

ALEPH NULL

The Ritual

Aim Of The Game

You're performing a ritual to summon Baphomet.

When he appears, Baphomet expects there to be no cards in your hand, the deck, and the discard pile; if there are any cards remaining in any of these **3 zones**, you lose.

However, "not losing" does not guarantee you have won! Any other cards still in play count against you and with too many cards in play you will lose regardless. Can you survive the harsh punishment of Baphomet?

Introduction by the designer

James Blish was an author of incredible breadth and imagination.

Perhaps more famous for his science fiction, particularly the **Cities In Flight** series and his many volumes of 'adapted' Star Trek novels, it is his '**After Such Knowledge**' series that inspires, astonishes and terrifies me in equal measure. **Doctor Mirabilis**, **A Case Of Conscience**, and **Black Easter or Faust Aleph Null**, and its sequel **The Day After Judgement** are exhilarating philosophical discussions on Faith and Love. The subject matter for Aleph Null will be disturbing to some, I am sure, but at its heart it is a paean to Humanity; it is redemption.

Tony Boydell

Components

69 cards



28 cards main deck



12 interference cards in 3 levels
level 1, 2 or 3 (here: 2)



9 Grimoire cards



14 FAQ cards



1 Baphomet card without text, for
if you want to play with style



3 blank interference cards
(for your own designs)



1 Aleph Null inspired Lux Aeterna Promo card



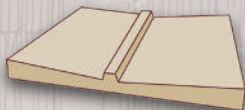
1 Lux Aeterna inspired Interference card



3 Magical Power tokens



3 Damage tokens



A wooden grimoire stand



This rulebook

The Preparation Of The Operator (aka Setting up the Game)

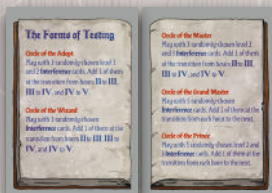


Place the wooden stand in easy reach and assemble the Grimoire Verum by putting the rectos (right side pages) in the correct order: **Cover, Circle, Preparation, Fasting, Fumigation, Exorcism, Reading, Last, and Hierarchy**.



Take the **3 Damage tokens** and **3 Magical Power tokens** and form a supply within reach.

Open the **Grimoire Verum** by turning the Cover to the left and chose your difficulty. For your **first game** we recommend to use the **easiest difficulty “Circle of the Adept”**. Shuffle the **necessary Interference cards** of the appropriate levels and randomly draw the given number of cards. Place these interference cards to the side and put the remaining interferences in the box.



Shuffle all 28 cards of the main deck and place them **face down**, this is **your deck**. Ensure that you leave enough space for a **discard pile** adjacent to it. Also leave space next to the Grimoire for the **sacrifice pile**.

Turn the next page of the Grimoire, it is now **SUNSET (Hour I)**.





You have now completed **The Preparation of the Operator** and are ready to begin the **ritual**.

Commencing the Ritual (aka Playing the Game)

The game is played over a number of turns. Each turn you draw cards, play them and discard the rest. Every time your deck is empty and you need to draw or reveal more cards you reshuffle your discard pile and advance the Hour. As you are thinning out your deck, the number of turns you can take before you need to reshuffle will decrease as the game goes on.

The Turn

A single turn always follows these steps, in order:

1. Draw 5 cards from the deck

These cards make up your **hand for the current turn**. At the **end of the turn** you must **discard all unused cards** from your hand.

If there are **not enough cards** in the main deck to fill up your hand, **draw as many** as you can. Then **advance the Hour** (see below) and continue drawing. If there are still not enough cards to make a full hand, draw as many as you can.

Advancing the Hour

Whenever you are instructed to advance the Hour you take the **discard pile**, **shuffle** these cards and set it up as the **new deck**. Depending on the chosen difficulty and the hour you may also need to add 1 **interference card** before shuffling. After the deck is set up, turn the grimoire to the next page.

You might take damage when you advance the Hour, see Magical Power below.

If for any reason the **hour advances past the final Hour** (THE COCK, HE DOTH CROW), and **Baphomet is not in play**, you **immediately lose the game**.

2. On The Use Of Cards



Cards can be in 1 of 5 different zones: in your deck, in your hand, in play, in the discard pile, or in the sacrifice pile.

Summon: bring cards into play

You cannot use the cards in your hand directly, you must **first** bring them into play by **summoning**.

To **summon** a card from your hand, you must **pay** its “**cost to summon**”. Most of the cards have a **Magical Power** cost (see Magical Power below) in the top-left corner – some cards have a **Special cost**. These Special cards mention their costs on the scroll. You may **summon as many cards as you want** during your turn and in **any order** you choose. There’s no limit to the number of cards you can have in play at the same time.



Important: Whenever you draw an **Interference card**, you must **summon it immediately**. If you draw **2 or more Interference cards**, you can summon them in **any order**, but you **must summon all** of them. If you **cannot pay** the associated **cost** (e.g. Akhtoi), you **must use** your cards in play in order to **generate** the necessary **Magical Power**. Until you summon all interference cards in hand, you cannot use cards in play for any effect other than generating Magical Power (see Magical Power below) nor can you summon any other cards.

Card Actions, Scrap, and Sacrifice

Once a card is **in play**, you may use its **card actions** during your turn. There are **card actions** you can **actively** use and they **always** include an **arrow**.

On the **left of the arrow**, you see the **cost to use** this action. On the **right of the arrow**, you see the **effect** you gain.



Example: When this card is in play, it allows you to either scrap or sacrifice it.

If you **scrap** a card, it goes to the **discard pile**.

If you **sacrifice** a card, it goes to the **sacrifice pile**; it is now out of the game.

If the action does not specify a certain card to be scrapped or sacrificed (see example), it always means itself.

Important: You **cannot just voluntarily** scrap or sacrifice a card. You may only ever do this if you have that option via a card cost or effect.

You may use any number of **card actions** in play (including any from cards just summoned) – either before or after summoning cards from your hand – as you see fit (Exception: Interference cards). Please note that cards that are scrapped or sacrificed **are put into their respective pile immediately**, before any of their effects is resolved or any other effects are triggered.

Ongoing effects

A card with **no arrow** has an **ongoing effect** that is active as long as that card is in play.



†-effect

Several cards have an †-effect. The †-effect of a card will be triggered and resolved only when the card is **sacrificed by any means**. If multiple of these effects are triggered at the same time, resolve them in any order you want.

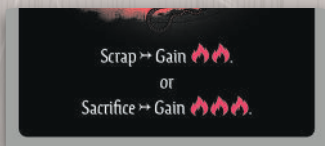
Please note: It is **irrelevant in what zone** the card with the †-effect was when it is sacrificed. Unless another effect prevents it, these effects always occur when sacrificed.

Magical Power

Many cards have a summoning cost of zero and, thus, can be summoned for free. Others have a magical power cost greater than zero. To summon these cards, you must have the necessary **Magical Power available** and spend it to pay the summoning cost.

The most common way to **generate Magical Power** is by scrapping or sacrificing a **Magical Power card**.

Example: If you scrap this card, you generate 2 Magical Power to spend, if you sacrifice it, you generate 3 Magical Power instead.



Whenever you gain Magical Power from cards, that Magical Power is “virtual”. You may use several actions to generate Magical Power and add them together to pay for a higher cost card. If you generate more Magical Power than you need the excess is not lost and is available to use until the end of your turn. You must keep track of any left-over Magical Power because you will **take damage for any unused Magical Power at the end of your turn** (see: 3. The End of Your Turn).

Three of the **Hours (III, IV, and V)** provide a bonus of **1 Magical Power**. While preparing these rounds place **1 Magical Power** token on the grimoire. You may use it the same way you use the “virtual” Magical Power and it is returned to the box, once used. These tokens do carry over from turn to turn.



Important: If **any token** is still on the grimoire when you **advance the Hour** again, you must take 1 damage for each token. See Taking Damage below. You keep the token(s).

Taking Damage

Whenever you are instructed to take 1 damage, you take 1 **damage token** from the supply and place it next to the grimoire. If you take the **third damage token** you **immediately lose the game**.



Discard

If an effect instructs you to discard a card, it goes directly **to the discard pile**. This will usually **not trigger any effects**.

Golden Rule

If any card effect contradicts these rules, the card effects take precedence.

3. The End of Your Turn

When you cannot, or choose not to, summon and/or use any further cards – you must **discard all remaining cards from your hand** and end your turn.

For each unused “virtual” Magical Power (i.e. Magical Power that you generated or received from cards during your turn AND did not spend) you **must take 1 damage and forfeit** the “virtual” Magical Power. Magical Power tokens stay.

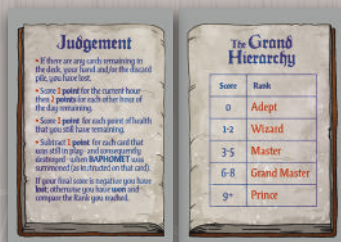
End of the Game

The game may end in a number of different ways:

1. You have taken the third damage token from the supply. You die a horrible death and **lose!**
2. You sacrificed a Key for anything other than summoning Baphomet. You face the wrath of Baphomet and **lose!**
3. You advance the Hour past the VI. Hour. You’ve run out of time and **lose!**
4. You have summoned Baphomet. You **may have won!** Immediately proceed to Final Scoring.

Final Scoring

Once you've successfully summoned Baphomet the ritual is over and the game ends. Take note of the current Hour and then turn the Grimoire to the final two pages (Judgement) to check if you did indeed win.



1. Check if there are any cards remaining in the deck, your hand and/or the discard pile; if there is at least 1 card in any of these 3 zones, you have lost and do not even have the dignity of recording a final score.
2. If you have not yet lost, you may proceed to calculating your score:
3. Score 1 point. Score 2 additional points for each Hour remaining (e.g. summoning Baphomet during Hour IV would score 1+2+2=5 points).
4. Following the instructions on Baphomet, you will have to deduct 1 point for each OTHER non-Key card sacrificed in play by summoning Him.
5. Add 1 point for each damage token in the supply (i.e. that you did not take).

If your **final score is negative, you have lost** and have to face the wrath of Baphomet. If your final **score is 0 or higher, you have won**. Check your score against the Grand Hierarchy and take note of your rank.

Music

If you're enjoying Aleph Null and want the full experience, Nicholas O'Neill prepared 6 tracks of music to play alongside the 6 Hours of Aleph Null (mp3 and full musical notation):

capstone-games.com/board-games/aleph-null

You can listen to each track just before beginning that Hour or try your hand by playing the music yourself.



For Tenor, at concert and for SATB, Soprano

I - Sunset

Distorted and ethereal, slightly wobbly
 Moderate (70-80)
 12/8

p

5

9

13

17

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slowing

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Tempo primo

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Credits

Game design: Tony Boydell

Artwork and graphics: Alex Lee @storyofalex

Original soundtrack: Nicholas O'Neill

Development: Matthias Nagy

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Tony wants to say Thanks to: Nicholas O'Neill, John "MrShep" Shepherd,
Matthias Nagy and eternal thanks to James Blish.



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