

Player's Guide

Everything players need, with no spoilers. Print one for each player.

Welcome

You and your fellow players are heroes visiting Gale's Landing, a small harbor town on a foggy stretch of coast. This autumn, strange things are happening all over town: lights on the island where the old lighthouse has been dark for fifty years, a bell that rings by itself, a beast in the cove, whispers in the walls of the old inn. Are there ghosts? Or something else? Either way, something isn't right in Gale's Landing, and it's up to you to find out what, and to set it right.

One person runs the game as the Game Master (GM). The GM describes the world and plays everyone you meet. You decide what your hero does. When the outcome is uncertain, you roll dice.

What you'll need

- About 4 six-sided dice
 - Your character sheet and a set of action cards
 - A pencil and a small notepad or dry-erase board
 - A flashlight (you may want one)
-

Ways to Play

You can play this game any way you like: talking, pointing, laying down cards, writing, or drawing. Every one of these counts exactly the same.

Taking an action

- **Say it** out loud: tell the GM what your hero does.
- **Lay down an action card** to show what your hero does. Add a point at the map or a character's name card to show where or to whom.
- **Point** at the map, a choice card, or another hero.
- **Write or draw** on your notepad for anything longer.
- **Pass a note** to another player to read aloud for you.
- **Signal:** thumbs up for yes, thumbs down for no, a flat hand for "not sure, give me a second."

Choices

The GM will often lay out two or three choice cards. Tap one, hold up fingers, or suggest something different. For big group decisions, everyone places a token on the choice they like.

No rush

There's no turn order and no timer. You can always wait, watch, or pass. Thinking quietly is part of playing.

When your hero talks

When your hero speaks to someone in the story, you can say the words, describe them ("I ask about the island"), write them down, or play the Talk card and let the GM fill in the conversation. All of these work.

Table jobs

You can pick a job at the table, and swap whenever you like:

- **Map keeper:** holds the map and moves the heroes' tokens.
- **Case-board keeper:** pins clue cards to the case board and arranges them.
- **Evidence keeper:** holds the evidence cards and lays them down when they're needed.

Comfort tools

- **Pause card:** tap it anytime to take a break. No reason needed.
- **Skip card:** tap it to fade out a moment that's too scary or uncomfortable. The game simply moves on.
- The game is spooky, not gory. Heroes get scared, but they never get badly hurt.

At the start of each session

The GM will put out the case board and last session's cards. Help lay them out in the order things happened, while the GM tells the story so far. You can add to it, or just arrange the cards.

At the end of each session

The GM will lay out two cards, **Best moment** and **More of this**. Put one token on your favorite moment from the session, and one on something you'd like more of. You never have to explain why.

The Rules

The whole game runs on one roll: pick a stat, roll that many dice, and read the highest one.

Three stats

STAT	USE IT TO
Brave	Climb, run, hold a door, face something scary, protect someone
Clever	Search, notice, figure things out, fix or build, read old writing
Kind	Talk, calm, convince, comfort, understand how someone feels

Rolling

You only roll when the outcome is uncertain. The GM will tell you which stat fits, or your action card will suggest it.

1. Roll as many dice as your stat.
2. Add 1 die if a teammate helps, and 1 die if you spend a Courage token. Never roll more than 4 dice.
3. Look at the single highest die.

HIGHEST DIE	RESULT
6	Great! It works, plus a bonus
5	Yes. It works
3–4	Yes, but... It works, with a twist
1–2	Not yet... It doesn't work, and something changes

Very hard tasks use one fewer die (always at least 1). A low roll never ends the story. It just makes things more interesting.

Helping

Play the Help card or point at a teammate to give them 1 extra die. If their roll brings a twist, you share it.

Team efforts

For jobs that take everyone at once, like lifting something very heavy, one hero rolls and everyone who pitches in adds 1 die, up to 4 dice. A team effort always succeeds in the end, though a low roll may bring a twist.

Countdown clocks

When something is coming, like a storm or a villain, the GM may put a clock on the table: a circle split into 4 slices. Slices fill in as time runs short. When it's full, whatever is coming arrives, ready or not.

Courage

You start each session with 2 Courage tokens. Spend one to:

- Add 1 die to a roll, before rolling
- Add a helpful detail to the scene ("There's a coil of rope by the door")
- Shake off 1 Fright

You earn Courage when you helped a teammate and the roll came up "Yes, but" or "Not yet," so you share the twist. You can also earn it by being kind when it counts, and once per session by acting on your promise. You can hold up to 5 tokens.

Nerve and Fright

You have 4 Nerve. Heroes don't get hurt in this game; they get scared. A scare, a fall, or a run-in with trouble gives you 1 Fright, which means you cross off 1 Nerve. At 0, your hero is **Spooked**: they freeze up. You stay in the scene, but you can only Help or Wait, until a teammate comforts you with a Help card or a Kind roll. Then you shake it off and get 2 Nerve back. If no one can reach you, you recover at the end of the scene. Nerve refills between sessions, and partly after a good rest.

Special move

Your role gives you one special move to use once per session.

Making Your Hero

Making a hero takes about ten minutes, and every step is choosing from a list. Circle your choices on the sheet.

1. Pick a role

ROLE	BRAVE	CLEVER	KIND	SPECIAL MOVE (ONCE PER SESSION)
Seeker	1	3	2	Sharp Eyes: ask the GM one question about the scene and get a true, useful answer
Defender	3	1	2	Stand Firm: take a Fright meant for someone else, and gain 1 Courage
Listener	1	2	3	Heart Sense: feel what someone, or something, wants right now
Tinkerer	2	3	1	Rig It: build a gadget from junk that solves one problem
Wanderer	2	2	2	Lucky Break: turn any roll into a 6 after seeing the dice

2. Pick a name, or roll a die

D6	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME
1	Wren	Holloway
2	Sam	Calder
3	Juniper	Ashby
4	Max	Penrose
5	Ivy	Quill
6	Theo	Marlow

3. Pick why you're in Gale's Landing

- Your great-aunt Ada Finch invited you, saying she needs your help
- You're writing a school report (or a book) about real ghosts
- You're on vacation, and the inn's only free room faces the island
- You dreamed of the lighthouse before you ever saw it

4. Pick a keepsake

Choose one small item with meaning: a brass compass that never quite points north, a grandparent's pocketknife, a sketchbook, a lucky stone with a hole in it, an old film camera, or a silver whistle. Sometime during the adventure, it will matter.

5. Pick gear

Every hero has a flashlight, a notebook and pencil, a phone, and a backpack. Pick two more:

- Rope (50 feet)
- Toolkit
- Instant camera
- Walkie-talkies (a pair)
- Chalk and a measuring tape
- Thermos of cocoa (restores 1 Nerve, twice)
- Binoculars
- Bag of salt (for emergencies of an unusual kind)

6. Pick a companion (optional)

A companion follows your signals: point at something and it goes there. Once per scene, it adds 1 die to the roll listed.

COMPANION	WHAT IT'S GOOD AT	BONUS DIE ON
Pip, a nosy seagull	Flying ahead, stealing small objects, squawking alarms	Look
Biscuit, a scruffy terrier	Sniffing out trails, digging, barking at bad guys	Brave (chasing, digging)
Nuts, a clockwork crab	Squeezing into tiny spaces, picking locks, snipping rope	Fix
Wisp, a lantern sprite	Glowing in the dark, noticing things others can't	Kind

7. Make a promise

Pick, or write, one short promise your hero has made to themselves. Once per session, when your hero acts on it, you earn 1 Courage. Some ideas:

- I'll never leave a friend behind.
- I'll find out the truth, whatever it is.
- I'll protect anyone who can't protect themselves.
- I'll prove I'm braver than people think.
- I'll make sure someone forgotten gets remembered.

8. Get ready

Set your Nerve to 4 and take 2 Courage tokens. Your GM may also run you through a prologue that matches the reason you picked in step 3: a short one-on-one story about how you came to Gale's Landing.

Your Cards and Character Sheet

Laying down a card is the same as saying it out loud.

Action cards

CARD	WHAT IT MEANS	USUAL STAT
Look	I search, examine, or keep watch	Clever
Sneak	I move quietly, hide, or follow someone	Clever
Bold	I climb, run, push, grab, or face something scary	Brave
Talk	I talk with someone: ask, convince, or comfort	Kind
Fix	I open, repair, build, or use my gear	Clever
Help	I help a teammate (+1 die for them)	(theirs)
Ask	I want to know more. Tell me or give me choices	none
Wait	I hold back and see what happens, or pass	none

Signal cards: Yes, No, and Not sure.

Table cards: Pause and Skip.

Character sheet

Name	
Role (circle one)	Seeker · Defender · Listener · Tinkerer · Wanderer
Brave	1 · 2 · 3
Clever	1 · 2 · 3
Kind	1 · 2 · 3
Special move	☐ used this session
Nerve	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Courage tokens	(keep them on the sheet)
Why I'm in Gale's Landing	
My promise	
Keepsake	
Gear	Flashlight, notebook, phone, backpack, plus:
Companion	
A drawing of my hero	

Notes and clues

Use this space, or your notepad, to keep track of people you meet and things you discover.