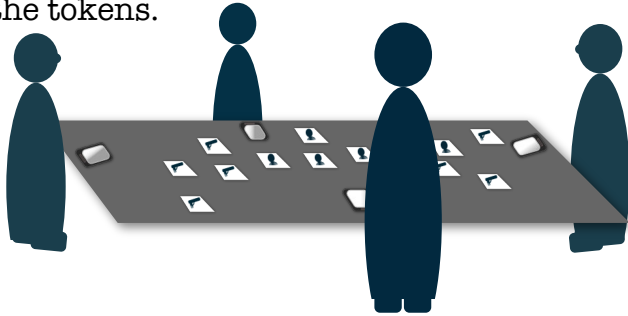# COVER BLOWN!

In COVER BLOWN! 3-5 players takes on the roles of hard boiled criminal investigators. Over the course of the game they have to blow the cover of the murder accomplice. The investigators' only reliable sources of information are their confidential informants, providing them clues about the ongoing murder case.

Will those clues provide the information necessary? Can the case be solved through simple deduction, or will blood be shed?

The app for iOS and Android can be downloaded from www.coverblowngame.com/tester/

Game setup

1. The suspect and weapon tokens are placed face up. Make sure every player can see and reach each of the tokens.
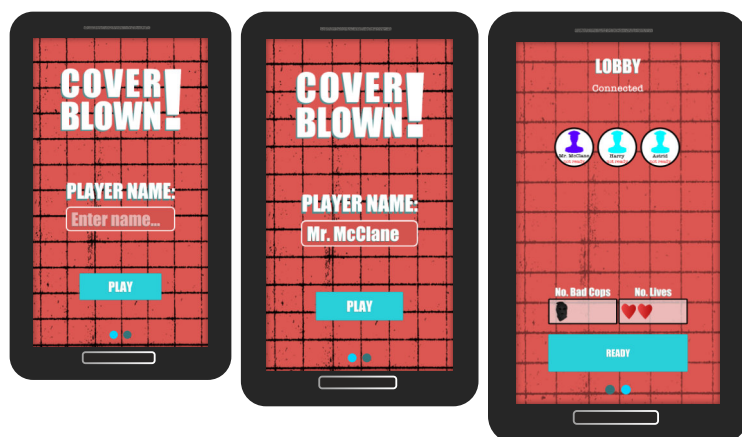

2. Each player takes a bullet token.

3. Each player connects their smartphone to the same wifi or wifi hotspot and opens the COVER BLOWN! app.

4. Each player types in a player name and presses play.

5. Once each player is connected to the game, each player taps "Ready" and the game begins.

Game details

Number of players: **3-5**

Play time: **10-30 min.**

Age: **13+**

Game assets

10 Suspect tokens

9 Weapon tokens

5 Bullet tokens

The COVER BLOWN! app

Prerequisite

Each player needs a **smartphone** running the COVER BLOWN! app

Get the app

iOS

Android

PLAY GUIDE

Start of game

Each player receives a phone call. By this phone call you are assigned your role in the game, be it honest or dirty cop. Honest cops are assigned a confidential informant they have to protect throughout the game.
Dirty cops are told who the murderer is and what the murder weapon is. They have to protect both the murderer and the murder weapon throughout the game.

The game spans over 5 rounds, signified as days in the week, starting Monday and ending on Friday.

Investigate

The first action you can take in each round of the game is to investigate. When a player investigates they choose whether they want information on either suspects or murder weapons. Then they call their confidential informant or murderer and receives 1-2 clues on their specified type of information. The murderer provides the same kind of information as the confidential informants to help avoid blowing the dirty cops cover.

The information acquired through investigation is to be used to clear possible murder suspects and murder weapons. How you choose to share the knowledge is up to you.

Examine

The second action you can take in the game is to examine. An examine-action is a joint action, which means that whenever one of the players tap the examine button the action is performed on all the other player's devices.
Once a player has examined the round is over and a new round begins. The result of an examination can be one of three - wrong, fishy, or correct - and is publicly available to all players.
If:

Wrong - Both subjects were not involved in the murder and are clean.
Fishy - One of the subjects were involved in the murder.
Correct - Both subjects were involved in the murder. Should this happen the   honest cops win the game.
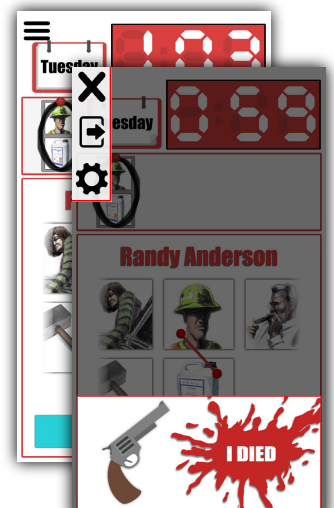
If a confidential informant or a murderer is examined the related cop will stop receiving investigation-information for the rest of the game.

You can't examine in the last round (Friday) of the game.

I Died

Press the menu button to reveal the "I died" button

Shoot

Throughout the game you can shoot each other. Each player can shoot once and each player has a 2-4 lives - depending on the number of players in the game. In order to shoot, you clearly signify (ex. make a gun gesture and say "bang") that you shoot a player and give the shot player your bullet token. When a player has lost all of their lives the player presses the "I died" button in the app.

End of game

The game ends either when a player is dead, when the correct combination of suspect and weapon is examined or when the timer runs out in the last round of the game.

The honest cops win if:
1. The right combination of weapon and suspect is examined.
2. A dirty cop died

The dirty cop(s) win if:
1. The time ran out in the last round of the game.
2. An honest cop died.

Time

The time each round lasts, scales with the number of players in the game: (**3**) 2.5 min. (**4**) 3 min. (**5**) 3.5 min.

No. lives

Once shot, a player loses a life. Each players number of lives scales with the number of players in the game: (**3-4**) 2 lives. (**5**) 3 lives.

A player dies once they have lost all of their lives. Should a player die, the player presses the "I died" button in the app.

No. dirty cops

The number of dirty cops in a game scales with the number players in the game: (**3-4**) 1 dirty cop. (**5**) 2 dirty cops.

Black Box

Intro:

This section reveals some of the black boxed elements that the app is handling in the game - we suggest only reading this if you have already played the game a lot, or if you are OK with "spoilers".

Setup:

Amount of bad cops:
(AmountOfPlayers / 2 - 1) - rounded up.

Clue Decks:
Each player has two "decks" - one for weapons, one for suspects.
Each deck contains 1 clue pr. suspect or weapon in the game.

Time:
The time for one round in seconds = number of players * 30 + 60. eg: 4 players = 3 minutes, 6 players = 4 minutes.
First round (Monday) has 30 seconds extra for receiving the first call

First Call:

Each honest cop draws 1 person clue - this one is their Confidential Informant (CI) - the clue is removed from the player's own clue deck (hence a player cannot get investigation information on their own Confidential Informant)
Every corrupt cop draws the same person clue and weapon clue - this is the murderer and murder weapon - a CI cannot also be the murderer.
The murderer and murder weapon are removed from all player's clue deck - hence no player will draw a clue on investigation saying they were clean.

Investigate:

Every time a player investigates and draws a clue, it is removed from their deck, and is hence unable to be drawn again (unless all other clues are drawn, then the deck is reshuffled).
Chance to get two clues in one investigate:
3 players: 50% with a maximum of 3 double clues over the whole game.
4 players: 33% with a maximum of 3 double clues over the whole game.
5 players: 0%

Alibis

Every suspect and weapon has an alibi (story) behind why they could not have been a part of the murder.
The alibi is assigned at random - but only 2 suspects/weapons can be at the same location (eg. Morning Sun Diner). They can be doing the same thing eg. both are working "Pouring coffee and making scrambled eggs" or they are at a "Shady drug exchange" - or they can be doing different things one is working, while the other is doing the drug exchange.
When drawing double clues, both elements do not need to share the same alibi.

Examine:

If an examination results in "wrong" (red X), each player's clue deck will have that person and weapon removed. Hence, players won't get investigation information on elements that have been declared clear by an examine.
Suspects or weapons that have been cleared through a collective consensus can still be drawn in investigations and hence be of little to no value for an Honest cop.
For "fishy" examination results, players can still get investigation information on the examined elements.

FAQ

Wifi

If you have problems joining and starting games, it is most likely due to your wifi connection. As a rule of thumb, start by making sure that every player's device is connected to the same wifi or wifi hotspot. If they are, try and force close the app on all the players' devices and restart the app. Note that on wifi hotspots you may need to restart the hotspot. Also make sure at least 3 players are attempting to join a game - a lobby won't be created until 3 players have pressed play.

- **"We have pressed play and the lobby states that we are 'connected', but some of the player's are not shown on the same page."**
    — The players not present in the lobby can try and swipe back to the start screen and tap play again.

- **"Some of the players' devices are hanging on 'connecting - waiting for players...'."**
    — The players who are hanging can try and swipe back to the start screen and tap play again.

- **"All players are hanging on 'connecting - waiting for players...'."**
    — Force close and restart the app. Make sure you are on the same wifi before restarting.

- **"A player's device dropped out of the game and returned to the start screen or lobby"**
    — The player somehow lost connection to the wifi. Now the game probably won't work for the rest of the players. The only solution is to start a new game. You can try and go back to the start screen by pressing the restart button in the menu.

- **"A player's device dropped out of the game and now all or some of the devices returned to the start screen or lobby."**
    — This most likely happened because the device that dropped out was the hosting device. The only solution is to start a new game.

Audio:

Controlling the audio output is different from iOS to Android. On iOS you should be able to control the volume of the game sounds and the phone call sound independently by turning the volume up/down using the physical volume buttons on the device when you are either in a phone call or not. On Android you need to set the independent volume settings inside the extended volume control settings. To do that, press the physical volume control up/down, now there should be a button next to the volume slider on the screen that, when pressed, lets you set the independent volume settings. You might need to be in a "phone call" to control the independent volume of the call.

- **"I cannot hear ANY audio."**
    — Make sure that the physical mute button is not toggled to mute. And make sure that you have turned the volume up.

- **"I cannot hear any speech in the phone calls."**
    — Make sure that your phone has a text-to-speech synthesizer installed. And make sure that the volume is turned up.

- **"Suddenly I cannot hear any speech in the phone calls."**
    — This bug has been present on iOS devices. If the audio does not return on the next phone call you have to force close and restart the app.

STRATEGY

SPOILER ALERT!

Do not read this if you want to explore the meta-strategies of COVER BLOWN! on your own.

STRATEGY

Deducing logic

There are two ways to clear the possible murder weapons and suspects from suspicion:

Information sharing - To clear a subject from suspicion you can share your information from calls with the other players. As a player could be lying, the collective needs a specific number of statements from different unique players in order to definitively clear the suspect or weapon. As such, the number of unique statements it takes to clear a subject depends on the number of dirty cops (DC) in a game: (1 DC) 2 statements, (2 DC) 3 statements, (3 DC) 4 statements.

Examine results - a "wrong" examine result effectively clears the examined subjects from any suspicion. A "fishy" examine result on the other hand is unspecific and only tells you that one of the subjects were involved in the murder.

> If **fishy**, the collectives consensus could be that the next examine has to check either the fishy suspect or the fishy weapon against another random element - this way, if the next examine is still fishy, the collective (and honest cops) will know that the element you kept is involved in the murder. If the new examine resulted in wrong, the collective will know it was the other fishy element.

> **Alternatively** - depending on the situation - the collective can decide to put the fishy elements aside and do two other elements for the examine but that result may also render fishy, and now the honest cops will have 4 fishy elements instead of having found the murderer or the murder weapon.

> If you chose the **first strategy** the collective can for future rounds (if any) focus all of its investigations on the element type (weapon or suspect) that is missing in the murder case.

Shooting Deduction Generally

The first shot is critical!

As every player has lives equal to the amount of cops +1, the first shot is very critical. If an honest cop shoots another honest cop, the dirty cop(s) can win the game buy quickly shooting and killing the injured honest cop. As such, Honest cops must be absolutely sure before they shoot a player.

If an honest cop shoot a dirty cop, the dirty cop will have to retaliate fast. If not, the rest of the honest cops will realize that no one else followed up on the shot (as per the point above), hence the shot must have hit a dirty cop. Instead, the dirty cop has to shoot back at the same or another honest cop fast, setting them both in an equally suspicious perspective.

Normally, an honest cop shoots first (since the dirty cops are hoping for an easy win), but a dirty cop can make a statement by being the first to shoot, making him stand in a clearer light (to everyone but the one he shot).

We are yet to fully understand the deduction logic players can use here for the different number of players.

Strategy for Confidential Informant sharing (aka. counter to honest cops cheese strategy)

After everyone has received their roles, the Honest Cops can make a play where they each declare their Confidential Informant(CI). The dirty cop(s) has two choices to continue to behave like an Honest cop: **1)** take a random suspect and declare it their CI, or **2)** take the murderer and declare it their CI.

For the first option, the danger is if the dirty cop takes an honest cop's CI before they have declared. This means the honest cop will now definitely know that the player is a dirty cop and shoot him. The dirty cop has to respond to this and shoot back in order to behave like an honest cop. This way, the rest of the honest cops will see both players as equally suspicious, as either could be dirty.

For the second option, the dirty cop(s) is in danger of being collectively forced by the honest cops to do a strategy where each examine contains a declared CI. This way, (in games of 3 and 4) the cops can collectively check all CI declarations and find the murderer (and the dirty cop) once an examine results in fishy. The risk for the honest cops is if the dirty cop took the first option (a random innocent suspect) as their declared CI, all examines will result in wrong, and the honest cops will have lost a lot of investigation information.

Strategies for Dirty Cops

The dirty cop(s) main goal is twofold; **1)** remain unsuspicious and act like any honest cop would do, while **2)** keep the murderer and murder weapon from being examined together. Cover Blown is balanced so that the dirty cop(s) almost always will have to lie at least once - sometimes more dictated by the meta-game and the RNG.

Lying implies:

> **Saying the murderer or the murder weapon is clean** - This is the obvious go to strategy, but timing can be very important. Obviously, if you are the only dirty cop, no one else will confirm your claims, and you could end up a sitting duck when having declared the last suspect clear, if every single other suspect has been cleared by the collective.

> **Sharing useless information** - You as a dirty cop can't simply say "I won't tell you my information" unless you can convince the collective of some meta-strategy. Instead, you will have to share information that is close to useless. This can be declaring a weapon or suspect clear, which have already been declared definitively clear by other players (reference: deducing logic on information sharing). Remember to not overdo it, or the honest cops may catch your scent.

> **Saying your Confidential Informant has had their cover blown** - If you are successful in convincing the honest cops that your CI can't give you any clues for the rest of the game, you can sit back and relax while not providing any information. The honest cops may however question why you did not protect your informant well enough when they were cross examined, and you will have to - depending on the situation - come up with a clever excuse.

Getting another player's CI examined - An opportunity may arise where you can convince the collective that an honest cop's CI is the murderer. If you examine an honest cop's CI, their cover will be blown, and you will have diminished the amount of useful information the honest cops can rely on for every future round.

Being clumsy - "Oh, damn! I accidentally pressed examined and blew the cover of your CI! Sorry!!!" or "I don't remember whether my CI said Katana or Cleaver" - Being clumsy can suffice as a reason behind many suspicious activities.

Playing the timer - Following up on being clumsy, an examine that either blows a CI's cover, or clears a suspect and/or weapon which was already cleared, is a good examine for a dirty cop. It effectively progresses towards one of your win conditions while diminishing the amount of useful information for the honest cops.
Alternatively, stalling and dragging out discussions in the open forum can spend a lot of time, forcing the collectives examination decision to be made fast and with minimal thought - maybe to your benefit.

Getting an honest cop shot by another honest cop - Tough, but maybe you can sow doubt about an honest cop's willingness to progress the investigation, and lure another honest cop into shooting them. This way you (and any other bad cops) can easily win the game by killing the honest cop fast - that is if you haven't used your bullet for any other meta-play.