



Basic Rules

Overview of Play:

The object of *Sucking Vacuum* is to be one of two players who are not sucking vacuum in the doomed International Space Station at the end of the game. To do this, a player must collect all three parts to a space suit, fuel the Escape Pod, and make his way to the pod to escape. He can collect special objects to help him on his way and find makeshift weapons used to beat his former co-workers silly allowing him to steal their stuff. It sounds easy enough, but they're all trying to do the same thing. There are just two seats on the escape pod and not enough space suits to go around, so somebody is going to end up *Sucking Vacuum*.

Disclaimer:

We know next to nothing about the International Space Station, space travel, or life in zero gravity. The absolute minimum research was done on the actual International Space Station upon which this game is based. The only true similarity between the doomed space station depicted in this game and the real International Space Station is that both are located in space. Additionally, our playtesters repeatedly pointed out that the fixtures depicted in this game are nothing like the actual fixtures used aboard the actual space station to which we replied, "Give it a rest, it's just a game. If we drew a picture of a real zero-gravity toilet and stuck it in there you'd complain because you couldn't tell what it was." That said, enjoy the game.

Set Up:

Before you begin, take a look at the counter sheets. You should see that some of the counters have different background colors—they need to be kept separated by color for the game to work right. For now, place them in piles as follows:

Sucking Vacuum Counters	SV Logo
Basic Game Counters	Blue Glow
Alien Incursion Counters	Green Glow

Assemble the astronauts by sliding them into the little clear plastic stands provided.

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Finally, separate the two Alien Incursion map tiles from the rest. The AI tiles are the 'undamaged escape pod' and hallway section with the big UFO attached to it. These tiles, along with the counters that have a 'green glow' are used for the Alien Incursion expansion and should be set aside.

Getting Started:

Once everything is ready to go, have everyone choose a different accent. Remember, we're talking about the *International Space Station* here, and since players are going to be representing doomed members of the international crew, they're really going to have to play the part.

We've even included a short table of accents just in case you can't think of any. Of course, there's nothing stopping you from ignoring this rule, but you've got to trust us when we tell you that this will add vastly to your enjoyment of the game.

Next, have everyone take a set of lungs and place a rocket token on the "10" representing the amount of air left between them and miserable suffocating death.

3 Player Game:

For a 3-player game, remove one complete space suit from the counters pile before distributing the counters. Also, remove any one map tile (except a hallway or the Escape Pod!) from play.

Building the Station:

There are only a couple of rules governing the construction of your space station:



- The map tiles and hallways may join each other only by connecting two airlocks.
- Map tiles may never overlap one-another.
- The Escape Pod must be connected to the rest of the structure by a hallway (i.e. it may not be directly connected to another room).



To build the map, players take turns (starting with the owner of the game) adding map tiles to the space station until all of the map tiles are attached to the station.

Now that the station is built, find the *Escape Pod* (it is at the end of a hallway, right?) and put one of the Sucking Vacuum counters on it. Place a second Sucking Vacuum counter on the hallway which attaches the *Escape Pod* to the rest of the space station.

Now, have each player take one Sucking Vacuum counter (starting with the owner again) and place it on the map. Each room or hallway which has a Sucking Vacuum counter placed into it *must* be attached to another room or hallway which is already exposed to vacuum.

The first one is easy, it will be whichever tile is attached to the end of the *Escape Pod* hallway.

Now take all of the Object Counters, shuffle them, and place 3 face down next to each room (not the hallways). You should have just enough counters to put 3 objects into every room with 3 left over. If you have way more counters you didn't read the rules carefully enough and combined the Alien Incursion Counters with the basic game. Don't say we didn't warn you. Assuming you didn't screw it all up, take the remaining three and set them aside *without looking at them*.

Finally, each player needs to select a starting location by placing their astronaut into any empty space in any room which is *not* already sucking vacuum.

Taking A Turn:

The player who owns the game gets to go first (noticing a theme?) unless he is one of those people who seems to take forever to take a turn, in which case the player to his left should dope-slap him and proceed with *his* turn. In fact, while we're on the subject, Alien Menace heartily encourages players to dope-slap others for excruciatingly slow play.

Ending a Turn:

A player's turn always ends when he:

- takes a breath (see *Oxygen Management*)
- runs out of air
- searches a room for equipment (see *Finding Stuff*)

The Vacuum and Oxygen Management:

At the start of the game, all players are located in rooms which have not yet been exposed to vacuum. They can breathe normally, and need not stop at the big blue oxygen (O₂) cylinders to get air. Players needn't worry about expending O₂ out of their lungs to do things like move or reveal object counters.

However, when a player moves from a room which is not in vacuum into a room which has been exposed (i.e. has a Sucking Vacuum counter in it) *the room he just left is exposed to vacuum* so he places a Sucking Vacuum counter into it. Read that sentence again, it is very important.

When a player is moving through rooms or hallways exposed to vacuum (you'll find that once he's in vacuum, he can't get back out) he must pay Oxygen cost for everything that he does according to the following table:

Action	O ₂ Cost
Move 1 Space	1
Attack Another Player	1
Steal 1 Object from a Suffocating Player	1
Defend Against an Attack	1
Do Absolutely Nothing	1
Take One Object from a Suffocating Player	1
Reveal Counters & Take 1	2

Getting Around:

Players moving through the space station may move up to 7 spaces in a turn. They may never move diagonally or through any objects in the rooms but they may move *through* other players but they may not end their turn on the same space as another player.

The sole exception to this rule is the *Escape Pod*. There

are no 'spaces' in the Escape Pod room, any number of players may simultaneously occupy it and it is considered 1 space for movement purposes.

Movement is free when moving in areas which have not yet been exposed to the vacuum (although still limited to 7 spaces per turn), and costs 1 O₂ per space when moving through exposed areas.



Getting Oxygen:

Oxygen may be replenished by moving next to any air tank (still no diagonals though!). Replenishing oxygen ends your turn and the rocket token on your lungs is returned to 10.

Sucking Vacuum:

When a player runs out of air, he is considered to be sucking vacuum. A player who is sucking vacuum is simply struggling to get to an air tank and can take no action except to move 2 spaces per turn. The suffocating character is completely vulnerable to others who may approach the struggling player and take items from them at a cost of 1 O₂ to themselves.

Strategic Negotiation (Combat):

Sucking Vacuum, being the supremely cerebral game that it is, requires a winning player to rely on subtle strategy and shrewd negotiation in his path to victory.

Obviously, the best negotiating strategy is to beat on other players until they're gasping for air and then take their stuff. Attacking another player costs 1 O₂. When an attacking player announces an attack but *before* he rolls the attack die the defending player may choose to defend herself at the cost of 1 O₂.

If the defending player chooses not to defend, the attacker rolls a single die: On a 1-4, the attack is successful and the defending player loses O₂ from his lungs equal to the number on the attacker's weapon.

- If the defending player chooses to defend, both the attacker and the defender roll a single die: Both succeed on a roll of 1-3 and if successful do damage to one another knocking O₂ out of each other's lungs equal to the number on their respective weapons.
- If the attacker succeeds and the defender does not, the defending player loses O₂ from his lungs equal to the number on the attacker's weapon.
- If the defender succeeds and the attacker does not, the attacking player loses O₂ from his lungs equal to the number on the defending player's weapon.
- If both the attacker and defender fail their rolls, neither loses air except for the single point that it took to attack or defend in the first place.

Players without weapons may resort to using their fists inflicting -2O₂ when successfully attacking or defending.

Finding Stuff:

From *any space in a room*, a player may elect to search for equipment. Equipment includes space suit parts, weapons, special equipment, and two counters which may be used to fuel the pod making it ready for departure.

When a player elects to search a room he picks up all of the object counters associated with that room and looks at them. He may then take *one* and add it to his inventory by placing it in front of him. Players should not share the contents of a room with the other players, unused counters are returned face-down.

All objects are played face up, *except for special equipment* which may be played face down to hide it from other players until it is used. Objects not removed from a room are returned face down.

Searching a room for equipment ends a player's turn regardless of whether or not he elects to take an object.

The Objects:

Players may carry only one each of the 3 Space Suit components, 1 weapon, and 1 piece of special equipment. Players may not carry 'extras' but they may elect to drop any part at any time during their turn. The dropped part is placed, *face up*, next to the room or hallway that it was dropped in. It may be picked up by another player who searches the room during their turn.

Space Suit Parts: Every space suit comes in three parts: a helmet, a body piece, and legs. To escape from the space station, a player must collect *all three parts* before jettisoning in the escape pod.

Weapons: A player may carry *only one weapon* to aid him in knocking the wind out of his comrades. Each weapon has a -O₂ number printed on it. This is the amount of air knocked out of an opponent's lungs upon a successful attack or defense.

Sucking Vacuum: When revealed, rooms with the Sucking Vacuum counter in them are immediately exposed to Vacuum. When a player finds this counter it *must be revealed*, however, this does not cost the revealing player his action so he may still take one of the remaining two objects.

Annabelle: Annabelle is the space station's helper robot. (Bet you didn't know they had cool robots on the International Space Station did you?) A player who

chooses to use the Annabelle counter reveals it immediately (it may not be added to inventory) and adds the Annabelle token to the map board *anywhere in the same room*. Annabelle may then be commanded to do one of the following:



- **Open an Airlock:** She moves to an airlock and opens the door, exposing a room to vacuum.
- **Search a Room:** She moves to the specified room and radios the commanding player with the contents of the room.

- **Attack Another Player:** Annabelle runs up and slaps another player for 4 O₂. Annabelle always hits and her attacks can't be defended.

- **Move to a Specific Location:** Annabelle moves to the specified location and stands there.

Annabelle moves 7 spaces per turn at the beginning of the commanding player's turn and *may not be interrupted* until she fulfills her orders.

Having completed her command, Annabelle may be commanded by any player who enters the room that she is in at the cost of 1O₂. Finally, Annabelle occupies a space just as players do, so if she's in it, a player can't be.

Special Equipment: There are several pieces of special equipment available to the potential survivors. Taking special equipment from a room ends a player's turn, but using it does not. All special equipment may be used *only once*. The use of the five types of special equipment is described below:

Jet Pack: Allows a player to exit the space station at any airlock not connected to another room or hallway, and re-enter the space station at any other airlock not connected to a room or hallway. They may also re-enter through the hull breach in the Escape Pod room. Using the Jet Pack costs no air except for the single space of movement and does not require a completed space suit for use.

Automatic Pilot: Allows a player to escape the ship without a co-pilot. The automatic pilot faithfully fills that role.

Fuel Pod: There are 2 Fuel Pod counters, one of which must be played before the Escape Pod can successfully depart. One player must carry this object to one of the computer consoles scattered through the station and 'use' it to fuel the Pod. Once fueled, place the "fuel pod" counter on the escape pod to indicate that it is ready to go.



Air Reserve: Adds 5 O₂ to a player's lungs. A player may never have more than 10 O₂ in their lungs though, so using it with more than 5 remaining is a waste.

ISSMPV: The International Space Station Multi-Purpose Vehicle (ISSMPV) allows a player to move a little bit further and twice as fast as normal for a single turn (then the batteries go dead). That means that instead of moving 1 space for each O₂, you can move two and the maximum number of spaces that you can move is 10. There's just one catch—there isn't enough room in *hallways* for both the ISSMPV and another player, so you can't move through another player in a hallway (in rooms, there is no restriction).

Winning the Game:

In order to escape from the space station, the Escape Pod must be prepared for departure by using the Fuel Pod counter at a computer prior to launch. If the Fuel Pod counter has not yet been played, the Escape Pod can not be launched.

Players wishing to escape must also have a complete space suit (i.e. helmet, body, legs). Players who do not have a full suit may enter the Escape Pod room, but they may not escape the space station.

Finally, the pod is designed for a pilot and co-pilot so *two players must escape together*. The only way for a single player to escape is for one player to take the Automatic Pilot with him.

When all of these criteria are met, a player may, on his turn, announce that he is escaping including who he is taking with him (if anyone) if more than 2 other players with full space suits are in the Escape Pod room.

Beyond Sucking Vacuum:

Once you've played *Sucking Vacuum* a couple of times, experiment with the optional rules located on the "Rules Supplement & FAQ" or try your hand at the Alien Incursion Expansion.

If you have any questions about the game, or want to contact us about anything at all, email us at:

games@alien-menace.com

We would love to hear from you and answer all correspondence personally.

Who is Alien Menace?

Alien Menace is a game company founded by Ed Evans and Marc Davis in the spring of 1999. We believe that games don't have to be expensive to be cool, and after years of complaining about it we're putting our money where our mouths are. With a little luck, *Alien Menace* will grow big enough for us to sell out to some faceless corporation for tons of cash, but until then know that we sincerely appreciate you selecting this game, and welcome all feedback good, bad, or indifferent. Visit us online at:

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