



# Cluedo



**Cluedo** (Clue in North America) is a deduction murder mystery board game. The game is based on the crime fiction genre of pop literature. Players take the role of crime investigator searching for clues. To solve the crime, players must guess the correct answer to three questions: *who* committed the crime, *where* was the crime committed and with *what weapon* did they commit the crime?

## History

*Clue* (the game) was created in 1948 by Anthony E. Pratt, a bureaucrat from Birmingham, England. He termed the game *Cluedo*. Game players in England still use the name *Cluedo* for the game, in fact.. Mr. Pratt sold the distribution rights to Parker Brothers Limited, the famed American game manufacturer. Parker Brothers continues to distribute *Clue* to this day, though it is now a subsidiary of Hasbro.



## Equipment



The game's current equipment consists of a board which shows the rooms of an English country house called Tudor Mansion (previously Tudor Close and Tudor Hall), and the corridors and passages linking them, several coloured playing pieces (character pawns), some props representing murder weapons (dagger, rope, etc), one or two six-sided dice/die, three sets of cards describing the 9 rooms (scene of crime), the 6 suspects and 6 weapons (corresponding to the playing pieces), along with a Solution Cards envelope to contain one card of each, and a Detective's Notes pad (often with 6 pencils) for keeping detailed notes during the game.

## Suspects



The characters are represented by colored game pieces. Each color corresponds to a particular character. Therefore, Colonel



Mustard is yellow, Miss Peacock is blue, Professor Plum is purple, Mr. White is white, Mr. Green is green and Miss Scarlet is red. Depending on edition, the playing pieces are typically made of coloured plastic, shaped like chess pawns, or character figurines. Occasionally they are made from wood or pewter.



### Weapons

There murder weapons are represented by game pieces, too. There are six possible murder weapons in *Cluedo*.



The Cluedo weapons list includes the *knife, the revolver, the wrench, the rope, the candlestick and the lead pipe*. When a player suggests a possible combination for the murder, the corresponding game piece is moved to the room being suggested. Otherwise, these pieces have no role in the game.

### Rooms

The game of Cluedo has a game board with nine rooms in the mansion where the murder could have taken place. The rooms are laid out in a circular fashion, separated by pathways overlaid by playing spaces. The rooms are found along the perimeter of the board, while two of the rooms are found on the interior. Each of the four corner rooms contains a secret passage that leads to the room on the opposite diagonal corner of the map – a secret passage connecting the Lounge with the Conservatory and a secret passage connecting the Study to the Kitchen, and vice versa.. The center room (typically called the Cellar, or Stairs) is inaccessible to the players, because the clue packet, the solution envelope, is found here.

†	Ballroom	‡
Kitchen		Conservatory
Dining Room	"Cellar" with envelope	Billiard Room
		Library
Lounge	Hall	Study
‡		†

### Playing the Game

At the start of the game, three cards, the true elements of the crime – one suspect, one weapon, and one room card – are chosen at random, put into this special envelope and kept hidden, so that no one can see them. These cards represent the facts of the case. The remaining cards are shuffled together and then distributed and handed out face down among the assorted players. The players look at their cards.







The aim is to deduce the details of the murder; that is, the cards in the envelope. There are six different characters, six possible murder weapons and nine different rooms, leaving the players with 324 distinct possibilities. In the course of determining the details of the murder, players announce suggestions to the other players, for example, "I suggest it was Mrs. White, in the Library, with the rope." All elements contained in the suggestion are moved into the room in the suggestion.

The players move their game pieces of a suspect and a murder weapon from prearranged starting spots to the various rooms of the mansion. Upon reaching a room, a player may make a suggestion about the crime that these were at the murder. The other players must disprove the accusation. The other players must then disprove the suggestion, if they can. A suggestion is disproved by showing a card containing one of the suggestion components (for example, the rope) to the player making the suggestion, as this proves that the card cannot be in the envelope. Showing the card to the suggesting player is done in secret so the other players may not see which card is being used to disprove the suggestion. Once a suggestion has been disproved, the



player's turn ends and moves on to the next player.



This is done in a clockwise rotation around the board, starting with the player on the left of the player whose turn it is. If the player to the left has a card that is being suggested, then that player must show that card to the suggesting player, and only that person. The suspected player's game piece, which was moved to the room with the suggesting player, remains in the room into which it was moved. Once the player whose turn it is has had his or her suggestion disproved, that player's turn is over.

The player's suggestion only gets disproved once. So, though several players may hold cards disproving the suggestion, only the first one will show the suggesting player his or her card. A player may only make a suggestion when his or her piece is in a room and the suggestion can only be for that room.

Once a player has sufficiently narrowed the solution, that player can make an accusation. According to the rules, "When you think you have worked out which three cards are in the envelope, you may, on your





turn, make an Accusation and name any three elements you want." You may name any room (unlike a Suggestion, where your character pawn must be in the room you suggest).

The accusing player checks the validity of the accusation by checking the cards, keeping them concealed from other players. If he has made an incorrect accusation, he plays no further part in the game except to reveal cards secretly to one

of the remaining players when required to do so in order to disprove suggestions.

Also, according to the rules, "If, after making a false Accusation, your character pawn is blocking a door, [you must] move it into that room so that other players may enter." Since a character pawn can only block a door by being outside of a room, this clearly demonstrates that the character pawn need not be in any room to make an Accusation. If the player made a correct accusation, the solution cards are shown to the other players and the game ends.



Eventually, process of elimination allows a player to solve the crime. It must be remembered that players have only one chance to guess the crime. This step of the game is called the accusation. The accusation should not be confused with the suggestion, which has no such consequences.



When a player makes a guess, this player opens up the contents of the clue packet and sees whether he or she is right. If correct, this player shows the contents to the others and declares victory. If incorrect, that player returns the content to the clue packet and the game continues as before, except the player who guessed incorrectly.

There are six to nine possibilities for each answer, which each player can eliminate from suspicion as the game progresses. The game is over when one player guesses all three questions correctly. To guess any one of the three questions wrong is to immediately lose the game, and give the other players extra clues to help them win.

It is possible for a player to be using the piece representing the murderer. This doesn't affect the game play; the object of the game is still to be the first to make the correct accusation. If the game is played with two people, the process of elimination diffuses the same information to both players. Such a game tends to pass quickly. The Hasbro version of the game is not advertised as a two-player game.





## Clue Specifics

A typical game of *Clue* takes between 30 to 45 minutes. It is easy to learn, and not much harder to master. Children from ages 8 up can play the game. It is

for three to six players.

The game does not play well with only two players. When a suggestion is made, both players involved in the suggestion are privy to the same information. This eliminates a large part of the suspense of the game, and makes it simply a matter of manipulating one's game piece to the correct room before one's opponent. For groups of three or more, [Clue](#) is a surprisingly engaging game.



## Spinoffs

Waddingtons, Parker Brothers and Hasbro have created many spin-off versions of the game. Spin-off games consist of alternative rule variations of the original game, which are not to be confused with themed "variants" which otherwise utilize the same rules and game configuration. In addition, commencing in 1985, the brand expanded to include feature films, television series, a musical, as well as numerous books.



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