

# WEREWOLF

A game of mystery, deduction and communication for 6 or more players.

A peaceful village in the Balkans has discovered werewolves in their midst!

The villagers must try to determine their identity and send them to the stake before it's too late, while the werewolves devour the helpless villagers, night after night.

The fight continues until one side is completely eliminated.

Will it be yours?

## GAME COMPONENTS

33 Role Cards

1 Turn Card

1 Icons Card

1 Biography Card

1 Game Rules booklet

## THE GAME

**Werewolf** is played over a series of alternating "days" and "nights". During the day, the villagers gather together and try to figure out who the Werewolves are. They will then vote on whom they should burn at the stake. At night, the Werewolves will choose a victim to devour, while the Seer probes the souls of the villagers hoping to discover their nature.

In order to play, you will need a Moderator, who will guide the players and lead the game.

## GAME SETTING

Before you can play, you must decide who will be the Moderator. His first duty will be to explain the game to any new players and prepare the Village.

## PREPARING THE VILLAGE DECK

*- FOR YOUR FIRST FEW GAMES*

Until you are comfortable with the game, it is best to start with a Village deck that has a number of cards equal to the number of players. You **must** include the Seer and some Werewolves (1 for 5-8 players, 2 for 9-12 players, 3 for 13-16 players, 4 for 17-20 players and so on). You should ignore the text of any Role Cards **except** the Seer and the Werewolves, and treat everybody else as basic villagers with no abilities.

Once you've learned the basics of the game, then you can include all other Role Cards and experience the full game!

*- FOR YOUR LATER GAMES*

The Moderator, working with the other players, chooses which Role Cards to include in the Village, picking from all the Roles in the game. You need to pick a number of Roles equal to the number of players. This can be a delicate process, since a good Village composition is important to make a balanced game. In general, we recommend that you have an "antagonist" Role (Werewolf, Vampire, Traitor, etc..) for every four players, rounding down. Of course this number is just a guideline, and with time and practice you will start to learn how to design more balanced and interesting Villages, and how to consider your players' style and experience.

*- FOR THE EXPERTS*

When Role Cards are chosen to form the Village, you can make the game even more interesting if you include more cards than the number of players. Of course, you will still only deal out one Role Card to each player, so some of the Roles that are chosen won't actually be used during the game. But the players will still have to take all the chosen Roles into account, because they "could" be there! This will create more opportunities for the players to bluff, particularly if they are playing a Role that needs to hide their identity.

The more Role Cards you use, compared to the number of players, the more uncertainty and tension there will be in the game. For this reason, we recommend that you always use more Role Cards than the number of players.

With skilled players, we find that adding one extra Role for every 2 players works best (for example, playing 18 Role Cards in a 12 player game).

After the group decides which Role Cards to include, it is up to the Moderator to secretly build the Village deck. This can be a tricky process, as you want to make a Village deck that is going to be balanced and interesting to play. Make sure that you include enough adversaries (Werewolves, Vampire, etc..) for the size of your group. In general, one adversary for every four players is the right ratio. Don't let the players know which Role Cards you included in the deck and which were left out.

To make things easier, you could make a list of all the Roles in the game, including the ones that were not dealt out, and keep it nearby to reference during the game, or just place the Roles not dealt face up on the table. Remember that the Moderator will have to call out the turns for every Role you choose to include, even if they are not actually in the game!

## DISTRIBUTE THE ROLES

Once you have prepared the Village, have the players sit in a circle or around a table. Shuffle the Village deck and give one Role Card to each player.

The players look at their Role Card without revealing them to other players.

The Moderator should take note of each player's Role. It may help to use paper and pencil to record any notes you need to remember. You can easily draw a diagram of the players locations and list their Role next to each player's name. This can help you manage the game. When all the players have memorized their Role, then the game can begin!

## THE PLAY OF THE GAME

### - THE FIRST NIGHT

The game begins with the first night. During all nights, including the first, all players have to remain silent and must keep their eyes closed. The Moderator calls out the Roles in the order they are listed on the Turn Card. When the Moderator calls your Role, you can open your eyes until your turn is done. To avoid accidental noises giving away clues, all players should tap their fingers on the table to create a background noise. This also helps creating a fitting atmosphere for the game!

Here is an example of the first night. Only the Moderator is speaking:

"Night has come and you go back to your houses. All the players shut their eyes".

The Moderator checks that all the players have their eyes closed and are silent.

"Let the Seer open her eyes and point to a player, I will tell her if that player has a Dark Aura". The Seer opens the eyes and silently points to a player. The Moderator nods "yes", if that player has a Dark Aura, or gestures a "no", if that player has a White Aura. The Moderator always responds in silence, so only the Seer knows the answer.

**Note:** when you are tapping the table with your fingers, always make sure you point with your *other* hand, so the players near you can't hear you stop tapping.

The Moderator goes on.

"Let the Seer close her eyes".

The Moderator makes sure the player has his eyes shut, then continues:

"Let the Werewolves open their eyes and recognize each other. Let the Pack Leader make himself known to the other Werewolves".

During the first night, the Werewolves don't attack anyone. Instead, they just find out who the other Werewolves are. During later nights, the strongest Wolf in play will choose their target.

The Moderator continues in this way for all the Roles included in the game that take an action during the first night. Once this is done, the Moderator says:

"The day has come. You may open your eyes".

All the players open their eyes (and stop tapping), then the first day phase begins.

### - THE FIRST DAY

The Moderator should follow the steps on the Turn Card to help guide the events during the Day.

### - VILLAGE ASSEMBLY

This first part of the game is very open. Anyone can speak if he chooses, and you can decide whether or not reveal any details about your identity, ask questions, share information received during the night, or accuse others of being a Werewolf. The only restriction is that players may **never** reveal their Role Cards. You are free to lie or mislead the other players!

The purpose of this discussion is to try to decide how you should vote and who to accuse of being a Werewolf, so the villagers can burn him at the stake.

This part ends when the Moderator announces that it is the time for the First Voting. The Moderator should use his common sense, giving the players time for their deductions and accusations, and proceeding more quickly if they don't have any relevant information to discuss.

Keep in mind that the early phases of the game will tend to be faster, since there is very little information, and players are often reluctant to speak first. The first day is usually the shortest, and the Moderator can quickly move on to the First Voting.

### - FIRST VOTING

The First Voting will determine which villagers are going to stand accused of being a Werewolf. One of the accused may be burnt at the stake at the end of the day!

To announce the First Voting the Moderator says:

"Let's proceed with the First Voting. Each of you *must* cast one and only one vote against any other player. Close your eyes and I will call the players one by one. When you hear the name of player you want to accuse, raise your hand".

Once all the players have shut their eyes, the Moderator proceeds, calling out the names of the players one by one writing down the number of votes each one receives.

Once all the players have been called out, the Moderator announces which players will be on the ballot for the Second Voting, according to these rules:

If more than one player has tied for the most votes, all the tied players, and only these players, are on the ballot for the Second Voting.

If only one player has the most votes, he goes on the ballot for the Second Voting, along with the player who has the second highest number of votes (or all players with the second most if there is a tie).

This ensures that there will be at least two players on ballot for the Second Voting.

Now the Moderator announces:

"The First Voting is over. Open your eyes. [list of names] are on the ballot for the Second Voting."

#### - DEFENSE STATEMENTS

A second round of discussion follows. The accused players on the ballot each get a chance to defend themselves, before a vote is taken to decide which one will be burned at the stake. They are free to share any information they think will save them, or even accuse the other players on the ballot with them. They may *not* reveal their Role Card, however. In this phase all players can speak, but the discussion must pertain to the players on the ballot.

Once all the players on the ballot have had their opportunity to speak, the Moderator says:

"Let's proceed with the Second Voting, in order to decide who must go to the stake. Each of you, except for the accused, must cast their vote against one of the players on the ballot. The player with most votes will go to the stake and be burned. If there is a tie, the hesitant villagers won't burn anyone today. Close your eyes."

#### - SECOND VOTING

The Moderator calls out the names of all the players on the ballot, and writes down the votes each one receives. Then he announces:

"Open your eyes. The village has decided. [name] goes to the stake!" **or** "The village is hesitant. Today there won't be anyone sent to the stake."

And:

"It's now night. Close your eyes."

After the execution, the next night begins immediately, and there is no more discussion between the players.

When a player goes to the stake, the Moderator takes his Role card, making sure that nobody can see it. That player is out of the game, and cannot participate in any more discussions. He can follow the game as an observer (and keep his eyes open at night and during Voting!). You may find that sometimes this can be as much fun as actually playing the game!

#### - THE FOLLOWING NIGHTS

The other nights proceed just like the first night, with the difference being that some Roles are called only on the first night (such as Juliet), and other are called only on later nights (like the Healer).

Starting with the second night, the Werewolves kill one victim each night. The strongest Werewolf in the game chooses their victim during the Werewolves turn.

Remember: during the night, the Moderator still has to call out all the Roles in the game, even if the player that had that Role has been killed!

#### - THE FOLLOWING DAYS

At sunrise, each day, the Moderator announces which player has been killed by the Werewolves, and takes his Role card without showing it to the other players. That player is out of the game.

When voting, we recommend that the Moderator alternates the direction that he calls for votes (right to left for one day, then left to right for the next). This way the last names called are not always the same.

### THE END OF GAME

The game ends as soon as one of the following End Game Conditions is met. When this happens, the Moderator *immediately* announces it to players and the game ends

#### - THE VILLAGE WINS

(or the Criminals win, see page 17)

If all the Werewolves, the Vampire and any Lesser Vampires have been eliminated.

#### - THE WEREWOLVES WIN

If only members of the Werewolves Faction are still in the game.

#### - THE VAMPIRE WINS

If only members of the Vampire Faction are still in the game.

**Note:** the presence of the Ghoul or of the Traitor does not prevent the ending of the game with the Village win.

It is possible to have a situation where the game will stall because no one remaining in the game can kill the other (for example, a lone Werewolf and the Hermit). If this happens, the Werewolves win over any other Factions, and the Vampire wins over the Village or Criminals.

If there are Criminals in the game, they don't change the End Game Conditions. They only change the Winning Conditions for the Village.

(see The Faction, on page 17)

## VARIATIONS

One of the reasons of the wide appeal of *Werewolf* is the many ways that it can be changed by the players. The variants that follow are only some of the more popular ones. Feel free to create and try new ones!

### REVEALING THE ROLES

Each time a player is eliminated, his Role Card is turned over and revealed to all players. This variant greatly reduces the uncertainty of the game, making it harder for players to bluff about their identity, so it is only recommended for beginners. Of course, if you use this rule, some Roles will completely lose their meaning (such as the Medium), and should not be used in the game.

### PUBLIC VOTING

Players keep the eyes open during the daily voting. This can simplify the game and make the Moderator's job easier, but it makes it harder for the players who need to bluff about their identity. If you use this rule, you should not use Role Cards that affect voting.

### THE AMULET AND THE SWORD

The Amulet is a talisman that protects its owner. At the beginning of the game, the Moderator chooses one random player to be the first owner of the Amulet (you can shuffle the cards before handing them out and pick one. That player that gets that Role also gets the Amulet). During the first night, the Moderator quietly taps the Amulet owner on his shoulder when it is the Amulet turn. During later nights, the Moderator calls for the Amulet owner to open his eyes and choose a player. The Moderator taps the chosen player on the shoulder. He does not open his eyes, but now he knows that he is the holder of the Amulet. If a player who has the Amulet should be killed for any reason, the Amulet protects him! If he is attacked in the night, he stays alive instead. If he is sent to the stake, then no one is executed that day, just like a tie in the Second Voting.

The Amulet can only be used once. It is destroyed after it is used the first time, or if it is ever passed to a player who had already held it during the game, or of the current owner refuses to pass it to another player.

The Sword is also randomly given, passed around and destroyed in the same way as the Amulet. But it does not protect the bearer from being killed. If the Sword's owner is attacked by the Werewolves or by the Vampire, he dies normally, but he also kills the strongest Werewolf in play or the Vampire (depending on who attacked him). The Sword is a very powerful item, so if you decide to include it in the game, you will need to balance the Village composition appropriately.

### TIMED GAME

A particularly interesting variant is to set a fixed duration for each day of the game. At the end of that time, if the Village hasn't sent anyone to the stake yet, the night comes and every other activity is interrupted!

This variant requires more attention, but it has the great advantage of making the tension very palpable, with time running out before the setting sun. The effect can be even more realistic if you can use a clock that is visible to all players (a chess clock or an hourglass in the center of the table is perfect for this purpose).

## GAME PLAY SUGGESTIONS

### THE MODERATOR

The role of the Moderator is fundamental to a good game of *Werewolf*. As the Moderator, you have the task of choosing the Roles that are included in the Village, explaining the game to the new players, answering any questions and leading the players through the game. You will set the tempo for the game, cutting off discussion when the game falters and giving time to the players when it make sense. Every Moderator has his own style, and intervenes in the game differently. There is not "right" way to moderate a game, just follow your taste and above all try to understand what your players like.

At night when, calling for Roles, there are some hints to follow: if there is no player with a given Role, make sure you let enough time pass after you call that Role's name, so it appears the the Role is still active. Try to speak to the center of the room, instead of towards the player who has his eyes open at that moment. Always use the pronoun that match the gender of the Role, **not** the gender of the player (for example, the Seer is always a "she").

### EXPLANATION OF THE GAME

At first, the rules of the game might seem much longer and complicated than they really are. My suggestion is to keep the required explanations to a minimum (rules for the day, rules for the night, Roles and Victory Conditions). Then start a game quickly. You will find out that the best way to explain the game is by playing it!

## THE SETTING

A good setting is another element that can really add flavor to the game.

Look for a room large enough for all players and isolated from noises and external interruptions. Some groups prefer to play around a table, others in a circle of chairs with empty space in the middle. If you go for the table make sure you have some way to reach a player with his eyes closed without the other noticing it (space at the back of chairs, a wand to touch them without getting up, etc...)

If the players don't know each other it's advisable to give each one a name card on the table or a name badge.

If it is possible, find a place where eliminated players can go. The fact that they are not staying with the others will add to the tension, as the Village is gradually reduced, and will simplify the discussion for the remaining players.

If you can't have them move, try doing something to make them recognizable (for example turning their chairs around with the back in front of them, or turning over their name card and writing OUT OF GAME on the other side).

## THE ATMOSPHERE

Besides being a game of bluff and deduction, **Werewolf** is also a game of atmosphere. Therefore, every single effort you take in this direction will make your games more entertaining and suggestive. Enhancing the night atmosphere is particularly effective, such as turning off the lights and using only the minimum of illumination to distinguish the players and their gestures (it may be enough to use the light of an adjacent room, if you don't want to overdo with candles, blue lights or adjustable lights). Another very useful trick is using a music player to create background noise during the night (you can easily find ambient sounds like wind, rain and thunders on the internet, maybe even with some howling in the background!). Keep the lights on and a total silence during the Voting, in order to give different tones to the times when the players keep their eyes closed.

## THE "BAD GUYS"

It is harder to play a Role if you have to bluff about your identity than it is to play a simple villager, but it can also be very satisfying. At first, you may be tempted to stay in the shadows and not draw too much attention to yourself. But remember that it will be very easy to deduce your identity if nobody in the Village gives out false information! Don't hesitate to fake important Roles, like the Seer or the Wizard, maybe allowing your allies to stay hidden. And remember: a Village with just one Seer is often a Village that wins.

## POST-GAME DISCUSSIONS

Sometimes, one of the most interesting parts of the game is the discussion about events and choices taken that occurs at the end. This can also be a way to improve your game, by comparing with the other players and finding out what really happened while your eyes were closed. Encourage discussion among the players, asking them what mistakes they think they made, which different choices they would take now, who they trusted and why, or who they felt was the Village leader during the discussions. This is also a good way to prepare for your next game!

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Some valuable thoughts on the game:

**Werewolf** is a game where the group wins and not the individual. Remember that, aside from rare exceptions, it won't matter at the end of the game whether you are alive or not. What matters is the contribution that you gave to your Faction to enable it to win.

**Werewolf** is a game of logic and deduction. The elements to make the right conclusions will be at hand for everyone. It will be your task to make the best use of them.

But even more than that, **Werewolf** is a game of interaction. Work with your team, make yourself trustable, and at the same time understand who can be trusted and who cannot, lead the group and communicate your opinions in an effective way. All these are fundamental characteristics of the game.

You will realize that, since the relations between people are the main element of this game, **Werewolf** will take different forms when you play it with your friends in a pub, with your family after a dinner, at a work meeting with colleagues, or in class with your classmates.

Every different group you will get in contact with will offer you a new interpretation of this game. It is up to you to find them out!

## HISTORICAL NOTES

**Werewolf** is a game whose roots are lost in time, even if they are recent. The first apparitions seem to go back to the 50s in England with a popular game called *Murder*. The first official rules were written in 1986 by Dimitry Davidoff, a psychology teacher at Moscow University. In those times the game was called *Mafia* and the setting was that of a village in Sicily where the gangsters hid. The Werewolf theme was instead introduced by Andrew Plotkin in 1997. Several people contributed to the game development during the years, even if the greatest evolution was due to the internet's arrival that connected the various gamers communities, and spread the changes and the variations tried along the way.

Over the years several versions of the game have been published (*Are You A Werewolf?* from Looney Labs, *Les Loups-garous de Thiercelieux* from Lui-même, *Lupus in Tabula* from DaVinci and *Ultimate Werewolf* from Bezier Games, just to mention a few). Each of them drew in a more or less similar way the changes that the game underwent over the years.

I met the game in 2001 and I started immediately to work on my own version of it. My goal in the making of **Wherewolf** has been that of expanding the game without weighting it down, and creating inside it new interaction dynamics and new game mechanics. The target has been that of a game complex but not complicated, well balanced, and interactive for every Role.