



Welcome to
CRIMSON HOLLOW

**GAME
RULEBOOK**

Welcome to CRIMSON HOLLOW

THE STORY

When night falls on Crimson Hollow, the town remembers. Every fear ever whispered by its people takes shape, from dark-stalkers in the woods, figures behind windows and even voices that speak your name as if they've always known it.

Each dawn, survivors awaken to a town rebuilt yet permanently scarred by what came before. In Crimson Hollow, fear cannot be escaped, only confronted, mastered, or fed to the horrors that grow stronger with every scream.

Overview

Crimson Hollow is an evolving deck-building game where players confront terrifying enemies, recruit allies, and unleash horrors that permanently alter the game. Victory is achieved by defeating enemies and collecting victory points. Every horror you unleash brings chaos to the center row as the rules and mechanics evolve each time.



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CONTENTS

258 Cards

4x 10 card starting decks

7 Determined, 2 Training Day and
1 Unleashed Horrors

24 Fear cards

56 Center deck cards

6 Horror sets with 23 cards and 1 token each

Sinister Carnival
Zombie Apocalypse
Better Days Asylum
Alien Invasion
Living Dolls
Haunted Manor

Horror set breakdown
(5 enemies, 5 minions, 10 items
1 location, 1 companion and
1 twisted companion)



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SETUP

1. Each player receives a starting deck of:

7 Determined
2 Training Day
1 Unleashed Horrors

2. Shuffle your deck and draw 5 cards.

3. Shuffle the 56-card Center Deck (cards without theme symbols).

4. Reveal 6 cards from the Center Deck in a row to form the Center Row next to the Center Deck.

5. Place the Fear cards on the table opposite the Center Row.

6. Randomly determine a starting player. Play proceeds clockwise.



LAYOUT

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Fear



Center Row



Center Deck



Starting Hand
(5 cards)



Starting Deck
(remaining 5 cards)



CARD TYPES

Basic/Item

Companion/Location

Card Name
(card type/s)

Card Cost

Insight needed
to acquire the
card



Effect

What a card
does when
played

Set Icon

Gain  against
enemies. Stays in play until
you fight an  enemy.

Hope

Victory points added
up at the end of the
game

You can play any number of cards from your hand each turn. Resolve each card fully before playing another. Cards played remain in your active area until the end of the turn. They are then placed in your discard pile.



Companions and Locations remain in play until removed by an effect.

CARD TYPES

Enemy/Boss/Minion Twisted Companion

Card Name
(card type/s)

Strength

Amount of
courage needed
to defeat.



Effect

When revealed
card from
of their
adds 1



Your hand size is 6.
When Defeated: Trash a card
from your discard pile.



Use courage that you generate
each turn from cards in your
hand, to defeat enemies.



Twisted Companions may be
defeated multiple times per
turn, in an effort to make your
deck more efficient.

Welcome to

Gameplay

Objective

Score Victory Points (VP) by defeating enemies and acquiring cards. When the game ends, the player with the most VP wins.

TURN BREAKDOWN

Players take turns clockwise. Each turn consists of three phases:

1. Start of Turn
2. Player Actions
3. End of Turn

Start of Turn

Resolve any start-of-turn ongoing effects. These may be from cards in the center row or from any Horror Themes that have been “Drafted” so far.

Player Actions

Each player takes a full turn and may then begin playing cards one at a time from their hand into their Active Area, fully resolving each card before playing another. Keep playing and resolving cards until you have declared your turn over or no longer have any resources to use, or cards you wish to play. Players may take the following actions in any order, using resources generated from played cards:



Acquire Cards

- Spend Insight (💡) to acquire cards from the Center Row
- The following cards are able to be acquired
 - Basic
 - Item
 - Companion
 - Location
- Acquired cards are placed into your Discard Pile
- Costs are shown in black in the upper-left corner
- Enemies can never be acquired. Only defeated. If a card says “Acquire a card”, it can never be an enemy card.

Defeat Enemies

- Spend Courage (💪) to defeat enemies in the Center Row
- Enemy strength is shown in red in the upper-right corner
- Defeated enemies are placed into your Victory Point Pile

Whenever you defeat an enemy, you may trash one card from your discard pile (optional), in addition to any rewards listed on the enemy card.

Fear Card Option

Once during their turn, a player may add exactly one (1) Fear card to their active area.

- The Fear card provides the players a choice of either:
 - +1 Insight (💡) OR
 - +1 Courage (💪) (chosen immediately)
- Fear cards in your hand are Silenced. They still count as a “card” and may be discarded or trashed by effects.



End of Turn

1. Refill the Center Row to 6 cards from the top of the Center Deck.
2. Discard:
 - All remaining cards in hand.
 - All non-token cards in your Active Area.
3. Draw, from your deck, a new hand of cards according to your hand size.
 - If you run out of cards in your deck to draw. Keep the cards you have drawn, then shuffle your discard pile. This becomes your new deck. Continue drawing cards until you reach your current hand size for your new hand.
4. Resolve all end of turn effects.
5. Play passes to the next player clockwise.

END OF GAME

The game immediately ends when either of the following occurs:

- A player has 13 or more enemy cards in their Victory Point Pile
- There are 2 “Flipped” Horror Tokens in players’ active areas

After either of the end game conditions are met, finish the round so that all players have had an equal amount of turns. Add up all victory points from cards in your VP Pile, deck, hand, active area and discard pile, then SUBTRACT all negative points (mostly Fear cards), to determine your victory point total. The player with the most points wins. In case of a tie, the player who defeated the most boss cards wins. If still tied, the player with more cards in their VP pile wins.

If STILL tied, sharpen two machetes and have at it. (If more than 2 players, there are still only 2 machetes available.)



Horror Tokens & Unleashed Horrors

Each Horror Token names a specific Boss Enemy Card.

- When a player defeats that Enemy:
 1. They take control of the matching Horror Token
 2. Flip the token to its Victory Point side
 3. Place it in their Active Area
 4. Remove the associated Twisted Companion from the game

▲ When 2 Horror Tokens are flipped, the game end condition is triggered.

Unleashed Horrors

Unleashed Horror is a special starter deck card that permanently changes the game.

When played:

1. You may gain 1 Insight (🔦) or 1 Courage (💪)
2. If you have 2 or more cards in your VP Pile you may trash this card to “Draft a Horror” Use the following steps to “Draft a Horror”
 1. Choose one unused Horror Theme.
 2. Place its Horror Token in your active area.
 3. Place the Twisted Companion next to your Horror Token.
 4. Read the Horror Token rules aloud.
 5. Shuffle the remaining 22 cards of that horror theme into the Center Deck.

Twisted Companion Rules

- Only the player that controls the matching Horror Token may defeat it, any number of times per turn.
- It can never be targeted by card effects, discarded or placed into any VP Pile.
- The only reward is the ability to trash one card from your discard pile.
- If the Horror Token is ever flipped, the accompanied Twisted Companion is removed from play.



GLOSSARY & KEYWORDS

Active Area

The area in front of a player where cards are played and remain until the end of the turn.

Acquire

Gain a card from the Center Row and place it into your discard pile. Usually by spending insight, although other effects may allow you to acquire a card.

Basic Enemy

An enemy card that starts the game in the original center deck.

Boss Enemy

A named enemy tied to a Horror Token. Defeating it flips the Horror Token and removes the associated Twisted Companion.

Center Deck

This deck contains items, companions, enemies, locations, basic and special cards.

Center Row

The face-up display of 6 cards available to acquire or defeat.

Companion

A card type that remains in play until an effect removes it.

Courage (👊)

A resource used to defeat enemies.

Cycle (x)

Set aside (x) Center Row cards, refill the row completely, then place the set-aside cards on the bottom of the Center Deck in any order.

Defeat

Spend Courage to defeat an enemy and place it into your Victory Point Pile. You may then trash a card in your discard pile.

Discard Pile

Where discarded cards are placed. These cards are placed face up.

Draft a Horror

Choose a currently unused Horror Theme, place its token and accompanying Twisted Companion in play near your active area. Shuffle the remaining 22 Horror Theme cards into the center deck.



Enemy

A card type typically in the center row, to be defeated by using courage and placed into your VP pile.

Fear Card

A shared card pool, available once during a player's own turn that grants +1 Insight or +1 Courage. Fear cards in hand and played from hand are Silenced.

Flip

Turn a card over to reveal its opposite side.

Hand

The cards a player holds and plays during their turn.

Horror Token

A card representing special rules, effects and an associated Boss Enemy. This enters play when a Horror Theme is drafted. The game ends when 2 or more of these tokens are flipped.

Insight (💡)

A resource used to acquire cards.

Item

A card type acquired from the center row.

Location

A card type that remains in play until removed by an effect.

Silenced

A silenced card is treated as blank for the turn when played. It can still be discarded or trashed. It is still a card.

Trash

To remove a card from the game entirely.

Twisted Companion

A special enemy tied to a Horror Token. It may only be defeated by its controlling player and never worth Victory Points. This is never placed into your VP or discard pile. This can never be targeted by card effects.

Victory Point (VP) Pile

Where defeated enemies are placed. The game ends when there are 13 or more enemies in any player's VP pile.



Credits

Kerry Anderson
Game Design

Art Director & Visual Design
Crimson Hollow Lore

Jeff Anderson
Game Development & Balance

Illustrations

AI-assisted artwork generated using modern AI tools and curated by the designer.

Playtest record breakers.
Most cards drawn in 1 turn 17: Kris.
Most points 61: Kris, R.J.
Most Horrors drafted 3: Brandon
(yeah you can't do that anymore.)

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Special Thanks

My wonderful wife Kerry for whom i cherish and adore. To Josh and Jenifer, introducing Fear to the game with tremendous success. To Zack and Zach for playtesting the worst versions with us. To RJ and Matt our west coast digital playtesters. To Chris for playtesting anytime he had a chance. To Kris for reminding me not all good cards are "good cards" and everything has a cost. To Brandon for such zeal and enthusaism.





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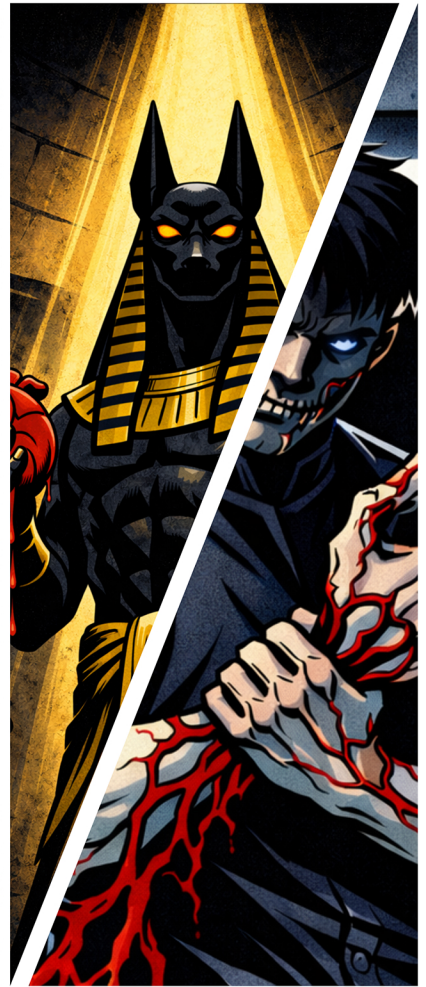
Look for these expansions coming soon!



Tooth & Claw



**Cultists &
Killers**



Sand & Snow