



by Peter Cobcroft

Get your thief past the guards to the vault, steal the treasure and escape before any of the other thieves. Play cards to distract guards, or alert them to the presence of the other thieves in the keep.

Created for the **Hidden Movement Challenge**. Inspired by the computer game *Thief: The Dark Project* by *Looking Glass Studios*. A non-cooperative game of players versus the environment.

Objective

To win the game your thief must-

1. Reach the **Vault Hex** without being caught by a guard.
2. Reveal your hidden **Treasure Card**. As soon as you leave the Vault Hex, your Treasure Card will start slowing down your movement.
3. Reach an **Outside Hex** on the Map Tile marked with your **Exit Thief Card** (see *Outside Hexes, pg8*). You must do this while suffering the restrictions of your Treasure and without being caught by a guard.
4. Play a movement Thief Card to move off the **Outside Hex** on that map tile and get away into the night.



If other players look like they might be closer to winning, **play Guard Cards** to alter the guard behaviours so they will catch those other pesky thieves.

Components

- 1 black dice
- 10 wooden meeples (3 blue **Stationary** guards, 3 green **Patrolling** guards, 4 red **Wandering** guards)
- 3 translucent avatars (blue, green and red **Thief Markers**)
- 3 **Location Dials** (blue, green and red)
- 5 double sided hexagonal mats (1 **Vault Map Tile** with a yellow crown symbol in the centre, 3 **Map Tiles**, 1 **Play Aid**)
- 16 double sided hexagonal tile punch outs (4 Alert/Interested, 4 Bored/Distracted & 4 Pursuing/Returning **Status Counters**, 4 Rock/Extinguished Torch counters)
- 69 Cards (1 **First Player**, 3 **Sequence of Play**, 5 **Treasure**, 24 **Guard Cards**, 12 blue, 12 green and 12 red **Thief Cards**)

Setup

The Thief cards and the Guard cards have the same back, so you will need to sort them based on their faces. (see *Cards* for more details, pg3)

- Sort the Thief cards into 3 player decks (Green, Blue and Red)
- Shuffle the Guard cards
- Shuffle the Treasure cards

Each Player should then-

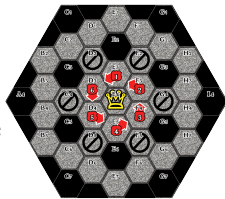
- **Randomly choose which Treasure** you are after. You may look at this card, but should keep it hidden from other players. Your treasure card doesn't go into your hand, but is kept nearby.
- **Randomly choose a Map Tile**. This is the tile you will be responsible for moving the guard(s) on during the game. You can use either side of the tile.
- **Choose Guards**

Easy difficulty: Randomly choose one guard to go on your map tile.

Hard difficulty: Randomly choose two different kinds of guard to go on your map tile.

You start with your **Thief Cards**, a **Thief Marker** and a **Location Dial** of your colour (blue, green or red) and a **Sequence of Play** card.

Place the **Vault Map Tile** in the centre of the table. Don't place any guard on this tile yet, the guard only appears when a thief enters the tile for the first time. You can place this tile either side up, it changes the direction the guard will move.



Vault Map Tile

Place the **Play Aid** tile next to the Vault Map Tile in any direction you like. It gives you a place to put your guard card deck and discards, reminds you of the guard statuses, and provides the common directions that every player will use for moving their thief.



Play Aid

Determine the **First Player** - the player wearing the darkest clothing.

Starting with the First Player and going clockwise, each player places their map tile so it touches the Vault Map Tile, then you place the guard you picked on its starting location (see **Guards**, pg4). Place a guard **Status Marker** under your guard.

Starting The Game

Starting with the **First Player**, you:

1. Place your **Thief Marker** next to the map tile you will be entering. You aren't choosing which hex yet, you do that secretly in step 3
2. Place your **Exit card** next to a different non-vault map tile.
3. Secretly choose which **Outside Hex** (see **Outside Hexes**, pg8) your thief is entering on your **Location Dial**. Each non-vault hex will give either two, three or four choices for a starting location depending on how many other map tiles are next to it.

You can choose to enter and exit on the same map tiles as other players.

Each Turn

A turn is broken up into three phase: Initiative, Resource and Movement. The movement phase is repeated five times before you proceed to the next turn.

1. Initiative Phase

Change **First Player**

The player that now goes first is the one clockwise to the previous first player, Pass the First Player card.

2. Resource Phase

Remove any **Thief Markers** that are out of the line of sight of any guard (see **Line of Sight** for more details, pg6) and any **Resting Thief Markers**.

Place **5 guard cards** face up so every player can see them.

In order you spend your **thief cards** with the **Gold Coin** symbol to buy guard cards.

You may buy a face up guard card, or an unknown face down card from the deck of guard cards

- A face up Guard card costs between one and three **Gold Coins** as shown on the card.
- A face down card from the deck costs **two gold coins**.



Gold Coin

Spent thief cards are placed face up in front of the player such that other players can see what they are. Spent cards are not stacked, but placed side by side so they can all be seen. Only thief cards with the gold coin symbol on them can be spent. Bought guard cards go into your deck immediately.

You may buy as many guard cards in your turn as you can afford but your **deck may only contain 6**.

Bought guard cards are not replaced, so some players may not be able to buy face up cards in this phase.

Face up cards that aren't bought are discarded to the Guard Discard pile.

3. Movement Phases

Repeat the Guards and the Players Movement Phases five times.

Guards Movement Phase

In player order, each player moves the guard(s) on the map tile they are responsible for. The first thief that moves onto the **Vault Map Tile** is also responsible for initially placing and subsequently moving the guard on that tile from now on.

Guards move according to their type and status. (see *Guards* for more details, pg4)

- **Stationary** (blue meeple) guards rotate clockwise one hex side.
- **Patrolling** (green meeple) guards move along their patrol route one hex, facing the next hex they will move into. If they reach the end of the route, they turn around.
- **Wandering** (red meeple) guards move one hex in the direction of the red arrow and face the next hex they will move into.

Guards check to see if they spot a thief (see *Line of Sight* for more details, pg6), or if they fulfill their patrol route or the conditions to change their status.

Players Movement Phase

Each player secretly plays one card face down in front of them from their deck. This card will be either a **Thief Card** or a **Guard Card**. **Thief Cards** allow you to move, hide, get your cards back (with **Rest**) or **Pick Pocket** a guard. **Guard Cards** modify guard behaviour or give your thief temporary advantages.

Once all players have played a card (Thief or Guard) the cards are turned face up, resolved (in player order if that becomes important), and then put in the line of spent cards in front of the player. (see *Movement* for more details, pg7)

If your **card is invalid** (i.e. a Rope Arrow card, but the thief is not next to a Special Hex), your thief remains stationary.



Guard cards are moved to the **Guard Card discard pile** after their effects cease.

Played thief cards remain on the table face up in front of you until you eventually play a **Rest** card to get them back. Resting is the only way to get your thief cards back.

Everyone now secretly updates their **Location Dial** to their current location.



Location Dial

Guards check to see if they spot a thief, or if they fulfill their patrol route or the conditions to change their status. (see *Guards*, pg4)

Winning And Losing The Game

You win the game if you are the first thief to exit the Keep with your treasure. You lose if your thief is caught by a guard.

Additional Instructions

Cards

Your Thief Deck consists of any unplayed and unspent Thief Cards of your colour and any unplayed Guard Cards you have acquired.

All cards in your Thief Deck are available to use in your turn. Your hand size is the same as your deck size.

Treasure Cards

Each of the treasure cards will slow your thief down in some way. They are kept secret until you reach the **Vault Hex** on the **Vault Map Tile**, and then revealed. The effects of the treasure card **come into play as soon as you leave the Vault Hex**, so it's best to **Rest** there before leaving.

Thief Cards

When Guard Cards are bought with Thief Cards, the Guard Cards immediately go into your Thief Deck. Only cards showing a **Gold Coin** may be spent to buy Guard Cards and you can only have 6 in your deck

Thief Cards are placed face down in the *Players Movement Phase* and turned face up when every player is ready.

Your thief must move according to the card played if they can.

Spent Thief Cards (from buying Guard Cards, or from using them in the *Players Movement Phase*) are always placed in a line in order of use in front of you such that all other players can see all your spent cards.

You can only get your Thief Cards back by **Resting**.

Guard Cards

These cards are used to influence the guards in the game. Either to reduce the risk to your thief, or increase the risk to another player's thief.

Unless otherwise stated, a Guard Card can be played on any guard on the table.

Guard Cards are bought with **Gold Coins** from **Thief Cards** in the *Resource Phase*, or obtained by **Pick Pocketing** a guard in the *Players Movement Phase*. Guard Cards cannot be used to buy other Guard Cards. You may have a **maximum of 6 Guard Cards** in your Thief Deck.

Guard Cards are played instead of Thief Cards in the *Players Movement Phase* and once used, go to the discard pile and are reshuffled when there are no more Guard Cards left.

You do not have to reveal the actual location of your thief if you play a card that says “within line of sight of your thief”.

Guards

There are three types of guard in the basic game – Stationary (blue), Patrolling (green) and Wandering (red)

Guard Setup

Setup guards according to their type (see *Types of Guard* below).

The guard on the **Vault Map Tile** is always a **Wandering** guard (red meeple). This guard isn't placed until the vault map tile is entered by a thief for the first time. The player of that thief is now responsible for moving the guard for the vault.

Guards start the game as either **Bored** (if a **Stationary** guard) or **Interested**. Place a status counter under each one to show their status.

Catching Thieves



If a guard hears a noise (e.g. from a Thief using the **Run** card) it will change to **Alert** status if it is **Distracted**, **Bored** or **Interested**.


If a guard ever spots a thief, it will change to **Pursuing** status. (see *Line of Sight*, pg6)

If a guard investigates (moves into the same hex as) a **Thief Marker**:

- If the **Thief Marker matches the location on that thief's Location Dial** - the thief is caught and out of the game.
- If the thief is not there:
 - but a thief is within **line of sight**, that thief is spotted and then pursued,
 - but another Thief Marker is within **line of sight**, the guard will begin moving to investigate that Thief Marker
 - and there is nothing within **line of sight** the guard changes to **Returning** status.

Types of Guard

 <p><i>Stationary (blue)</i></p> <p>A Stationary guard (blue meeple) starts on the blue crescent marker on the map tile facing in a random direction. Roll the black die.</p> <p>Each <i>Guards Movement Phase</i> the Stationary Guard rotates to face the next clockwise hex side.</p> <p>Stationary guard default status is Bored.</p>	<p>Map Tile Hexes</p>  <p><i>Starting hex with random facing</i></p>
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 <p>Patrolling guard (green meeple) starts on the green star marker on the map tile.</p> <p><i>Patrolling (green)</i></p> <p>Each <i>Guards Movement Phase</i> the Patrolling guard moves towards the green shield marker on the map tile following the green line. The guard always faces towards the next hex it will move into. Once the Guard reaches the shield marker it will immediately turn around and on the next <i>Guards Movement Phase</i> commence to move towards the star marker.</p> <p>Patrolling guard default status is Interested</p>	<p>Map Tile Hexes</p>  <p><i>Start (star)</i></p>  <p><i>Route (line)</i></p>  <p><i>End (shield)</i></p>
 <p>A Wandering guard (red meeple) starts on a random red shield marker. Roll the black die.</p> <p><i>Wandering (red)</i></p> <p>Each <i>Guards Movement Phase</i> the Wandering guard moves one hex along the path indicated by the red arrows. The guard always faces towards the next hex it will move into.</p> <p>Wandering guard default status is Interested</p>	<p>Map Tile Hexes</p>  <p><i>A random start hex (shield)</i></p>  <p><i>Path (arrow)</i></p>

Guard Statuses

Guards may have the following statuses, marked with a **Status Counter**. The counter also shows the direction the guard is moving or viewing (see *Line of Sight* below)

<p>Distracted</p>  <p>A player has played the Art Guard Card on a Bored guard. The guard does not have a line of sight to anything until the next <i>Resource Phase</i>. Then change the guard back to its normal status.</p> <p>If the guard was a Stationary type, roll to see which direction they now face.</p> <p>If Patrolling on a 1-3 towards the star, 4-6 towards the shield.</p>
<p>Bored</p>  <p>The default for a Stationary (blue) Guard. The guard's line of sight only extends 2 hexes.</p>
<p>Interested</p>  <p>The default for Patrolling (green) and Wandering (red) Guards.</p> <p>The guard's line of sight is a single row of hexes in front of them extending until stopped by a wall.</p>
<p>Alert</p>  <p>The guard is actively looking around. Line of sight is a 180 degree arc that includes the front three hex sides and all full hexes within that arc.</p>
<p>Pursuing</p>  <p>The guard has the same line of sight arc as an Alert guard, and has spotted a thief.</p> <p>The guard moves two hexes each <i>Guards Movement Phase</i> towards the nearest visible Thief Marker.</p> <p>When the guard reaches the marker, it will investigate. (see <i>Catching Thieves</i> above).</p>



Returning

The guard has failed to catch the thief and is returning via the shortest route back to their regular spot or the nearest hex of their patrol route. The guard has the same line of sight arc as **Alert** and **Pursuing** and moves 1 hex each *Guards Movement Phase* until it reaches its destination. Then it returns to its default status for its type.

If the guard was a **Stationary** type, roll to see which direction they now face.

If **Patrolling** on a 1-3 towards the star, 4-6 towards the shield.

In the above example -

The **Wandering Guard** at **F2** is **Distracted** and has no line of sight at all. A thief could stand next to this guard and not be seen.

The **Patrolling Guard** at **D3** is **Alert** and can see off the map tile to the top left (hexes B2 and C3 etc) also the full hexes of B3 (which is a Special Hex), C4, C5, C6, D4, D5 and E6. The guard can only see parts of the hexes B5, C7, E5, E7 and F6 and so cannot spot a thief in those hexes. The guard cannot see through the Special Hex and so cannot spot a thief at A4 either.

The **Stationary Guard** at **E4** is **Bored** and can only see 2 hexes. It can only see hexes F4 and G5.

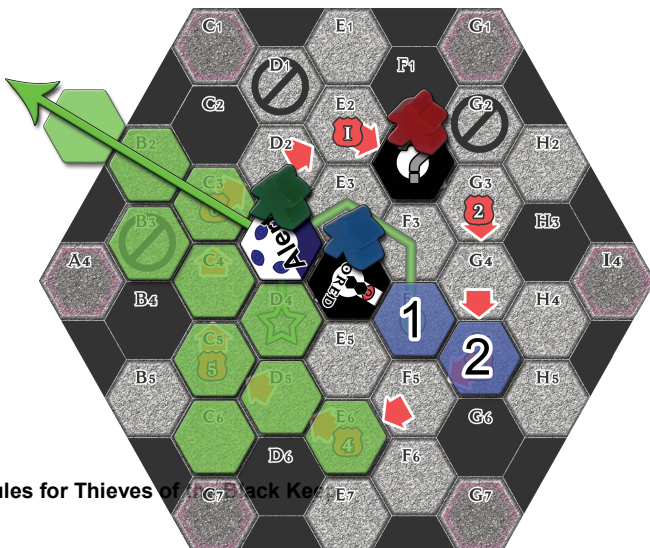
Line of Sight

A guard's line of sight is measured in a **straight line from the centre of the hex** the guard is in.

It extends past every map tile unless it hits a wall or if it is limited by a status that shortens their line of sight (e.g. **Distracted** or **Bored**).

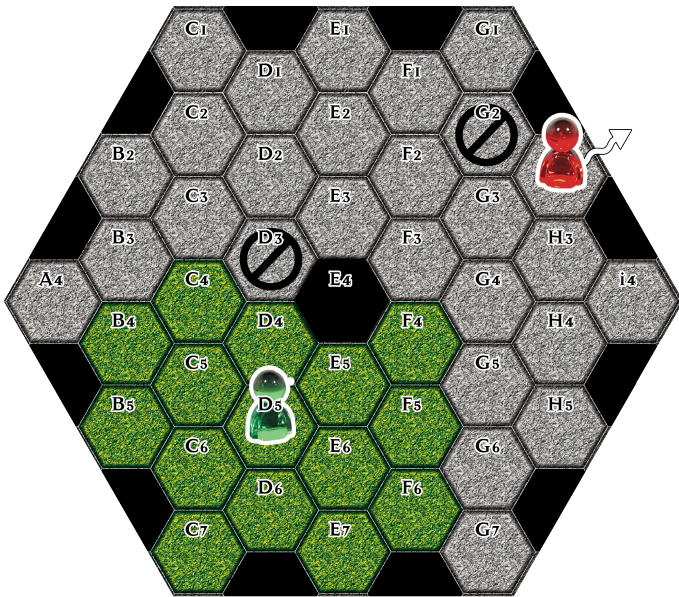
All guards normally look down the row of hexes in their immediate front. If on a more attentive status - this line of sight expands to a 3 hex side (180 degree) arc to their front, but does not include hexes they can only partially see (i.e. they must be able to draw an uninterrupted line to each of the 6 corners of the hex).

A guard has line of sight into a **Special Hex** but not through it to the hex on the other side.



Movement

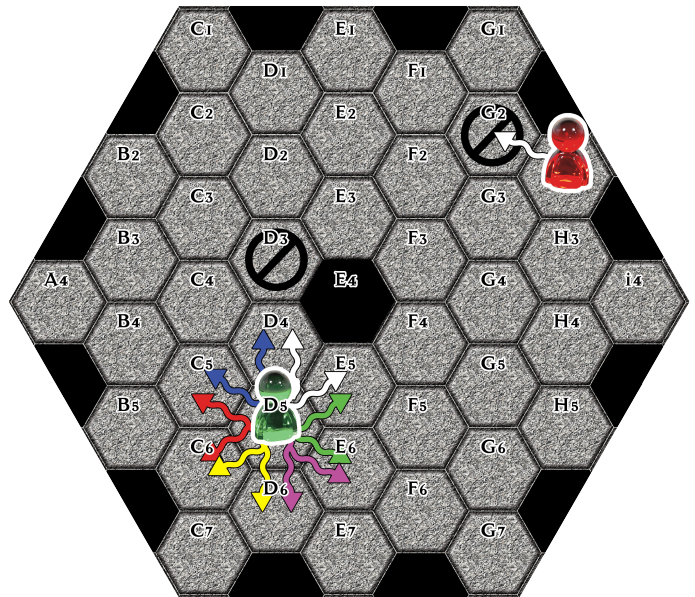
Movement directions are based on the compass rose shown on the **Play Aid** tile. How you place the Play Aid tile is up to the players and directions may be in any facing, but as all players are using the same compass rose, they will be consistent.



In the above example -

the red thief at **H2** can only move to a different map tile by playing the **Nor-East, East** or **Run** card

the green thief at **D5** can move to any of the green hexes by playing a **Run** card. Note - they can't move into the wall or the special hex.



In the above example -

the red thief at **H2** can only move into the special hex **G2** by playing the **Rope Arrow** card

the green thief at **D5** can move to -

- **C5** or **D4** (blue arrows) by playing a **Nor-West** card
- **D4** or **E5** (white arrows) by playing a **Nor-East** card
- **E5** or **E6** (green arrows) by playing an **East** card
- **E6** or **D6** (purple arrows) by playing a **Sou-East** card
- **C6** or **D6** (yellow arrows) by playing a **Sou-West** card
- **C5** or **C6** (red arrows) by playing a **West** card

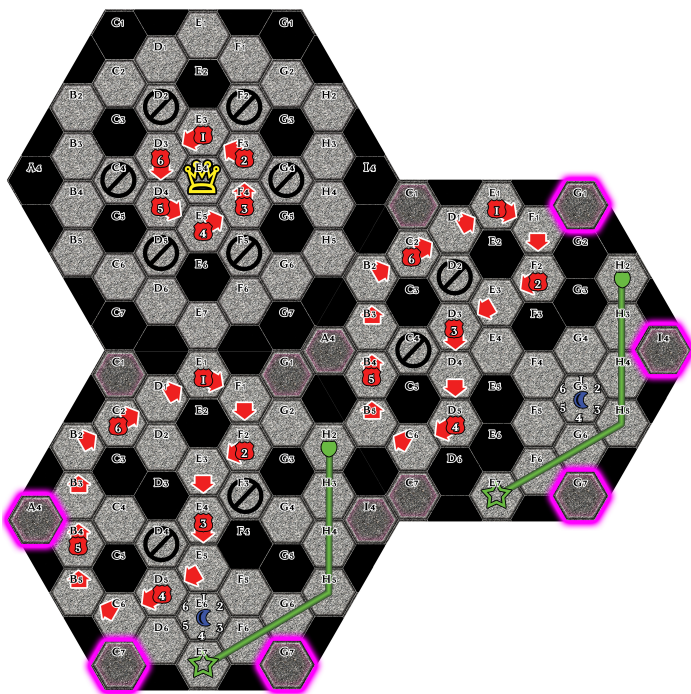
Outside Hexes

A hex is defined as an **Outside Hex** and therefore a legitimate way for a thief to enter or exit the Keep if:

The hex is not on the **Vault Map Tile**

The hex is one of the six corner hexes of a map tile

The hex has two hex sides not adjacent to any other hex



Outside Hexes are shown with a purple border.

Alternate Rules

The expansion to this game includes components for up to 6 players, as well as rules and additional parts for guards to be armed with bows, a roving guard and the undead.

Credits

The following people made this game possible.

Game Concept:	Peter Cobcroft
Artwork:	Peter Cobcroft
Play Testers:	Victor Connor
	Deborah Gaskell
	Michael Glew
	David Jameson
	Jason Morton
	Doug Taylor
	Craig Wayling

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For the full rules, including the expansion rules, see the downloadable PDF here-

<https://www.thegamecrafter.com/games/thieves-of-the-black-keep>

Or my wiki here- <http://curufea.com>

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