Bleed: 3mm

2-8+

45'

11+

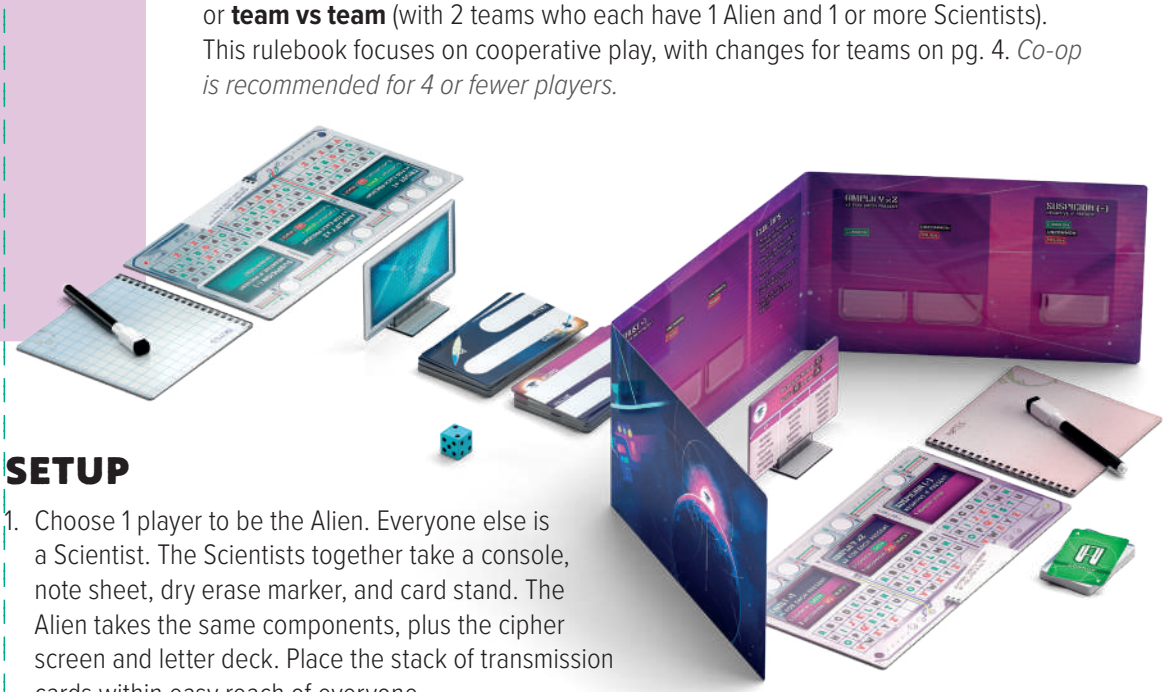
A MESSAGE FROM THE STARS

COMPONENTS

- A 1 Cipher Screen
- B 4 Player Consoles
- C 4 Note Sheets
- D 26 Letter Cards
- E 12 Scientist Message Cards
- F 12 Alien Message Cards
- G 6 Scientist Transmission Cards
- H 6 Alien Transmission Cards
- I 6 Dry Erase Markers
- J 1 Die
- K 2 Message Card Stands

CO-OP OR TEAMS

The game can be played **cooperatively** (with 1 Alien and any number of Scientists) or **team vs team** (with 2 teams who each have 1 Alien and 1 or more Scientists). This rulebook focuses on cooperative play, with changes for teams on pg. 4. *Co-op is recommended for 4 or fewer players.*



SETUP

1. Choose 1 player to be the Alien. Everyone else is a Scientist. The Scientists together take a console, note sheet, dry erase marker, and card stand. The Alien takes the same components, plus the cipher screen and letter deck. Place the stack of transmission cards within easy reach of everyone.
2. Shuffle and deal 1 Alien message card to the Alien and 1 Scientist message card to the Scientists. Each side places their message in a card stand, so only they can see it.
3. The Alien secretly rolls the die 3 times to select 1 word from each column on their message card. The Scientists do likewise. *You **must** keep your 3 numbers secret from the other side. You can write them down somewhere if you need to remember them, but keep them hidden.*

CREDITS

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OBJECTIVE

You've made contact with an Alien from deep space! To understand each other, your team of Scientists will each have to decipher the Alien's 3 secret words, and the Alien will have to guess yours as well. Score points based on how many words each side can guess, and how many letters of the Alien cipher the Scientists can figure out.

THE CIPHER

Before starting, the Alien must create the **cipher** that encodes their message.

As the Alien, shuffle the letter cards and begin drawing them behind your screen. Whenever you draw a **green, black,** or **red letter,** place it in the next **matching** slot in your cipher, going left to right. If all matching slots are full, instead discard the letter to the bottom of the deck and draw again. Continue until all 6 slots are filled.

IMPORTANT: Your cipher can have a max of **1 red letter.** Discard any red letters you draw after the first.

Your **trust** letters must include 1 green (common) and 2 black (uncommon) or red (tough).

Trust: E, P, H

Your **amplify** letters must include 1 green and 1 black or red.

Amplify: R, X

Your **suspicion** letter can be any color.

Suspicion: O

TRANSMISSIONS

The game is made up of **4 rounds.** Each round, the Alien and Scientists alternate making transmissions:

Step 1: The Alien writes a word on a transmission card along with its **cipher score,** then passes it to the Scientists. The Scientists discuss the word and write down any deductions on their note sheet or consoles.

Step 2: The Scientists write a word on another transmission card and pass it back to the Alien. The Alien writes the **cipher score** on the card and gives it back.

A transmission can be any English word **except** the words on your side's message card (or any words that contain or derive from them). This includes **all** words on your message card, not just the ones you rolled.

You should try to give words that are related to your message to help the other side guess what you're trying to say! For example, if one of your words is "elephants," you could make transmissions like "pachyderm" or "Dumbo."

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CIPHER SCORES

To determine a word's cipher score, start by **adding 1** for each **trust** letter in the word.

Trust: E, P, H

C**H**O**PP**E**R**	4
HORCRUX**E**S	2
BORAX	0

Next, **multiply by 2** for each **amplify** letter in the word.

Amplify: R, X

CHOPPE**R**	4 x 2 = 8
HO**R**C**R**U**X**ES	2 x 2 x 2 x 2 = 16
BO**R**A**X**	0 x 2 x 2 = 0

Last, if the **suspicion** letter is in the word (any number of times), make the score **negative**.

Note: the negative of 0 is 0.

Suspicion: O

CH**O**PPER	Final score: -8
H**O**RCRUXES	Final score: -16
B**O**RAX	Final score: 0

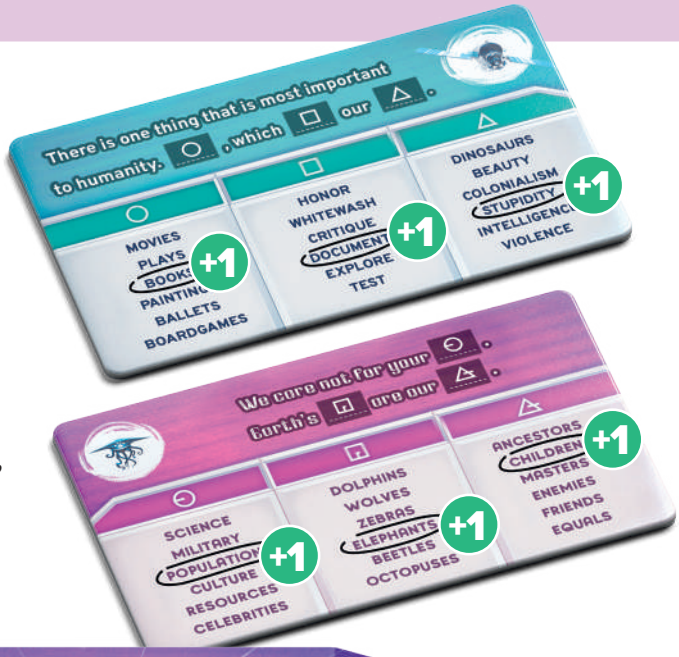
FINAL GUESS

After the Alien and the Scientists have each made **4 transmissions,** it is time to guess the messages and cipher. Each correctly guessed message word and cipher letter is worth **1 point.** A perfect score is **12 points!**

First, the **Scientists** reveal their message card, and the Alien tries to guess the 3 words in their message. They must guess all 3 words before the Scientists reveal if they're correct.

Next, the **Alien** reveals their message card, and the Scientists try to guess their 3 words. Again, they must guess all 3 before answers are revealed.

Last, the Scientists try to guess the **trust, amplify,** and **suspicion** letters. Once they've written down guesses for all 6 letters, the Alien reveals their screen.



12 Points = Perfect Score

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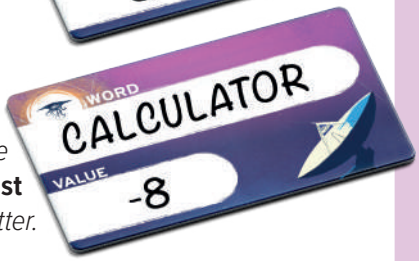
TIPS & REMINDERS

*If a word has a score of **0**, you can rule out every letter from **trust.***

*If a word has an **odd** score, you can rule out every letter from **amplify.***

*If a word has a negative score, one of those letters **must** be the suspicion letter.*



*If a word has a score of **6**, then it must have either 3 trust letters and 1 amplify letter, **or** 6 trust letters. Here, 6 trust letters can be ruled out, because they would need to be N and O (both common letters).*

*There can only be **1 red letter** in the cipher! If you have identified it, you can eliminate all other red letters. Use your console to see which letters are red.*

TEAM VS. TEAM

Playing in teams requires at least 4 players. Split up into 2 teams with 1 Alien and 1 or more Scientists on each team. Each Alien and each team of Scientists get their own secret message card, but both Aliens use the **same cipher** to score transmissions. Each round, do the following:

Step 1: Each Alien writes a word and its cipher score on a transmission card. Both Aliens reveal their transmission to **everyone.**

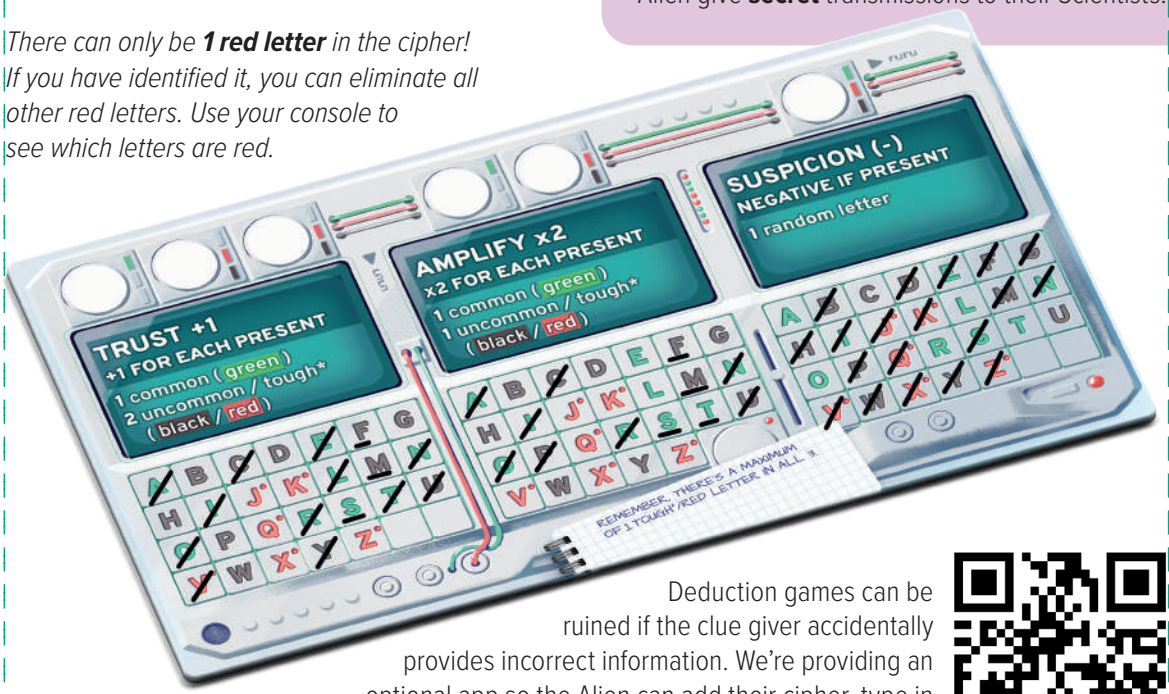
Step 2: Each team of Scientists writes a word on a transmission card and **secretly** shows it to their Alien. The Alien **secretly** writes the cipher score on the card, then passes it back to their Scientists (not showing it to the other team).

The game lasts for only **3 rounds.** In each step of the final guess, each team secretly writes down their guesses at the same time, then reveals and scores them. The team with the higher score wins!

Throughout the game, the Aliens must keep their transmissions public, but each team of Scientists may keep their transmissions secret from the other team. Each Aliens and each team of Scientists should also keep their message cards, notes, and consoles secret from the other team.

HARD MODE

For a harder **cooperative** game, play only **3 rounds.** For a harder **team** game, have each Alien give **secret** transmissions to their Scientists.



Deduction games can be ruined if the clue giver accidentally provides incorrect information. We're providing an optional app so the Alien can add their cipher, type in a word, and it will calculate the cipher score for them.

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