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Summary: *The Harvest* is a strategy card game of crime and intrigue, set in Fight City (the fictional city of Selaria, Mississippi). Players control crews of nefarious characters, manipulating the political landscape in an attempt to drive their opponents' influence to zero. The core rules are written for two players, but rules for 3 to 5 players require just a few adjustments, below.

Components: Each player starts with 21 points of *health*. You can use tokens or paper money to represent this. A player's health can never go above 21. If you reach 0, you lose. Note that our print-on-demand version includes paper money (cards), enough for two players.

The Deck: The deck contains 36 character cards. Each card has a value between 1 and 6, shown in the upper right, and a different value on the other side (this is shown below the main value). The 36-card deck comprises one of each combination of the values 1 through 6.

Each card has character information on both sides. The "faceup" side has ability text, and the "facedown" side has the card's reset cost. Whether faceup or facedown, the card's *value* (for attacking etc.) is the number in the upper right. Many cards get stronger when flipped over.

All cards start faceup, except for cards in the discard pile, which are always kept facedown. If a card returns to play from the discard pile, it remains facedown, unless otherwise indicated.

Beginner Setup: If you are new to the game, we suggest using a random setup to get a feel for the rules. Once you have played once or twice, you can use the normal setup described below.

Shuffle the deck and deal a hand of three cards to each player, face up. All cards in play, including players' hands, remain on the table in full view. Deal three more cards into the center of the table, called *the Street*. Discard one more card, to start the discard pile.

Add up the values in each player's hand, and in the Street. If the lowest total is in the Street, you are ready to begin. If not, then the player with the lowest hand swaps it with the Street. Break ties alphabetically, by card name, with the earliest letter indicating the lower hand.

Then, the player with the lowest valued hand will go first.

Normal Setup: Shuffle the deck, and have either player call "odd" or "even." Deal three cards into the Street, and discard the fourth card to start the discard pile. Use the oddness of this discard (face down) to determine who will draft first.

Starting with that player, each player will take one card at a time from the Street into their hand, face up, and after each, a new card will be dealt from the deck into the Street. Take turns, taking one card at a time, until both players have a hand of three.

As above, the player with the lowest total value in their hand will go first, with ties broken alphabetically by character name.

On Each Turn

On your turn, you must do one of the following four things: *activate* an ally or a neutral card, *attack* with an ally, *reset* an ally, or *buy* the top card of the deck.

Option 1: Activate Cards in your hand are your *allies*. Cards in the Street are *neutral*. You may activate any faceup ally or neutral card. To "activate" a card means to follow its instructions and then turn it facedown. Below are some common rules and terms.

All Players / Each Player: When a card instructs multiple players to do something, the action happens in turn order, and begins with the current player.

Discard: Unless the instruction specifies otherwise, "discard" means moving a card from your hand into the discard pile.

Draw: Unless the instruction specifies otherwise, "draw" means taking the top card of the deck into your hand.

Flip: Turn a card over (faceup to facedown, or vice versa).

Follow the Instructions: When a card tells you to follow the instructions on a different card, this *does not* automatically flip the other card.

Gain: When you gain points, your health can never go higher than your starting health. If you try to regain more than your maximum health, you return to your starting health.

Hit: To “hit” a player is to damage them, similar to what happens in an attack. Damage that originates from cards can be prevented in the same way as basic attacks.

In Play: The cards “in play” include all cards in players’ hands and the Street, but not in the deck or the discard pile.

Impossible Instructions: If a card gives you an instruction that you cannot follow, you ignore that instruction, but you still follow the others. General definitions above may be contradicted by specific card wording, in which case the card takes precedence.

Timing: Cards that you have activated flip facedown *after they are finished being executed*. If you need to determine the value of a card (or anything else about it) while you are still following its instructions, you treat the card as if it is faceup. If a card would somehow reflip itself, this is essentially ignored; the card will always be facedown after it has been activated.

Option 2: Attack You may *attack* with an ally by sending it into the Street. This will *damage* your opponent, and they will lose health points equal to the value of the attacker. However, your opponent may *prevent* some or all of this damage by passing you cards from the Street.

To prevent N points of damage, your opponent may move a total of N value in cards from the Street into your hand. They may use any mix of cards to do this, with one exception: Single cards cannot prevent damage from cards of the same size, unless their secondary value (that is, the value on the other side of the card) is strictly *lower than that of the attacking card*.

For example, if a player attacks with a 5/4, the damage can be prevented using a 5/3 or below, or any mix of cards totaling 5, but not a 5/4 or higher. (This rule prevents endless loops.)

If damage comes from a card ability (rather than a basic attack), then secondary values do not matter.

You cannot over-prevent, meaning that you can’t prevent more damage than you are due. Any unprevented damage is subtracted from your health. When a player reaches zero, they lose.

A note on the metaphor of attacking: Imagine that your closest allies are those in your hand, and the characters in the Street are unaffiliated. You can activate either group (your hand or the street) for their special ability, but when it comes to attacking, only those in your inner circle are capable. On the other hand, when it comes to blocking, you can never sacrifice someone in your inner circle, but you might be willing to compromise the loyalty of a neutral character.

Option 3: Reset If you have a facedown card in your hand, you may pay its *reset* cost in points, to flip that card face up again. Resetting one card takes your entire turn.

Option 4: Buy You may *buy* the top card of the deck, taking it into your hand. You must pay for this with health equal to the value of the card. Cards from the deck enter your hand faceup.

Passing: You must do exactly one of the actions above; you cannot pass. If every available option would reduce your health to zero, you lose.

Other Rules:

Street Max 3: The Street can hold no more than three cards. At the end of each turn, if there are more than three cards in the Street, discard *all cards of the highest value* and check again. This could discard several cards at once, leaving fewer than three in the Street. (Note that there is no minimum size for the Street, only a maximum, and the Street does not automatically refill.)

Discard Pile Min 1: There must always be a card in the discard pile. At the end of any turn, after checking the street rule above, if the discard pile is empty, discard the top card of the deck. The “discard pile” is not strictly a pile, but a collection of cards that are out of play. Cards in the discard pile are always facedown, and have no particular order. If you retrieve a card from the discard pile, it enters play facedown, unless otherwise directed.

Empty Hand: You do not necessarily lose when your hand is empty. You can still activate cards in the Street or buy cards from the deck. However, if none of these options are available to you, because they would run your health to zero, you lose.

End of Game: You lose the game when you reach zero health. There isn't currently a way for more than one player to lose at the same time, but if this happens, the active player wins.

Multiplayer Rules:

To play with more than two players, make the following adjustments:

The Draft: Randomly determine who drafts first, or use the basic setup, swapping the lowest player's hand with the middle if the middle is not already the lowest.

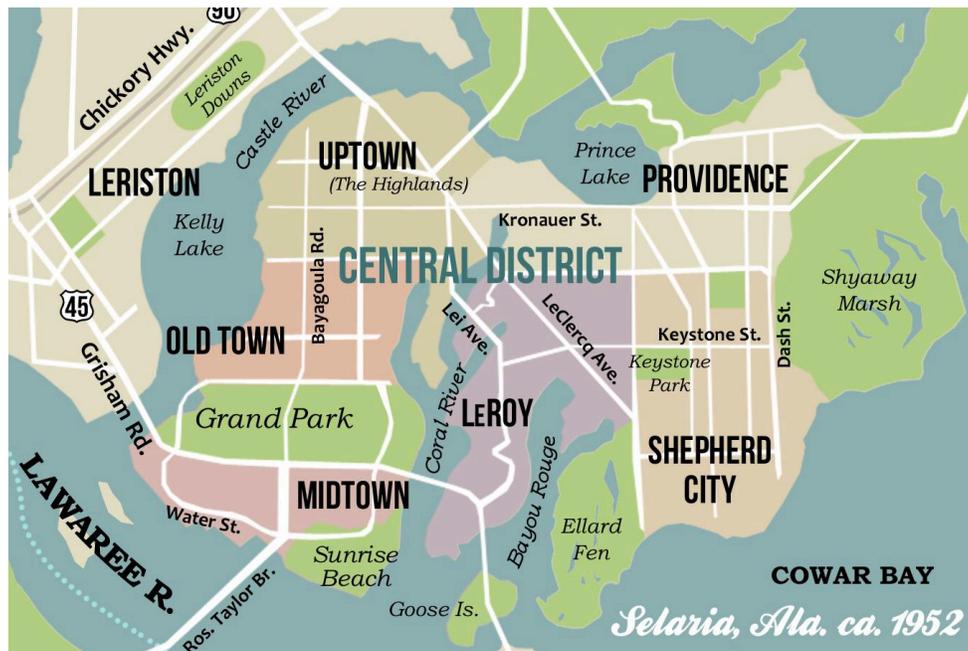
Direction of Attack: Generally, cards that target “an opponent” can apply to any other player. When you attack, you decide the target. That player decides how to prevent the damage.

Endgame: The game ends as soon as one player reaches zero health. Then, the player with the most health wins, with ties going to the player farther back in the turn order.

About Fight City:

Selaria, Mississippi, better known as Fight City, is a fictional city on the American Gulf Coast, originally invented for the Cheapass card game *Fight City*. It was later revisited in the Button Men reboot, “Beat People Up.”

Fight City is a nearly independent city-state on the Lawaree river, a fictional river on the border between Alabama and Mississippi, and is controlled by a menagerie of warring crime families. “The Harvest” was a period of savage upheaval in 1959-1960, when stresses in the underworld unfolded into a tumultuous gang war.



About The Game:

This card set represents a “basic” game, but *The Harvest* has dozens of obvious expansion hooks. Potential card types include permanent effects, triggered abilities, token-tracked abilities, alterations to core mechanics, alternate game objectives, two-faced cards, keyword abilities, and so forth. Once we have locked the core set, we will begin to explore these directions.

Playtest Notes: This game is now in a perpetual open beta test, and we welcome your feedback. Send a note to [Crab Fragment Labs](https://crabfragment.com) and let us know what you think!

Playtesters: Karen Aronld Ewing, Isaac Barry, Tony Ewing, John Haremza, Joe Kisenwether, Nora Miller, Jeff Morrow, Dave Rohrl, Greg Whitehead, John Wick, Jeff Wilcox, and many many more.