

THE YEAR IS 2220.

Government transport fleets have relocated vast numbers of Rain City inhabitants to the mining colonies that form a new ring of power in the far reaches of Sumerius, the economic heart of the known galaxy. Settlements were established, and while an alien presence formed a hostile environment for the local production facilities, operations ran in relative peace.

But then came the silence. One of the stations on Recon-6, a smaller mining planet, stopped sending signals to earth. The government decided to send a group of soldiers to investigate what might have caused this sudden loss of contact.

They never returned.

In a last-ditch effort to solve this mystery, a special unit of heavily trained troopers was sent out, with each trooper accompanied by a sophisticated new type of bio-mechanical android, adapting its actions to its master's commands and behavior, forming a telepathic team.

But the team was doomed upon entering: the alien parasite lurking in the darkness was of an unknown species, and the team arrived woefully unprepared. No bullet can penetrate the parasite's hard shell body and the team found itself at the mercy of the equipment left behind by the research team that discovered the parasite hive inside the complex before getting slaughtered.

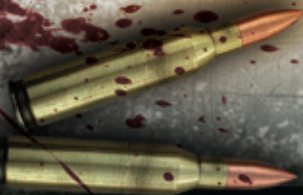
Even worse, there were signs of the parasite entering its host and taking control over bodily functions, turning the victim into an inhuman killing machine. From notes the team gathered information about the species sensitivity to heat. Their only hope is to collect the thermo-nuclear ammo developed by the research team of the station, to battle the crawling creatures.

But, the clock is ticking, and there is an infected member amongst the team. He will do anything to take over each member one by one, until every glimmer of hope vanishes in the dark hallways of the station.

Welcome to Recon-6.

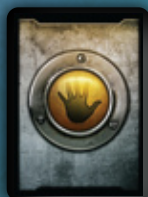
Your mission is to locate the parasite hive and destroy it.

Welcome to Panic Station.

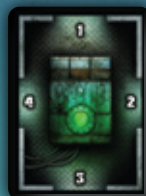




Welcome to the Panic Station



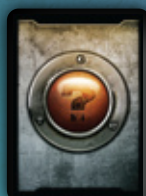
46 Search Cards
Containing the items that can be found during searches. This deck also includes the Host card.



20 Exploration Cards
Forming 20 locations that can be explored during the mission.



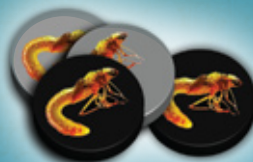
12 Character Cards
A set of 2 for each player, representing the characters under his control.



12 Check Cards
Used during heat scans to detect the presence of infected individuals. These are 6 positive (red) and 6 negative (blue) cards.



12 Wooden Character Discs
To mark the location of characters. 2 in each player's color: a Trooper and an Android.



10 Wooden Parasite Discs
Representing the parasites that roam the base. The set consists of 5 black (heavier) and 5 gray (standard) parasites. Black parasites are two sided and have a gray and black face.



18 Infect Cards
Consisting of 6 sets of 3 in the players colors, used to transfer the parasite to human players in hopes of turning them to the infected side. The backs are identical to the search deck cards.



1 4-Sided Die
To resolve parasite placement and movement



1 Heat-Check Board
Used to form 2 piles of cards during heat-checks.

Game Summary

Panic Station is a paranoia-driven cooperative game in which you control 2 characters in the Extermination Corps sent out by the government to investigate the presence of fiendish alien life forms. Players move both their Androids and Troopers through the base, exploring and gathering equipment that will help them to complete their mission: to find and destroy the Parasite Hive hidden somewhere in the inner depths of this doomed location.

A player who gets his Trooper into the Hive and plays 3 gas can cards to fuel his Flamethrower wins the game for the humans.

However, 1 of the players will become a Host. He must keep this identity secret, infecting or killing as many team members as possible to gain allies and prevent the humans from completing their mission. Only players who carefully watch the behavior of team members will stand a chance against the infected players and roaming parasites.

Panic Station is a game of growing paranoia in which no one can truly trust anyone. Can you maintain your sanity and destroy the source of this evil?

Before Your First Game

Carefully apply a sticker of the appropriate color to each wooden disk. Note that the gray parasites receive only one sticker per disk. The black parasite disk will have a black parasite sticker on one side and one of the remaining gray parasite stickers on the reverse side.

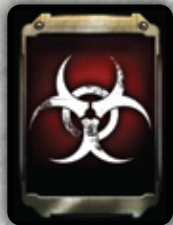
Game Setup

At the start of the game each player receives:

- 2 character tokens and character cards in a chosen color (a Trooper and an Android).
- 2 Check Cards: 1 "positive" and 1 "negative."
- 3 infection cards in the chosen color.

Place the Reactor room in the center of the table. It is the room surrounded by the numbers 1 to 4. This card forms the starting location.

Players keep their Check Cards to the side until needed for a heat scan.



The Host Card

Now the Search Deck is properly arranged for game play. To accomplish this take 1 gas card per player and shuffle these cards together with a number of randomly drawn cards from the Search Deck equal to twice the number of players less one card. Shuffle the Host card into this small set of cards and then place this set of cards face down on top of the Search Deck. This means that for any number of players, this small set of cards will be three times the number of players. For example, in a 5 player game this small set of cards should contain 5 gas cards, 9 random cards ($[5 \times 2] - 1$) and the single Host card. In a 6 player game, there would be 6 gas cards, 11 random cards and the single Host Card.

Each player is now dealt 2 cards from the top of the Search Deck (the set of cards on the top that was just created). Every player now secretly looks at his hand. If he received a Parasite alert card, he must immediately resolve it by placing a gray parasite into the Reactor Room and then take an additional card. All players should have 5 cards in their hand to begin the game - their 3 infection cards and two random cards from the Search Deck. It may be possible that the Host Card is already in one player's hand, and therefore someone is already infected!

Next, Players should place their 2 character cards face up in front of themselves, with the 4-heart side at the top of the card (full health). These cards will be used to track the health level of the characters, which in turn will affect the number of Action Points (AP) available to each during their turns.

Remove the Hive card (cocoon) from the Exploration deck together with the open terminal room (depicting the computer on the desk). Create roughly two equal stacks. Shuffle the open terminal room into 1 pile, and then shuffle the Hive into the bottom 3 cards of this stack. Now, shuffle the other stack and place it on top of this specially created pile to form the Exploration deck. Be sure to place all cards in the Exploration side with their black icon side face-up. This is the "unsearched" side of the Exploration cards.



The Hive Card



The Open Terminal

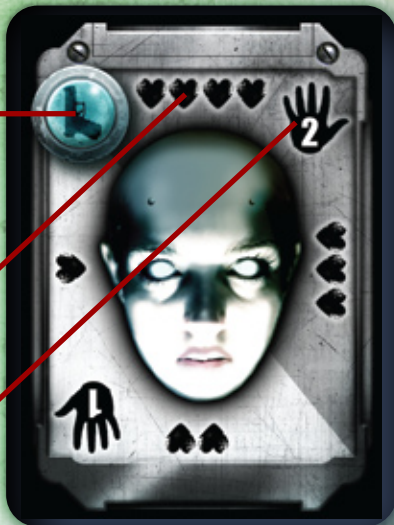
Randomly choose a starting player. Give this player any extra token or a coin to mark the position of the Parasite Phase, which will rotate each round. This is called the Parasite Marker.

The Character Cards in Detail

This icon represents the character's weapon type. Androids carry guns making them ideal for keeping roaming parasites at bay. However, an Android cannot complete the mission by destroying the Hive since only Troopers can wield Flamethrowers, as shown by the fire icon on their character cards.

Health points (hearts) translate into Action Points. A character with 3 or 4 Health gets 2 Action Points (represented with the hand icon), and a character with only 1 or 2 Health gets 1.

Each character starts with 4 Health. When a character is injured, rotate his card counterclockwise for each Health Point lost. As it rotates, the card position will also show any loss of Action Points. When a character loses his last energy point he is eliminated from the game and his character disk is removed from the board.



A player has only 1 hand of cards and can freely use cards for his Android or Trooper, regardless of where the card came from or who found it. Even when a character dies, the player keeps all items in the character's possession. In short, items are not attached to a specific character. However, if both characters die the cards held by the controlling player are out of the game permanently.

The Turn Structure

A turn in Panic Station consists of 2 phases: The Parasite phase followed by the Team phase.

Parasite Phase

The player with the Parasite Marker completes this phase before taking the first turn in the Team Phase. In the Parasite Phase, the parasites on the board will attempt to move and will attack any characters in the same room after the movement attempt. Players may not attack parasites during this phase. Also, any doors opened by the Computer Terminal are now considered closed just before the parasites start to move. Check to see whether parasites on the board (if any) move and attack by having the start player roll the D4 and consult the directional template in the Reactor room. Move all parasites on the board 1 room in the direction shown unless the parasite is blocked by a wall or closed door or would have to go through an open door to a location that has not yet been built. In the case that the parasite is blocked by a wall, a closed door, or an unexplored location the parasite just stays where it is (to the detriment of players standing in that location).

Once this movement is resolved, each parasite will attack any and all characters in the room with it. A black parasite deals 2 damage to each character present whereas a gray parasite causes only 1 damage.

After the Parasite Phase is complete, pass the Parasite Marker to the next player clockwise in turn. The next Parasite Phase will occur only after a full revolution of the table is complete and the turn passes for a second time to this newly-designated player. For example, in a 4 player game, after Player 1 has played the Parasite Phase and passed the Parasite Marker to Player 2, there will be a total of 5 player turns in the Team Phase before a new Parasite Phase. These turns would be P1, P2, P3, P4, and P1 (again). Player 2 would then carry out this same Parasite Phase before once again passing the Parasite Phase and then resuming the Team Phase with his own turn first.



In this example, the parasite roll produced a "2." The Reactor template indicates that all parasites on the base must move 1 room to the right. The top parasite moves into the Reactor room, but the bottom parasite's rightward move is blocked by a wall, so it stays put.

Team Phase

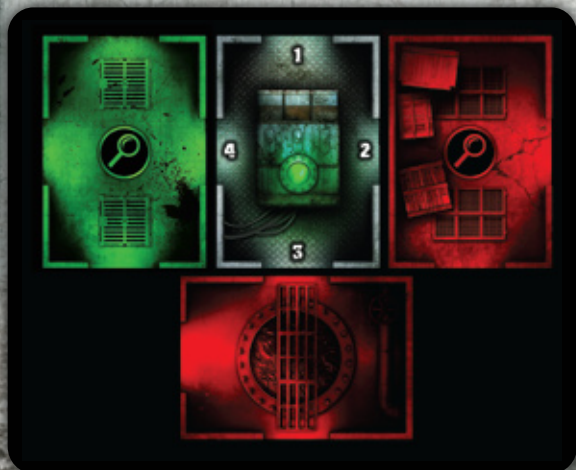
Starting with the player who just gave away the Parasite Marker and going clockwise, each player may spend their current allowance of Action Points (AP), as shown on their character cards. At the start of the first turn of the game, before taking his first action, a player places both his character pawns in the Reactor room. Players will not arrive in the Panic Station until their first turn, so the first player to arrive begins in the station all alone!

It is important to note that a player's combined AP can be spent as he sees fit: If a player has an Android with 2 AP and a Trooper with 1 AP, these combine so that the player has 3 AP to spend. He can use them all on 1 character (regardless of which contributed the AP) or divide the AP between them. A player is not required to use all of his available AP during a turn. Players have a choice between the following actions, all costing 1AP, and may perform any given action more than once per turn:

1. Explore

Exploring expands the board formed by the Exploration cards. All players start the game with both their characters inside the Reactor room. Since the exploration cards are 2-sided, players can see in advance the next room that will enter play. When a character explores, he spends 1 AP to take the top card from the Exploration deck and position it adjacent to his current location. In doing so, he must always make sure the icon (if present) in the center of the room is black-side up, which indicates the room has not been searched. Moreover, the newly placed location must connect to the adjacent location(s) so that no doorway (open or closed) connects to a wall and is blocked.

The player may choose the room's orientation as long as the card is placed vertically and legally. It is a legal exploration to place an Exploration Card on the opposite side of a security (closed) door. This represents a player peeking through a small window in the security door. Of course, to explore further in that direction a player will need to gain access to the other side of the security door.



In this example, 3 locations are positioned adjacent to the Reactor room through the use of the Explore action. However, only 1 (on the left) is placed correctly. The right-hand placement is illegal because it runs a doorway from the Reactor room straight into a wall. The bottom location is illegal because it is not vertical.

A player may not place 2 security doors next to each other so they connect.

If a player cannot legally place the card adjacent to his room, he may not explore at this time as long as there is somewhere else on the board where the Exploration Card could legally be played.

If no legal placement exists for the exploration card anywhere on the board, the player may discard the current Exploration Card to the bottom of the deck and attempt to place the next card without paying any additional AP (he has already paid 1 AP to take the explore action). However, the player may only do this once per turn. If the second Exploration Card is also unplayable from the player's current location he will have to attempt a different action or end his turn.

After the placement of the Hive Exploration Card, the game will pause briefly for an automatic Heat Scan. Refer to section 5 (Computer Terminal - "Heat Scan") for details on this process.

Depending on the infection status of players, the game may already be ended!

In the rare event that the Hive cannot be placed in a legal, vertical placement, it is acceptable to position it into a horizontal orientation in order to legally place it. In the near-impossible event that the Hive cannot be placed in any orientation, take the next Exploration Card in the deck and attempt to legally place it (vertical only). Place the Hive back on top of the Exploration Deck for later exploration.

If the Hive is the last card on the Exploration Deck and it cannot be placed in any orientation, the game is ended and the Infected team wins. If there are still exploration cards left after placing the hive, the team may continue exploring if legally possible, until all exploration cards are placed.

An Explore action does not allow the player to move into the newly-explored room for free. The player must still spend a "Move" action if they wish to enter the room.

2. Move

Players spend 1 AP to move a character through an open doorway to an adjacent room. Some locations are closed off by security doors that can only be opened with a keycard found when searching in the item deck, or if the doors have been opened for the Team phase by accessing the Computer Terminal.

Note that some cards contain 2 rooms, so moving from room to room costs 1AP.

Each time a player moves into a room for the first time in his turn with one or more characters in it of another player color he is forced to perform a trade unless he performs an attack (see "Trading").

3. Fire Gun

Only Androids can fire a gun at a parasite or team member, for a cost of 1 AP, and only if they have a bullet to spend. Ammo cards can be found during searches. Like character cards that are used to track HP, ammo cards are turned counterclockwise for each bullet spent. Remember to rotate any player cards which are shot at by other players!

Unless modified by an Item Card such as a Target Scope, Androids may only fire at a target in the same room. In the event that an Item allows an Android to fire at an adjacent room, they cannot fire through a closed security door unless the possess a key card or the Computer Terminal action "Open All Security Doors" has been activated this round. In the event that an item is found that allows the Android to fire more than one room away (such as a promo item or expansion item) the target must be in straight line from the Android (no shooting around corners!)

One shot will kill a standard parasite (gray), which is then returned to the supply, but heavy parasites (black) take 2 shots to kill. If a black parasite is shot only once, exchange it with a gray parasite from the supply. If no gray parasites are in the supply, flip the black parasite over to its gray side.

Troopers are armed with Flamethrowers, which can only be used on the Hive, and must rely on their teammates as well their own cunning and tactics to survive. Troopers may arm themselves with the Knife which is found in the Item Deck.

4. Search Location

A room with an icon in the center (regardless of which icon) can be searched. To show that a room has been searched, turn it over to the side with the red icon. Once flipped to its red side, a room will never “unflip”.

A two-room Exploration Card with an icon in either room may be searched from either room. The card is flipped to its red icon side regardless of which room is searched.

When a character spends an AP to search, he takes the top card from the Search Deck into his hand except that if he draws a “Parasite Alert” card, he must immediately reveal it, discard it, roll the D4 and place a parasite, as described under “Parasite Alert” in the “Room Types” portion of these rules. The Parasite Alert card is not replaced with a new card.

Searching in a red-icon room causes a parasite to appear nearby! Roll the D4 and use the same “Parasite Alert” method to place a new parasite. This roll must be performed before the player resolves the actual search and takes any other action. If there are gray parasites in the reserve, use these up first before placing black ones. Black parasites are always brought into play with their black side face-up. Once all the parasites are used up, future spawning is done by moving one parasite to the newly rolled location. The triggering player may choose the location from which to move the parasite. If parasites are killed during the game, they then go back to the reserve and become available to reenter the board.

During the first turn of the game, all players must at least perform 1 search if mathematically possible. In rare situations where it is not possible to perform a search, this requirement may be ignored.

5. Activate Computer Terminal

The computer terminals have 3 possible functions, but only 1 may be used by a specific player in his turn, even when two terminals are in play. The chosen function always costs 1 AP. Using a Computer Terminal will cause the Exploration Card to be flipped to its red side. Using a computer terminal with its red side face-up will cause a Parasite to appear as per normal placement rules!



Perform Heat Scan

Players can spend 1 AP to perform a heat scan of the complete base to look for infected team members. A Heat Scan simply tells everyone in the game how many players are infected and how many are not infected. The player's Check Cards will be secretly collected as a way of polling for the number of infected players.

When conducting a scan, 2 piles of Check Cards will be formed: 1 pile placed in the left slot of the Heat check board (green plus) that contains your true identity, and 1 meaningless pile placed in the right slot (red minus).

First, have each player pick the Check Card that applies to their current infection status (red = infected or blue = not infected).

Each player should place their true status Check Card face-down onto the green plus side of the Heat Check Board. Then each player places the remaining Check Card face-down onto the red minus side of the Heat Check Board making sure that no cards are accidentally shown to other players. It is not a legal play to deceive other players by placing an incorrect Check Card. However, players are encouraged to loudly claim that they are not infected!

Shuffle the cards on each side of the Heat Check Board but without mixing the two stacks. Then reveal the cards on the green plus side of the Heat Check Board for all to see. Players will now know how many of their former teammates are now infected, but not exactly who the infected players are. It is encouraged for all players to make loud accusations at this stage!

Afterwards, return the Check Cards to the players so that each has an infected and an uninfected card. In this manner, players will be ready for the next time a Heat Scan is required.

Open All Security Doors

By spending 1 AP, a character can open all locked security doors that normally can only be opened using keycards found in the Search Deck. The doors stay open until the next Parasite Phase, and close just before the parasites move. Teamwork is essential to make sure that the doors open at the right time for other players to pass through.

Reveal Location

The player turns on the security cameras and discovers a hidden location. By spending 1 AP, the player can add a new location to the board adjacent to any existing location(s) following the placement rules described earlier. This breaks the rule that locations may only be placed adjacent to the players current location. This action can only be performed once per turn.

6. Heal in Sick Bay

In these rooms, a player can heal 2 wounds per turn at the cost of 1AP. When two character of the same player are positioned in the room each can heal 1 wound if the player chooses. If the location card was not turned over due to prior healing or searching, turn it over to show the red icon after usage. From now on, healing here will trigger a parasite appearance. A player will not get to use any newly-acquired APs as a result of healing until the start of his next turn.



7. Use Item

Some items cost 1 AP to use, as marked on the item cards themselves. For example, the Heat-scanner and the Combat Knife. Remember that the upgraded guns can only be used by Androids as they are the only characters allowed to carry guns.

Items which are to be used are placed openly onto the table, paying the AP cost if applicable. Once used, if the item was a single-use item, it is discarded after use. If a multiple-use item it remains on the table in front of the player and may require the payment of 1 AP to be used again.

Remember that a Fire Gun action only costs an Android 1 AP. The upgraded guns are marked "1 AP" as a reminder of this cost. In other words, since these guns merely replace the Androids' standard guns, there is no additional cost to use them beyond the usual 1 AP.



This icon warns players that this is a single-use item and must be discarded after use. Other cards that get used up over time, such as ammo or armor, are also placed on the discard pile when depleted. If the item deck is ever exhausted, shuffle the discards to make a new pile.

If this icon is present, using the item costs 1 AP. In this example, the Heavy Gun replaces the Android's standard gun with a heavier weapon. Firing it is a "Fire Gun" action that costs 1 AP.

If this icon is present, the player may keep this card in his play area for repeated usage. When he is ready to use it for the first time, he plays it openly on the table, where it stays from then on.

IMPORTANT: At all times a player must have at least 5 cards on hand. He may never have less, and as a result, may NOT play an item card open on the table for use when he has only 5 cards on hand!

Room Types

Run

Entering these rooms offers a character the chance to take a free move in any legal direction if there is already a room present to move into. Think of it as an extra AP that can be spent on movement. This extra movement can only occur when no other player is present in the Run room. The extra movement may take place if the active player's other character is the only other character in the room. In addition, if a player wishes to use the Run action, no Search may take place (as the player is running through!).



Parasite Alert

Entering this type of room draws the attention of a nearby parasite. The entering player must roll the D4, consult the Reactor template, and place a parasite token in a room adjacent to the triggering character. If the rooms are not connected through a doorway, the placement is still legal. If there is no room in the resulting direction, place the parasite in the same room as the triggering character. Other parasites in the station do not move at this time, nor does the newly placed parasite attack (both occur only in the Parasite Phase). Parasites may be placed on the other side of a security door. A parasite room that has already been searched is, therefore, highly dangerous since it will spawn 2 parasites during each search after the first: one simply for entering the room (due to the parasite icon), and one because the room is already marked as red! Always resolve parasite spawning first, before resolving a search or any other actions in the room.



Storage Room

Storage rooms start out with an unusual amount of material scattered around. Searching here the first time allows a player to take 3 search cards instead of 1. If a Parasite Alert card is drawn, this must be resolved immediately. As before, these cards are not replaced. When these location cards are turned over, the red icon shows a 1, meaning that from now on, searches in this location only produce 1 item.



Team Search

These rooms may be searched solo as usual. However, up to 2 players can search this room together by sharing the same space, but only the active player needs to spend the 1 AP. In the event of multiple players in the same room the active player may freely choose which player to search with, although the active player must always receive one card (you may not select two other players to receive cards). No more than 2 cards are ever drawn in this room type regardless of how many different players are present. The cards drawn are randomly distributed face down among the searching members. Any player who is dealt a Parasite Alert card must reveal and resolve it immediately. Importantly, if the player whose turn it is attacked another player in this room, he may not choose to perform a Team Search (see "Order of Actions").



Trading

Each time a character enters a location with other player's team members (other than the Reactor room, which is a no-trade zone), he **MUST** either attack another player's character or trade 1 item face down with another player's character, unless he already performed a trade in this room during the turn. If more than 1 team member is present, the entering player chooses 1 with whom to trade.

To trade, each trader picks a card from his hand and places it face down in front of the other so that nobody else can see it. Each then picks up the card he received and secretly looks at it. Instead of an item, the Host player or any other infected player can attempt to infect his trading partner by giving him an infection card. But beware: an infection attempt might be dodged, as explained below. When a player successfully dodges an infection attempt, he simply holds onto the infection card in his hand even though he is not actually infected. Of course, uninfected players would never pass the infection card in a trade. Regardless of the current location of your 2 characters, if 1 member of your duo becomes infected, they both do. For example, even if a blue Android is on one side of the base and the blue Trooper on the other, once the Android is infected, so is the Trooper. From then on, the blue player can play infection cards!



This diagram shows 2 possible scenarios. In Scenario 1 on the left, the infector (red player) gives an infection card in the trade. His unsuspecting trading partner innocently plays out a grenade during the trade. As a result, the victim is infected and now switches to the alien side.

In Scenario 2, the opposing player does not trust his trading partner. Defensively, he plays out a gas can card, which causes him to avoid infection. While he has just lost a vital gas can card, at least he is safe for now and has gained valuable information about the infector's identity. Remember that cards are not visible to uninvolved players during trades. Note also that single-use items are never "used up" when traded.

When trading, players may never use infection cards other than those of their own playing colors, unless they find themselves without any item cards during a trade. In such a rare situation, players may, as an exception, trade an infection card of another player's color instead of an item. However, this card will not infect the receiving player.

A player may NEVER trade an infection card of their own color unless they themselves are infected. Only infection cards of a player's own color can infect another during trades. It is important for players receiving an infection card to make sure that the color of the infection card matches the color of the player who passed it to them. If it matches and they did not trade back a gas card, they are infected. If the infection card received does not match the color of the player passing it, the player is not infected no matter what was traded (unless they are already infected of course!)

Remember that each of your characters can only attempt one trade per room in any one game turn. If you wish to trade twice in the same room, you would need to bring your other character into the room as well. Be careful, as doing this will make others think you are infected!

Survival and Betrayal

Players are free to play their roles as they see fit. They must carefully watch for suspicious behavior that might indicate that a player is infected. Infected players must be subtle, gaining the trust of others and making an infection attempt at the right time. Remember that a failed infection attempt will usually draw a loud accusation ("He is the Host!"), so only attempt to infect at critical moments during the game.

Players are free to accuse others during the game, even if these accusations are ill-founded or outright ploys to draw attention away from the infected player, but the infected players and the Host must never actually reveal themselves, even if accused correctly.

Remember that there is always at least 1 Host active, and it can be anyone. Even the team member that just helped you kill a parasite! There is no code of honor at the Panic Station. You may attack a fellow team member you suspect of being infected or suggest that others do the same. There is nothing to prevent the Host from eliminating team members who might discover his identity before he can infect them.

Just as with parasites, a player's Android can expend a bullet to attack a team member in the same room, causing that member to lose 1 HP (and possibly an AP) as a result. However, immediately after the attack is performed, the defending character can play an armor card to dodge the bullet, but each armor card only protects against 1 shot. The same rule is applied to attacks with the combat knife. Once you run out of armor, you run out of luck.

Order of Actions

When entering a new room, players must perform their first actions following a specific order. Before a player can perform the Explore, Search or special room action with his character, he must decide if he will attack another player's character (if present). If he decides to attack, no trading occurs for now. If no attack was performed, a trade MUST be made. After trading however, a player may still attack another player's character at the additional AP cost. Afterward, the player can continue performing actions if he has AP left to spend.

End Game Conditions

When all players have performed their actions, a new round begins with the Parasite Phase unless any of the following victory conditions is met:

Human victory

A human victory can only be achieved by an uninfected Trooper playing 3 gas can cards while standing inside the Hive. Burning down the hive (playing all 3 cards) costs 1AP. By burning the Hive, the player may break the normal rule of a 5 card hand. Only human players left alive share in this victory which is the hardest of all victories to achieve.

Parasite victory

All team members are infected (as proven by a heat scan of the base). This results in a victory for the Host and his infected comrades that are left alive (greedy infected players might be tempted to eliminate other infected players just before winning). However, the last player infected does NOT win. Therefore it is never a good idea to risk being the last player infected.

The exception to this rule would be the rare case in which the Host won without infecting anyone, or in the case where the last person infected was already killed (and therefore already lost).

- There's only 1 Human left (as proven by a heat scan of the base), and there are no gas cans left in his hand or the Search Deck. This results in a victory for the Host and his infected comrades.

- All player's Troopers have been eliminated. Since only Troopers can burn the Hive, the Infected players have won.

Note that the game does NOT end when the Host is killed. Players must still find and burn the Hive.

In all victory cases, only players left alive share in the victory. Death means defeat for the player.

General Notes

Players may never show the cards in their hand except for as a result of a Heat Scanner card. Of course, players may talk about the contents of their hand and don't have to be truthful!

The Host and infected team can win by simply killing off the human players. This can be an effective way of winning the game without having to share the glory. Even better if the Host/Infected can convince everyone that he is shooting other players because they are the Host!

Once played face-up in your area, an item card is never picked back up again unless the item has been used up and is being discarded.

If you draw a parasite in the game setup phase, you won't have to take damage from them until their next parasite phase since the first parasite phase takes place before anyone has entered the Panic Station.

Parasites only move and attack during the Parasite Phase. Parasites can be placed during search actions, but they still only attack during the Parasite Phase.

If you are on an Exploration Card with two rooms depicted and a parasite is to be placed, it is possible that the D4 roll will direct you to place the parasite into the next room on that same Exploration Card. This is legal.

Strategy tips

- Always search enough times at the start of the game.

It is crucial to form a defensive hand of cards early on for when the opposition becomes tough and aggressive. It is no luxury to have an extra gas can on hand to defend against infections just as much as it is crucial to have enough cards (5-card minimum) in order to be able to play an item openly on the table.

- Remember that you can avoid trading if you attack upon entering a room.

Sure, it can backfire, but it is at least a way to get out of a doomed situation when you have no gas cans to dodge infections.

- Use the terminal to place the hive in a safe location as far from the infectors as possible.

This gives the humans a major advantage.

- The best weapon against the opposing team is confusion.

If you are human, mislead the infectors at the table by acting as an infector. If you are a host, take time to gain trust with the human team members by trading them valuable items or helping them out in dangerous situations and next strike at a well-timed moment when defenses are down.

Lies can also be a powerful ally in this game.

- As a human player you must at least find 1 other human that you can trust.

You can win the game playing solo, but two humans working together can make a big difference against the spreading evil. Use the personal heat scanner, one of the more powerful cards in the item deck, not only to reveal an infector but possibly as a way to find an ally you can trust and work with to achieve the mission.

- Carefully consider the orientation of each placed room and its position in relation to its surrounding rooms. A 180 degree turn can make a world of difference. Humans need to create optimal paths that guide them with a minimum of problematic situations across the station. Infectors can concentrate on the opposite: creating challenging paths for the humans to venture in, with many hurdles along the way.

- Remember that spawning parasites can also work "for" you. Deliberately spawning parasites could create dangerous swarms, preventing the opposition from coming near you.

- Make sure you spread your characters over the board as a human. A smart host will take advantage of two characters being positioned near each other by performing a double infection attempt within the same turn, seriously lowering the defenses of the player.

- As the host, remember that you could generate a forced trade situation by carefully planning placement of rooms, forming bottlenecks that will lead humans through the room you are positioned in.

- Always think about the room you will end your turn in, because it will greatly determine the chances of getting attacked by a parasite. Entering a room with 3-4 exits and a parasite is safer (given the high chance the parasite will move out of this location during the parasite phase) than entering a room with no parasites but surrounded by several that can potentially enter during the parasite phase.

Tweaking the difficulty

Panic Station is a challenging game for beginners playing as humans.

To give the human team an advantage over the infectors, remove 1 infection card from each player's starting hand. Players who are new to the game can gain experience playing the Host by adding the following rule: If the Host finds himself without any infection cards due to 3 failed infection attempts, he may use the Host card itself to infect another player. The original Host remains infected, but the new owner of the Host card is now considered to be the Host. If players want to up the challenge for the human team, they should try to complete the mission by destroying the hive using 4 gas can cards.

Master & Servant variant

In this variant the host wins the game when he achieves any of the conditions described earlier in the rules, but his infecting comrades don't automatically win with him but must prove their loyalty to the infector side and to their master.

In order for an infector to share the victory with the host he must complete either one of these conditions:

Infect a non-infected team member

This condition is checked after the session when players can both verbally determine and through the presence of other players infection cards in their hand if the act was successful.

Eliminate the last surviving character of a player

This is again checked after the session and can be proven by a simple method: when an infector manages to eliminate the last remaining character of a player that player passes the attacking player the check card that depicts his current identity. He must make sure that nobody at the table sees the content of the card by passing it face down. The receiving player keeps the card facedown until after the session, when it is revealed and checked if he successfully eliminated an uninfected player.

Naturally, an infected player can eliminate as many remaining characters as he likes.

But he must have at least 1 uninfected check card in his playing space in order to meet the condition and share victory with the host.

This method is often harder to achieve and in some cases the infector is forced to kill 2 characters of a specific player in order to meet the condition.



Keycard

With the help of this item, a player and only this player can move his characters through all secured doors. A player with a keycard may NOT open the security door for another player.



Heat Scanner

A player can use the scanner to check the identity of another character in the same room. Playing this card forces the other player to show his hand of cards to the player doing the check. This might reveal that the subject of the check is infected or is in fact the Host. For example, a player with 2 or fewer infection cards is clearly infected because he started with 3, so he has obviously played infection card(s) in an attempted infection. Naturally, a player with infection cards of another player in his hand reveals the identity of specific infectors that have been active.



Grenade

A character can throw the grenade into an adjacent room, causing 1 wound to all parasites and characters present there. The grenade may only be thrown into an adjacent room and may not be dropped in the current room. Note that throwing a grenade in a room also helps a character to avoid a forced trade when he enters it within the same turn.



Gas Can

This is a crucial item. It can be used to fend off an infection attempt from an infected player or Host during a trade or to destroy the Hive to win the game. Remember that only Troopers can destroy the Hive.



First Aid Kit

A character can use this to heal himself, or any team member in the same room, for a total of 2 Health points. You may also use it to heal your own character by 1 and another character by 1.



Target Scope

This item can only be used by the Android. Normally, an Android may only shoot at a character in the same room. The Target Scope modifies the standard gun or Heavy Gun so that it may be used to attack into the same or an adjacent room. The Target Scope may not be used with the Sniper Rifle (promo item).



Combat Knife

This weapon can be used by both Troopers and Androids to attack parasites or team members. Roll the D4: on a 3+ result, your character inflicts 1 wound on the victim. An intended victim can fend off a knife attack by playing an armor card.



Heavy Gun

This automatic weapon can only be used by Androids and replaces their standard gun: for 1 AP, the gun fires 2 shots (2 HP of damage) instead of 1. These shots can target different characters. If combined with a scope, it will fire 2 shots into the same or an adjacent room. Note that this would immediately eliminate a black parasite by only spending 1AP.



Armor

This item protects players from 1 point of damage from a knife, gun or Parasite attack. Once used, Armor cards go on the item discard pile. This card can be played by a player out of his turn, as a reaction to an attack. In the event that both a player's characters are standing in the same room, one armor card can protect both characters simultaneously.



Ammo

These bullets are used by an Android to refill his gun. Without ammo, any gun is useless. With every shot fired, the corresponding gun card is turned once counterclockwise, tracking the reduced amount of ammo left in the gun. When 2 bullets are fired with the automatic gun, this card must be turned twice. When the last bullet is fired, the card is discarded. Ammo cards are played in front of the owning player until used up, in which case the cards go on the discard pile.



Energy Boost

This item temporarily boosts the energy level of a character, permitting him to spend 2 additional action points during his turn. Multiple Energy Boosts may be used in the same turn.



Parasite Alert!

This card must be immediately resolved when drawn: the player who triggered the parasite rolls the D4 and places a parasite in the indicated location and discards the card, just as would be the case with a parasite alert icon.

Credits

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