



Rules version 20170411

A solitaire deck-building story game in 9 cards,  
by John Kean (© 2017 CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

*In South Dakota no one can hear you scream...*

You are Blog, a campy cartoon alien who took the family saucer for a joyride and crashed it into a small piece of the rural midwestern USA. Now you must find your way home across the empty vastness of space so that your MomDad can ground you for the rest of your mortal existence. Maybe you could fix the saucer, or flag down a passing spacecraft. In the meantime you'd better make sure no Earthlings see you...

## AIM

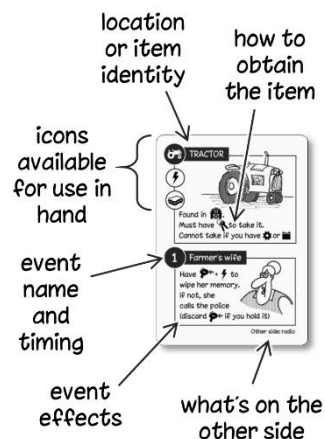
To escape the Midwest, either by repairing your crashed saucer or by summoning a passing spacecraft to pick you up and take you home (see GAME END). As Blog, you will need to figure out how to achieve these goals, which may take several plays.

## CARD LAYOUT

Each card is double sided, and most sides have two parts.

The top section shows the card identity: what the card represents. This may be an object such as a radio, or a location such as the barn. In addition, there may be icons showing what objects are available when you are holding that card. For example, the tool box provides a screwdriver, a wrench, a saw and a pair of pliers, but not all of these may be useful. The conditions for obtaining the card are shown.

The bottom section shows a character (person or animal) that you may encounter, or one or more events that may occur when that card reaches a particular position in the time line. Each card describes its events and their consequences (see SET UP).

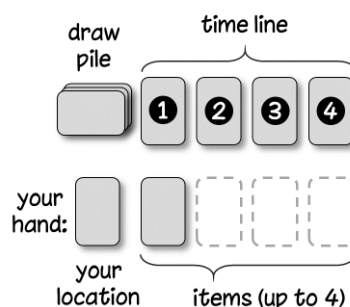


## SET UP

Set aside the Crash Site and Memory Eraser cards. Randomly flip and shuffle the rest of the cards, and place them sideways on the table as a **draw pile**. Deal the top four cards in a row next to the draw pile to form the **time line**; these cards define your environment and the events that happen around you. You will be able to interact with these cards depending on which cards you hold in your hand.

**Your hand** initially consists of the Crash Site and Memory Eraser cards. The memory eraser will be particularly useful, so you shouldn't discard it unless you really have to (or are told to).

It may be convenient to place the cards from your hand in a row below the time line. They define where you are (you should always have one, and only one, location card in your hand) and what you are carrying at the moment (up to 4 items). You start the game at the crash site, carrying only your memory eraser ray gun.



## TURN SEQUENCE

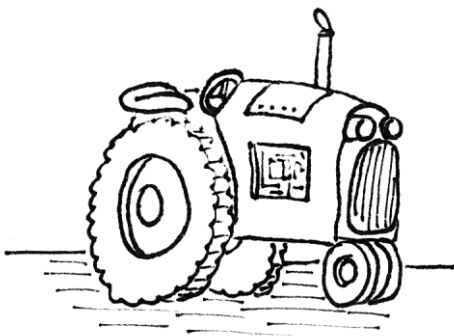
Play proceeds in three stages. First, you may act by changing your location, taking an item (if allowed), or discarding an item. Then you need to implement any events that occur around you at that time. Finally, time passing is simulated by moving cards along the time line.



1. **Your action:** You may voluntarily discard items from your hand at any time, by placing them at the bottom of the draw pile. With voluntary discards you may choose whether or not to flip the card as you discard it, but when you are forced to discard by events (see below) you must leave the same side up. You shouldn't discard the memory eraser unless forced to, as it signifies that you have been seen and triggers a game end timer.

In addition you may perform **one** of the following actions per turn, if desired:

- a. **Change your location** by flipping your location card or by swapping it with one available in the time line. This indicates that you have moved to another part of the environment. You should always have exactly one location card in your hand.
  - b. **Obtain an item:** If you have fewer than four items (plus one location) in your hand, you may take one item card from the time line into your hand by fulfilling the requirements shown on that card. Cards will generally require you to have access to particular objects, or to be in a particular place, denoted by the icons on the cards in your hand. For example, the alarm clock can only be taken if you are in the house (with the house icon in your hand), and the battery card can only be taken if your hand includes icons for the tractor and a screwdriver. Taking a card will leave a gap in the time line, and the gap will travel along one space per turn until it reaches the end and disappears. Note that you may never hold more than four items plus one location card in your hand at once.
2. **Events occur:** Check if any events occur by comparing their index number with the card's position in the time line. Working from left to right (position 1 to position 4), if the event index matches that card's position in the time line then that event becomes active. The outcome of an event may depend on the cards you hold in your hand. For example, if the farmer's wife sees you then you may be able to wipe her memory if you hold the memory eraser and have access to a power source (indicated by a lightning bolt icon on any of the cards in your hand). But if you cannot then you must discard the memory eraser, which sets in motion an end-game timer that limits the number of turns available to complete your goals.
  3. **Time passes:** If there is a card in position 4 of the time line, flip and discard it (slide it under the bottom of the draw pile). Slide the remaining cards (or gaps, if present) one position to the right and rotate the card from the top of the draw pile into position 1. If no draw pile is present (because you have five cards in your hand and there are no gaps in the time line) then simply flip the card from position 4 into position 1.



## GAME END

The game ends when you **win** by:

- repairing your own saucer by returning to the crash site with all of the required items, or
- being picked up by a passing spacecraft by fulfilling the conditions of that event (a more difficult challenge).

You **lose** if you are captured and vivisected by the FBI.

## DIFFICULTY LEVELS

**Novice:** Taking the memory eraser is free – you do not need to be near a power source. As your action you may flip any card in your hand provided you meet the requirements of that card. In essence, this makes additional items available to you without having to wait for them to arise in the time line.

**Normal:** Use the rules as described above.

**Expert:** Once you discard the memory eraser you may not pick it up again.

## DEFINITIONS

- **discard:** If you have the specified card in your hand, slide it under the bottom of the draw pile to become its lowermost card. If you have voluntarily discarded then you may choose which side of the card is uppermost, but if you have been forced to discard by an event then you must keep the same side uppermost.
- **flip:** Turn the card over so that the other side is uppermost.

## LOCATIONS



**Crash site:** where your broken saucer lies partly buried in the earth. (Reverse side = Cornfield).



**Cornfield:** where you might create a crop circle using the tractor. (Reverse side = Crash site).



**Barn:** the bigger, the redder, the better! (Reverse side = Shed).



**Shed:** where the farmer stores most of his tools and knickknacks (Reverse side = Barn).



**Back garden:** home to assorted farm animals as well as the clothesline (Reverse side = Farmhouse).



**Farmhouse:** home to the farmer and his wife (Reverse side = Back garden).

## ITEMS (warning: mild spoilers - you may wish to learn about these for yourself)



**Memory eraser:** an essential piece of alien technology, it nevertheless requires one or more passive power sources nearby (indicated by a lightning bolt icon) for it to work.



**Alarm clock:** found in the house and chock full of the same sorts of springs, cogs and gears that power interstellar flight (mankind has yet to discover this). Needed to fix the saucer. (Reverse side = Signal).



**Tool box:** found in the shed and containing a range of useful tools needed to perform major surgery on tractors and/or spacecraft. (Reverse side = Battery).



**Duct tape:** found in the house or in the shed, duct tape is useful for fixing just about anything, including cracked saucer domes and nosey policemen. (Reverse side = Keys).



**Keys:** found in the house, this includes the ignition key required to start up the tractor. (Reverse side = Duct tape).



**Tractor:** found in the barn. Besides being the most fun you can have on four wheels, a tractor provides a quick way to flatten corn on a large scale. (Reverse side = Radio).



**Crop circle:** despite the claims of skeptics, crop circles have long been an effective method for stranded aliens to signal passing spacecraft, and may be whipped up in next to no time given a tractor and a cornfield. (Reverse side = Sprocket).



**Sprocket:** may be removed from the tractor using a wrench, and then used to replace the broken master sprocket in your crashed saucer. (Reverse side = Crop circle).



**Battery:** a handy portable power source that can be removed from the tractor using a screwdriver. (Reverse side = Tool box).



**Radio:** found in the house or the shed. A smart alien knows how to reverse the circuitry of an AM radio to transmit a weak signal. (Reverse side = Tractor).



**Signal:** boosting a radio signal with extra power and a long transmitting wire (i.e. clothesline) can create a distress signal strong enough to reach nearby spacecraft. (Reverse side = Alarm clock).

## OTHER ICONS



**Nearby power source:** suitable for powering the memory eraser.



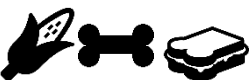
**Scarecrow:** scares off any bothersome crow that might want to steal your stuff.



**Pitchfork:** no barn, sea god or angry mob would be complete without one.



**Screwdriver, hammer, wrench and pliers:** tools of the trade.



**Corn cob, bone, and sandwich:** in case you meet a hungry animal.



**Clothesline:** a long wire strung up across the garden to air the farmer's underthings.



**Towel:** an essential tool for space travel, but not actually used in this game.

## CREDITS

The game has been significantly improved as a result of playtesting and feedback from Dan Nace, Nick Shaw, C.L., Orlando Hill, dark yeoman, Benjamin Wack, G. Uitz, Mark Tuck, Tomas Uhler, Mark Fuhrman, Jason Meyers and Eric Miller. Thank you!

All icons were obtained (and in some cases modified) from Noun Project ([thenounproject.com](https://thenounproject.com)), with credit to:

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