or player. If someone uses their previous name, their team draws one less card next trial round



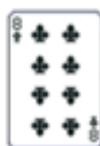
MULLIGAN. Play this card if you don't like your options this trial round. Begin your trial round again, drawing new cards



CAVEMAN BRAIN. Play this on a character, they can no longer use words with more than one Syllable.



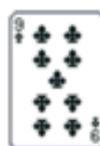
OPPOSITE DAY. Play this on a character, they can now only speak in opposites.



SPONSORED SEGMENT. Play this on a character, they must now end each testimony with “This testimony was brought to you by [Brand of your choice]”



OBJECTION! TO ERR IS HUMAN! If a character giving testimony “errs” or pauses while giving testimony, it is stricken from the record.



OBJECTION! “TEAPOT” If you get a character to respond with “What” after saying their name or a confusing sentence, their testimony is ignored



OBJECTION! NERDDDD. Just repeat what the person said in a nerd voice. They look stupid now, don't they? (Their testimony is ignored)



OBJECTION! WHO CARES? You make a good point. What that person said was irrelevant. Or even if it wasn't, we're going to ignore it anyway.

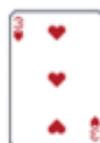
Case Cards Table



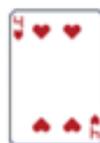
THE SMOKING GUN. This is a piece of evidence that ties the defendant directly to the crime. What is it, and how does it link to the defendant?



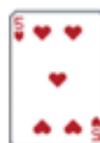
GOOD ACCOUNTING. This is a receipt for something. What is it for? Who paid for it? What does it say about that person?



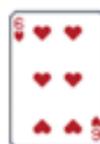
DEAR DIARY. This is a diary written by one of the characters. What does it say about that person? What does that person say about others?



A MAP? This is a map of a location. Does this change someone's testimony? Maybe something doesn't add up.



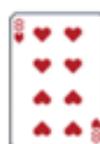
COOL LENSES. This is a prescription for VERY STRONG glasses lenses. Maybe someone can't see as well as they claim



BLOOD FOR THE BLOOD GOD. A sample of blood. Where was it found? Was it the victim or someone else? Can it be explained some other way?



A THING. This is an item found at the crime scene, it is not the murder weapon. What is it? What does it imply?



YOU SHOULD GET THAT CHECKED OUT. Someone has an injury. What is it? Was it inflicted during the crime?



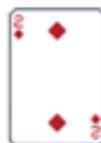
CHA CHING. This is a bank statement of one of the characters. Did they suddenly receive a big payday? Was it a bribe?



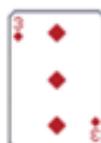
SAY CHEESE. This is an image of something not directly related to the crime. What is it? What does it suggest?



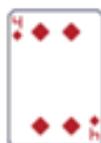
CCTV FOOTAGE. This is VERY BLURRY CCTV footage of something. What does it look like is happening here? Could it also show something else?



SUBJECT: MURDER This is a letter/ email. Who sent this to whom? What does it say? What does it imply?



TAG ME. This is a social media post. Does it place someone at a location? Does it express an opinion on something?



COLD PHOTOGRAPHY This is a picture of the crime scene. Where is it? What does it imply/ change?



MADE TRACKS. There's a shoe imprint at the crime scene. Who does it belong to? The defendant, or someone else?



THEY'RE DEAD ALRIGHT. This is an autopsy of the victim's body. What does it say? Is everything as it seems? Were they intoxicated? Could they have died another way?



THE LOOT. These are the items found on the victim's body. What does it say about the victim? Is something missing?



YOU SHOULD GET THAT CHECKED OUT. Someone has an injury. What is it? Was it inflicted during the crime?



GOOD TUNES. An audio recording. What does it say? Can it be misinterpreted?



SAY CHEESE. This is an image of something not directly related to the crime. What is it? What does it suggest?

Witness List



Psychology expert



**Niche Subject Expert
(Choose The Topic)**



**Defendant's Mother
(Character Witness)**



**Resident of Building
Near The Scene Of The
Crime**



**Defendant's Father
(Character Witness)**



**Resident of Building
Near The Scene Of The
Crime**



**Niche Subject Expert
(Choose The Topic)**



**Niche Subject Expert
(Choose The Topic)**



**Defendant's Colleague
(Character Witness)**



**Worker At Location Of
The Crime**



**Defendant's Childhood
best friend
(Character Witness)**



**Worker At Location Of
The Crime**

Example Game.

The State of New Orcland vs Frankie Wozz

Defendant Selection.

The Judge lays out the general facts of the case. The defendant is Frankie Wozz, a rock drummer accused of murdering “Jazzi Nikk”, the guitarist of his band “Puss Boilz”, after a show in Blackpool. The card King of Clubs was randomly selected to represent the defendant.

Opening Statements

The prosecution plays a mulligan card (7 clubs) to select new cards. This time, they play the King of Hearts, “Jon Bozz”, Frankie’s father. They claim that the testimony of Jon will clarify Frankie’s violent history as well as the general disturbed nature of Frankie’s childhood.

The Defence claims that their trial process will make it clear that this is a frame-up. They play the “Smoking Gun” on the table, arguing that the weapon found at the scene of the crime has no links to the defendant.

Witness Examination (Round One)

The prosecution elects not to play any cards but opens lines of inquiry to Jon Bozz about Frankie’s younger years. Jon claims that his son had a difficult childhood, with the family often moving for work. He had frequent visits to a child psychologist that ceased when he turned 18 and left home to pursue his music career in what Jon claims to be “Devil Metal”. When asked, Jon claims he has no difficulty in imagining his son could have committed this crime.

The Defence calls Frankie Wozz to the stand. Frankie is asked about the death of the band’s guitarist, he replies that he considered Nikk a brother and that their music career was only just taking off. Frankie argues that it would be entirely against his own interest to see Nikk dead. When asked about his relationship with his father, he claims that they never got along and that his father outright hated Frankie, his love of music, and his forming of the band “Puss Boilz” instead of joining the family business of mushroom farming.

The defence then plays the Jack of Hearts, bringing Frankie’s childhood psychologist to the stand. When asked about Frankie’s mental health as a child, he states that Jon was worried about little more than teenage angst and that he did not believe anything he saw in Frankie suggested violent tendencies.

The Defence finally moves onto the smoking gun they spoke about in their opening statement, claiming that the gun did not belong to Frankie, and instead belonged to Jon, with this all being an elaborate scheme to implicate his son and destroy the band.

The prosecution plays “Objection! That was a lie” (Ace Of Spades) in rebuttal, and the court is forced to dismiss claims that the smoking gun has any relation to Jon.

Witness Examination (Round Two)

The Prosecution brings to the table a receipt proving that Jazzi Nick had been paid to produce a full solo album. They claim that this provides a clear motive for Frankie to have killed Nick in anger over his creating a career outside of the band.

The prosecution calls Frankie’s childhood psychologist to the stand, inquiring about Frankie’s general opinion of his father, specifically whether Frankie found Jon’s parenting to be lacking. The psychologist confirms. They are then asked whether this, along with their moving for work, left Frankie feeling

abandoned. They reluctantly agree. The prosecution claims that this history of abandonment likely led to Frankie's violent reaction to the reveal of Nick's work outside of the band, fearing being left once more.

The defence plays the 10 of clubs, invoking "Objection! Who Cares", claiming that Frankie's history of abandonment is irrelevant to the case. The court has no choice but to agree.

Closing arguments.

The prosecution claims that the arguments that the evidence and witnesses they have brought to trial lay down a clear motive and psychological background of an angry child who, though he may or may not have a history of abandonment issues, does have a troubled childhood that could have easily led to this crime.

The defence claims that Jon's involvement in this case makes it clear that Frankie is purely on trial because of the person he is, rather than any facts that may suggest that he committed the crime.

The Judge finds Frankie guilty due to the clearly established motive, as well as an incredible performance by Jon, which was frankly incredible but impossible to lay out in text form.