

Unspeakable WORDS™

Instructions
in English

Number of Players: 2 to 6
Ages: 10 to Adult
Approximate Playing Time: 30 minutes

You are an intrepid researcher, unearthing words man was not meant to spell. As you seek out these baleful words, the evil Hounds of Tindalos lurk in every corner. You have five totems to Cthulhu to protect you from lunacy, so hold on to them tightly. Find words as long as you dare, careful not to lose your tender grip on your sanity...

Object of the Game:

Be the first to reach at least 100 points worth of words without going insane.

Contents:

96 Letter Cards, a 20-Sided Die, & 30 Cthulhu Pawns

A pencil and paper will also be needed to record words and keep score.

Setup:

Shuffle the Letter Cards. Deal **seven** cards to each player. The rest of the deck is placed face down at the center of the playing area as a draw pile. Give each player **five** Cthulhu Pawns.

Each player rolls the die. The player with the highest roll goes first (re-rolling any ties), and play proceeds clockwise around the table. Place used cards into a discard pile face up next to the draw pile. If the draw pile is ever empty, shuffle the discard pile to form a new one.



Game Play:

Each player takes the following four steps on their turn, in order:

1. Form a word by displaying cards from their hand face up on the table (alternatively, a player may instead discard all of their cards without scoring, draw back to seven, and end their turn).
2. Score the word by adding the numbers on the cards. Each card's value is determined by the number of angles that the letter contains (so a "C" is worth 0 points, and an "A" is worth 5). Add the score to the player's current total and write down the word. **That word may not be used by any player again this game.**
3. Roll a Sanity Check. In a Sanity Check, the player must roll **equal to or higher than** the value of their word on the 20-Sided Die, or they will lose one Cthulhu Pawn. A roll of 20 is always a success, no matter what the value of the word is. Regardless of the outcome of the Sanity Check, the player still scores for the word (unless it would bring them to 100 or more points - see "**Winning the Game,**" below). If a player loses their last Cthulhu Pawn, they are out of the game.
4. Draw back up to seven cards. If the draw pile is empty, shuffle the discard pile to form a new one. Play continues to the left.

CTHULHU (n.)
Kthul'-hloo

The Great Old One who lies in sleep in the sunken city of R'lyeh, waiting to arise and devour us all.

Forming Words:

A player may form any common English word of three or more letters. The plural version of a word counts as separate from the singular. Players may not form proper nouns (Dave, London), abbreviations (blvd.), acronyms (NASA), or contractions (she's, don't). No word may be used more than once by any player per game.

LOGOTOMY (n.)
low-GAH-tuh-me

The forcible removal of part of one's brain due to invoking Words Man Was Not Meant To Spell.

Forming Words Example:

Sue uses the letters "A", "S", "P", and "T" to form the word TAPS. She scores 2 for the "T," 5 for the "A", 3 for the "P", and 0 for the "S", for a total of 10 points. 10 points are added to her score, and the word TAPS may not be used again this game.



However, players with the same letters could still form SPAT or PATS (but not APTS, which is an abbreviation). Sue must now make her Sanity Check. She must roll at least 10, or lose one Cthulhu Pawn (but she keeps her 10 points for the word regardless).

Winning the Game:

If a player forms a word that would bring them to 100 or more points, they must succeed at their Sanity Check in order to score. If the Sanity Check fails, they score 0 points. If it succeeds, they win the game.

A player may also win the game if they are the only player left with any Cthulhu Pawns.

ELDER SPELL (n.)
EHL-dur spehl

The spelling of an eldritch word to ward off evil creatures from beyond, often with disastrous results.

Example 1 (Scoring):

Cindi has OOFMAKL. She makes the word LOOK and writes down a score of 4 points (1+0+0+3). She rolls the die and gets a 7, which exceeds the value of her word. She draws four cards and ends her turn without losing a Cthulhu Pawn.



$1 + 0 + 0 + 3 = 4$ points

Paul has MDAHPCD. He makes the word CHAMP and writes down a score of 14 points (0+4+5+3+2). He rolls the die and gets a 12, which is lower than the value of his word. He curses the M, gives up a Cthulhu Pawn, and draws five cards.

Sue has NTOONOP in her hand, but decides to play it safe. Instead of making the word PONTOON, Sue puts down TOP and writes down a score of 4. She rolls a 3, and wishes she'd gone for the higher point score as she loses a Cthulhu Pawn and draws three cards.

Example 2 (Scoring):

Towards the end of the game, Cindi has just tossed in her last Cthulhu Pawn, so she is out. Paul only has one Cthulhu Pawn, but Sue has three left. The score: Paul 89, Sue 95.

It is Sue's turn, and she has only consonants. She discards all her cards and redraws a nice mixed hand: OCLNUSM. Sue's pretty sure she can make a word on her next turn.

Paul's hand is packed with riskily angular letters (EMHANRT). He has one Cthulhu Pawn left. If he goes for it all, he could lose. He makes the lowest-scoring word he can (TEN) for 8 points. He rolls a 9 and counts his lucky stars. He redraws three cards, all U's.

Sue realizes she can make COLUMNS for 6 points, enough to get her to a potential game-winning 101 points. She makes the word and rolls - and gets a 4. This costs her a Cthulhu Pawn and scores her 0 points (as players may not score on their final word if they fail the Sanity Check). Sue redraws.

Paul is at 97, so all he needs is 3 points. He makes RUM for 6. He rolls a 17, succeeding at his Sanity Check. He now has 103 points. The game immediately ends and Paul is the winner.

Optional Rules:

1. **The Unspellable Oath** - A player with only one Cthulhu Pawn left may be allowed to make any word out of any number of letters and score for it (still rolling a Sanity Check to keep their last Cthulhu Pawn), whether or not it is gibberish. Unhinged folk can believe anything is a word.

2. **Spell Binding** - When a player discards their entire hand instead of making a word, other players may examine the discarded letters for words. Any other player may force the discarder to form a legitimate word from those letters, rolling and scoring as normal. If several players point out words that can be created, the discarding player must form the highest-scoring word out of those letters. After that, the player draws a new hand.

3. **Psychotherapy** - When a player discards their entire hand, they may roll against the total value of the hand. If the player rolls higher than that value, they regain a Cthulhu Pawn. If not, nothing happens. No one may have more than five Cthulhu Pawns during the game.

4. **Last Words** - Once a player reaches 100 or more points, each other player gets one more turn in which they have the opportunity to beat that player's score. The player with the highest score wins the game. If two (or more) players tie for the highest score, the one who reached their final score first wins the game. In other words, it is not enough to simply tie for the high score - a player must beat it in order to win.

HOUNDS OF TINDALOS (n.)
howndz uhv tin-DAH-lohse

*Demon dogs that enter through
the corners of your room to feast
on your brain...*

The Card Deck:

2 F's (3 points)	3 M's (3 points)	5 T's (2 points)
2 G's (2 points)	5 N's (2 points)	4 U's (0 points)
10 A's (5 points)	8 O's (0 points)	2 V's (1 point)
2 B's (5 points)	2 P's (3 points)	2 W's (3 points)
2 C's (0 points)	1 Q (2 points)	1 X (4 points)
3 D's (2 points)	5 R's (4 points)	2 Y's (3 points)
10 E's (4 points)	5 S's (0 points)	1 Z (2 points)
3 H's (4 points)		
9 I's (4 points)		
1 J (2 points)		
1 K (3 points)		
5 L's (1 point)		