

ROCK HARD

-1977-

RULEBOOK



**It's 1977. You're an up-and-coming musician,
dreaming of making it big with your band.**

*Over the next few months, you'll rehearse, play gigs, write songs,
and promote your band. With careful planning and a little luck,
you'll earn the most Fame and become the best new artist of the year!*

+INFO!



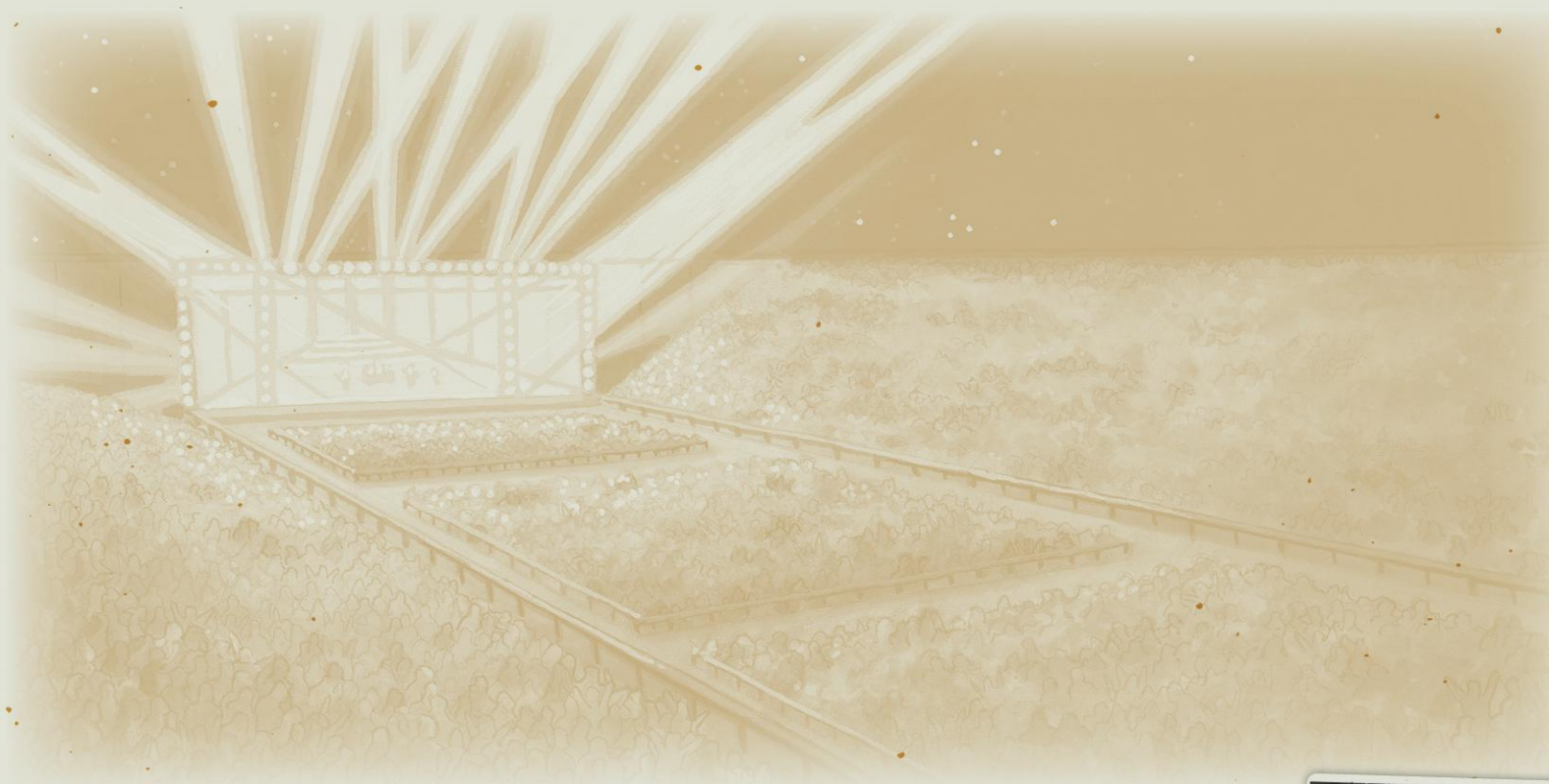
**How to play
video**

OVERVIEW

In **Rock Hard 1977**, you'll live the life of a late-70s up-and-coming rock and roll artist trying to make it big. The game is played over a maximum of nine rounds, each representing a typical day of a different month in 1977. You win the game by earning the most Fame. You get Fame both during the game and at the end by:

- Increasing your “Base Stats”: Chops, Reputation, and Songs;
- Achieving Production, Performance, and/or Publicity Bonuses;
- Achieving one or more Personal Goals;
- Getting a Record Deal and earning Royalties;
- Playing Gigs (concerts); and
- Hanging Out at the hottest After-Hours spots.

The game begins in April and is over at the end of December or the end of any earlier round in which one of the players has achieved **50 or more ★ Fame**.



WHY IS THIS RULEBOOK SO LONG?



Too long. That's what they said about Hotel California; Stairway to Heaven; Layla; Bohemian Rhapsody.

The rulebook is long because nothing — with the possible exception of an extended bass solo — is more annoying than having to stop and Google the answer to a question about gameplay.

These detailed rules will help you avoid the frustration of not knowing what to do at any point. Once you are familiar with them, you can skip to the **Radio Edit** (player aid card) and refer back to the rules as needed.

If you are new to the game, you may also wish to check out page 23 for Tips for New Players.



COMPONENTS



1 Board

Place the board with the correct side up for 2-3 or 4-5 players.

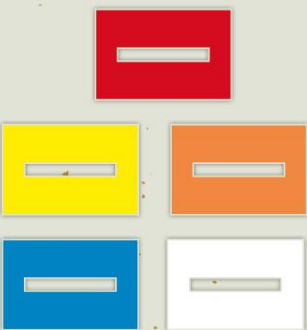


5 Amplifiers

(with 4 knobs each to put together before your first game).



5 Low Sugar tokens



5 stands (in 5 colors)

(2-3 Players)

(4-5 Players)



10 Character boards



10 Character standees



7 Ability tokens

(3 x Doc Sapphire and 1 x Shere Darling, Rafael Santiago, Yolanda Delacroix, and Eric Fairchild)



1 Die

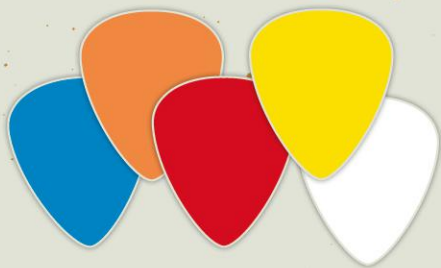


5 Demo Tape tokens (in 5 colors)



5 Record Contract tokens (in 5 colors)

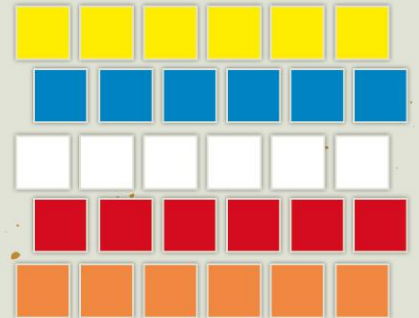
COMPONENTS



5 Turn Order markers
(guitar picks)



5 Fame scoring tokens



30 Wooden cubes
(6 x each color)



15 Crew tokens

(2-5 players)

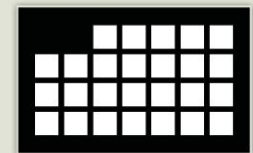


8 Hot Hang Out tokens

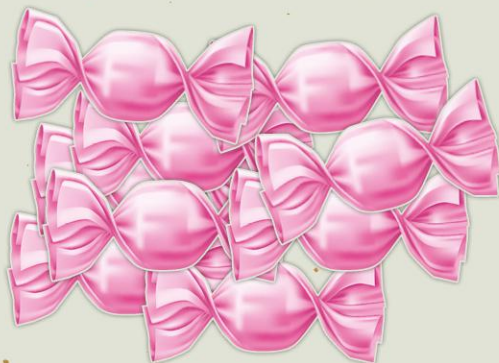
(2-3 players only)



(4-5 players only)



1 Round marker



25 Candy tokens



10 Missed Work tokens



Money
(30x \$1, 10x \$5, 8x \$10)



100 Hang Out cards
(20x Backstage, 20x Hoover's, 20x Bud's,
20x Jax, and 20x Slinky's)



12 Starting Life Experience cards
(3x each After Hours venue
other than Slinky's)

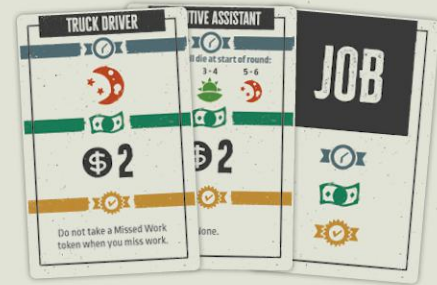
COMPONENTS



10 Character cards



6 Manager cards



11 Job Cards



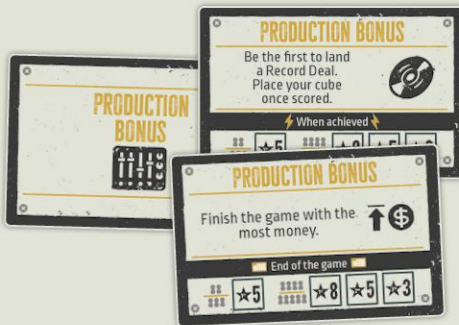
18 Random Gig cards
(6x A, 6x B, 6x C)



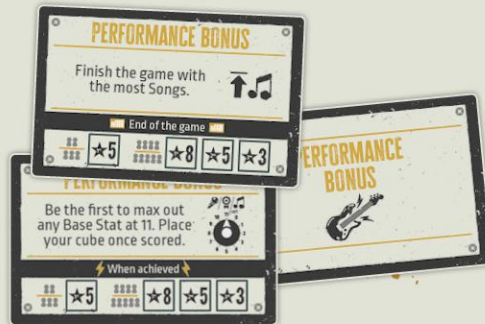
24 Personal Goal cards



5 Radio Edit Cards
(Player Aid)



8 Production Bonus cards



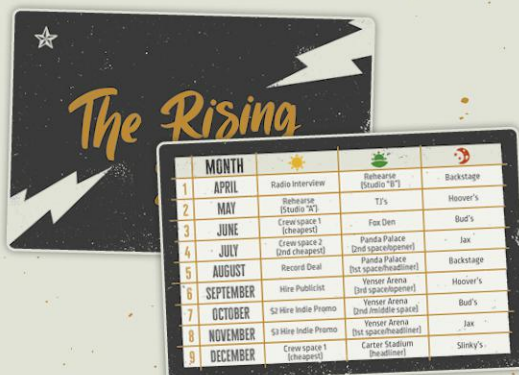
8 Performance Bonus cards



8 Publicity Bonus cards



8 Sugar Rush cards



1 Rising Star card



15 Event cards

SETUP

- 1 Place the **game board** in the center of the table according to the number of players (2-3 or 4-5).
- 2 Each player chooses a player color and takes the matching guitar pick **Turn order token**, **Fame token**, four **cubes**, and **standee base** along with **\$1** and one **Candy token**. Place each player's **Fame token** next to space "1" of the Fame scoring track on the board.
- 3 Each player takes an **amplifier**, and places one cube of their color on the 0 space of the **Royalty track**. Set the knob marked "Craving" to 0 and a **Low Sugar token** on the space next to it with the "Off" side facing up. Set the knobs for each of the "Base Stats" (Chops, Reputation, and Songs) to 2.
- 4 Shuffle the **Production**, **Performance**, and **Publicity Bonus decks** separately and randomly choose one card from each. Place the chosen cards face up in the designated spots at the top of the game board. Return the unused Bonus cards to the box.
- 5 Separate the **Random Gig cards** into separate "A", "B", and "C" piles. Shuffle each pile separately and randomly draw three cards from each. Return the remaining Random Gig cards to the box. Place the nine chosen cards in one face-down pile with the three "C" cards on the bottom, followed by the three "B" cards, and finally the three "A" cards on top. Place this stack on the Random Gigs space in the Night section of the game board.
- 6 Separate the remaining cards into their respective decks based on their card backs and shuffle each deck separately. Set aside the Character, Job, Personal Goal, and Starting Life Experience cards for now. Place the **Event**, **Sugar Rush** and **Hang Out decks** face down in their designated spaces on the game board.
- 7 Shuffle the five **Hot Hang Out tokens** (numbered 8 to 12 in a 4-5 player game) face down and randomly place one in each Hang Out space on the game board. Then turn them over.



- 8 Put the **Candy** and **Missed Work** tokens in separate piles in any convenient location near the game board, along with the **money**. Put the **Demo Tape** and **Record Contract** tokens near the Recording Studio area of the board.
- 9 The first player is whoever most recently sang in the shower—or use any other method you like to determine who goes first. Place the guitar pick of that player's color on the leftmost space of the **Turn Order section** in the upper left-hand portion of the game board. For the first round, play will proceed clockwise: Place each of the remaining players' guitar picks so that the Turn Order section correctly reflects the clockwise order of play for the first round.

- 10 Shuffle the **Character cards** face down. Starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise around the table, each player randomly draws two Character cards. Players then each simultaneously choose one Character card to keep and place its corresponding **Character board** in their amplifiers, with the playing side up. Return the other Character cards and boards to the box. Find the **standee** for your character and insert it into the base of your color.
- 11 Players playing with Doc Sapphire, Shere Darling, Rafael Santiago, Yolanda Delacroix, or Eric Fairchild take their **Ability tokens** and place them on their Character board.
- 12 Shuffle the **Starting Life Experience cards**, and one at a time, have each player draw two randomly. If a player draws a second card with the same icon as their first card, they draw again until a different symbol is drawn, then shuffle any prior cards back into the deck. Continue around the table until each player has two different cards, representing memorable life experiences from their character's past. Return any unused cards to the box. The text on these cards is just there for entertainment. Only the icon will have any effect on the game.
- 13 Everyone draws three **Personal Goals**, choosing two to keep. Return all unchosen Personal Goals to the box. Keep your Personal Goals next to your amplifier, secret from the other players (unless the card tells you otherwise). You may, however, look at your own Personal Goals at any time.
- 14 In player order, everyone draws two cards from the **Job deck**. Players then simultaneously select one to keep. Place your chosen Job face up on top of the space that says "Professional Musician" on your Character board. Return the unchosen Job cards to the game box.
- 15 Shuffle the **Manager cards** and draw a number equal to the number of players. Turn those cards face up where everyone can see them. In *reverse* player order, starting with the player to the right of the first player and proceeding counter-clockwise around the table, each player selects one of the face-up Managers and places it on the "Manager" space of their Character board.
- 16 Turn the top card of each of the **Event** and **Random Gig** decks face-up. You are now ready to rock!

PLAYING WITH 2 OR 3 PLAYERS

The indicated set up and the example image are for a 4- or 5- player game. If you are playing with 2 or 3 players make sure that you are using the correct side of the board. Also, use the Hot Hang Out tokens numbered 7 to 11 (as shown below).

If you will be playing with 2 or (optionally) 3 players, you will also need to check the Rising Star rules on page 23.



Top section featuring two player cards: **BEVLI "BAM BAM" BERNSTEIN** (The Scientist) and **DOC SAPPHIRE** (The New Yorker). Each card includes a character illustration, a 'PERSONAL GOAL' card, a 'LIFE EXPERIENCE' card, and a 'PROFESSOR' card. Below the cards are two \$100 bills and various decorative icons like a bow tie and a red heart.

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Game board header with a calendar grid for May through August. The calendar shows dates 1 through 31. Below the calendar are four bonus cards: **ROCK BAND BREAKS**, **PRODUCTION BONUS**, **PERFORMANCE BONUS**, and **PUBLICITY BONUS**. Each bonus card has specific instructions and icons.



Game board middle section with a 'TURN ORDER' track (1-5) and various action cards: **BUY OUT**, **UPST**, **MONTE BIDD**, **WRITE A SONG**, and **WORK**. Each card has a number and a specific icon.

8



Main game board area with various locations and actions: **RADIO STATION**, **REHEARSAL STUDIOS**, **LI'S**, **FOX DEN**, **GO TO BED EARLY**, **RECORD DEMO**, **HIRE INDIE PROMO**, **HIRE CREW**, **PANDA PALACE**, **YENSER ARENA**, **HANG OUT**, **BACKSTAGE**, **JAX**, **RECORD DEAL**, **ROYALTY**, **SUGAR RUSH**, **RECOVER**, and **CARTER STADIUM**. Each location has a character illustration and associated icons.



8



Bottom left player card for **YOLANDA DELACROIX** (The Well-Tempered). Includes character illustration, 'PERSONAL GOAL', 'LIFE EXPERIENCE', and 'PROFESSOR' cards. Numbered 14, 11, and 15.

Bottom middle player card for **KIMMY KIM** (The High Roller). Includes character illustration, 'PERSONAL GOAL', 'LIFE EXPERIENCE', and 'PROFESSOR' cards. Numbered 13, 12, and 15.

Bottom right player card for **KIMMY KIM** (The High Roller). Includes character illustration, 'PERSONAL GOAL', 'LIFE EXPERIENCE', and 'PROFESSOR' cards. Numbered 13, 12, and 15.



Bottom right section with two 'PERSONAL GOAL' cards and two 'LIFE EXPERIENCE' cards, each with a character illustration and text.

ELEMENTS OF THE GAME

YOUR AMPLIFIER & CHARACTER BOARD

BASE STATS

1 **CHOPS**

2 **REPUTATION**

3 **SONGS**

4 **ROYALTY**

5 **CRAVING**



YOLANDA DELACROIX

• The Well-Tempered •

• Keyboards • Female •

If your Reputation is less than 10, the first time you gain Reputation during the Day phase, gain 1 more.

Remove your ability token as a reminder that this ability has been used, and put it back during the Clean-Up Phase.



Your amplifier contains dials for you to track your **Base Stats**: **1** Chops 🎸, **2** Reputation 🎧, and **3** Songs 🎵, as well as your **4** Royalty tier (see page 15) and **5** Craving level (see page 15). It also has a **Low Sugar ON/OFF switch** **6**. The space below this is where you place your **Character board** **7**. Your Character board shows the name and nickname of your character, along with their instrument, gender, and unique special ability. You can read about their life on the back of the Character board, but that information is not relevant to the gameplay, and you are encouraged to make up your own back story for your character if you wish.

Base Stats start at 2 each. Whenever you gain a Base Stat, simply increase your dial by however many of that stat you gained, to a maximum of 11. Base Stats can never go below 0 or above 11. If an action space (such as a Random Gig) or an optional card requires you to lose more of a stat than you have you may not take that action. Otherwise, if a card effect would cause you to lose more of a stat than you have, you simply go to 0.

If you **max out** any of your base stats up to 11, from here on every time you would increase that stat, **you instead gain \$1** for each increase of that stat you would otherwise get. If your base stat drops below 11, nothing special happens until you max it up again.



THE CARD DECKS

There are different decks of cards covering several aspects of the game, from the random events that happen at the beginning of each round, to the interesting situations you can find yourself involved in after hours. Each will be explained in its corresponding section, below. If the text of a card conflicts with a general rule, follow the text on the card. If the text of two cards should conflict, give precedence to any Event card. Otherwise, well... it's only rock 'n' roll. Resolve things however you see fit, keeping in mind logic and the spirit of the game.

Should a deck ever run out of cards (i.e., a face-up card comes back up to the top of a deck), shuffle that deck's face-up cards, turn them over, and continue drawing. Otherwise, decks should not be shuffled except for the Sugar Rush deck, which gets shuffled during the Clean-Up Phase every round.

When you find a slash / on a card (or anywhere in the game for that matter), it reads as "OR" Meaning that there will be two or more options for you to choose from. For example, if you are told to gain **1 Fame / 1 Candy**, you can choose whether you **get Fame or Candy**, but not both.

When an icon has a **red** number next to it, that means you must spend or pay that many units. When an icon has a **black** number next to it, that means you gain that many units. When an icon appears in **blue**, that is a requirement and means that you need to have at least that much of that icon in order to take that action.



JOB CARDS



Job cards represent what your character does to earn money until they become a professional musician (i.e., lose their job). Each Job card contains the following information:

- The phase (Day, Night, or After Hours) during which you may take the Work action;
- The amount of money you earn when Working during the proper phase; and
- Any special perks or liabilities that come with the position.

Some characters (e.g., the Massage Therapist and the Executive Assistant) work a variable shift. If you work a variable shift, you will roll the die at the beginning of each round to see which phase you may Work that round:

- Roll of 1 or 2: 🌞 Day
- Roll of 3 or 4: 🌙 Night
- Roll of 5 or 6: 🌃 After Hours

After rolling for a variable shift, place a cube of your color next to the name of the phase on your Job card as a reminder that this is the phase in which you may Work that round.

You may Work a maximum of once per round even if you have extra actions available. You may quit your Job at any time during your current Work phase. Quitting does not require a separate action, but it can only be done during that phase (either after you Work or before you take your action that phase).

You receive money as indicated by your Pay Rate when you place your character standee on the Work space of the board. Some Jobs have a variable Pay Rate that requires you to roll the die. In that case, you receive the amount of \$ the card indicates according to the number on the die.

Missed Work tokens. There's more to the rock and roll life than working for the man, and sometimes you have to choose between your Job and your so-called "career". If you do anything other than Work during your shift, you do not get paid and must take a Missed Work token. If you would ever take a **third Missed Work token, you are fired** (or you quit—you decide) and can no longer take the Work action—discard your Job card. Time to move on with your musical career for good!



MANAGER CARDS



Managers grant a unique ongoing special benefit. Some Managers have a benefit that can only be used once per round. If your Manager grants such a benefit, turn their card to the side when you use it to indicate that it may no longer be used this round. You will straighten your Manager card up again during Clean-Up.

You must pay your Manager during the Clean-Up Phase at the end of each quarter as follows (or the end of the game, if earlier than December):

- End of June: 1\$
- End of September: 3\$
- End of game: 5\$

If you **do not have enough money** to pay your Manager, you lose whatever money you have remaining and then 3 Fame for every \$1 you were unable to pay, to a minimum of zero (Fame and money can never go negative).

Remember—your manager is not your friend! They can do powerful things for you, but they have a contract with you (and a very good lawyer!). Do your best to make sure you can pay them.

PRODUCTION, PERFORMANCE AND PUBLICITY BONUS CARDS



These cards are revealed at the beginning of the game and remain the same all the way through. They represent the goals the geniuses in the industry want you to achieve and they will reward you with Fame when you accomplish them. Each bonus is available to all players and scores as follows:

In a 4- or 5- player game

- Achieving the bonus first or best achieving an end-game requirement: 8 Fame
- Achieving the bonus second or second best: 5 Fame
- Achieving the bonus third or third best: 3 Fame

In a 2- or 3- player game

- 5 Fame to the player who achieves the bonus first or best achieves an end-game requirement. No Fame for second or third.

Tied players receive points for the next lower bonus.

So, in a 4- or 5- player game, if two people tie for the most of something, they each score 5 Fame and whoever has the third most scores 3. If one person has the most and two people are tied for second, the two tied for second each score 3. If three or more people tie for the most they each score 3 points, and if all players tie for third no one scores any points for that bonus. If any players are tied in a 2- or 3- player game, none of them score any Fame.

All bonus cards except for those that trigger at "End of Game" score immediately when achieved.

PERSONAL GOAL CARDS



Regardless of your aspirations in show business, there is always room for personal growth. During setup, players will draw three Personal Goal cards and choose two to keep. Unlike the Production, Performance, and Publicity Bonuses, Personal Goals may be scored only by the player who has drawn them.

There are two types of Personal Goals: Goals that score **“When achieved”** and goals that score **at the end of the game**.

⚡ When achieved

📊 End of the game

⚡ **“When achieved”** Goals score immediately as soon as the player satisfies the condition.

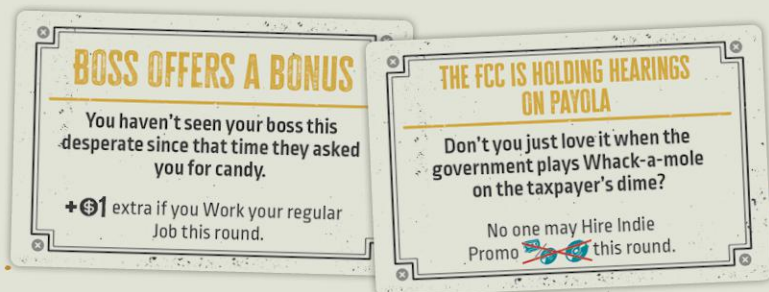
Many of these “when achieved” goals require you to perform a certain action three or more times. This type of goal has spaces on it for tracking your progress. Such a card must be revealed face up when you choose it so all players can see it.

Play Panda Palace at least 3 times. Turn this card face up when you choose it, and place your first cube on it as soon as you play Panda Palace for the first time. Move the cube to the “2” space when you play there a second time and score the card immediately if and when you play there a third time.



📊 **End game Goals**, on the other hand, involve a simple condition that may or may not be satisfied at the end of the game. *Example: Finish the game with a Craving of 3 or higher.* This type of Goal should always be kept hidden from the other players and revealed only during Final Scoring at the end of the game.

EVENT CARDS



Life is full of surprises and the music biz is no exception.

A new Event card is revealed at the beginning of every round. One of the players should read its text aloud as it will affect gameplay for everyone at the table until a new Event card is revealed. Some Events

provide immediate benefits. Others affect the game state at the beginning of the round. Other Event cards give players a bonus when taking a certain action or allow them to take a special action once during that round. When you use one a once-per-round benefit or action, you can place a reminder cube on the Event card to show that you have used it.

If an Event card makes a space unavailable, cover it with the card until the Clean-Up Phase.

RANDOM GIG, STARTING LIFE EXPERIENCE, AND HANG OUT CARDS



One new **Random Gig** card is revealed every round. These are opportunities to perform in unconventional places and earn something you might not be able to get otherwise.

Starting Life Experience cards simulate those memorable events that shaped your younger self into who you are today. **Hang Out** cards represent new experiences and contacts that can help you achieve your dream of Rock 'n Roll stardom. Starting Life Experience and Hang Out cards include icons that you will put together in sets in order to obtain Fame (see “Forming Sets” on page 19).

CANDY CARDS

See “Candy” on page 13.



PLAYING THE GAME

*Some play for fun, some for love, some for fame,
Some for a crowd that keeps calling their name,
But I play to win, don't accuse me, don't blame,
I want it all, that's the name of the game.*

— Shere Darling, "All"

The game is played in rounds, each divided into several phases. Each round in the game represents roughly a month in "real time" and what an aspiring Rock 'n' Roller would do on a typical day of that month. During each phase, the first player will take and finish their turn, followed by the next player, and so on until all players have taken a turn during the current phase. Once all players have placed their standees on new spaces of the board and finished their actions there, move on to the next phase. All the actions available in the game are discussed below.

Rounds are broken down into the following phases:

- 1. Prep Phase:** Players reveal new info for the round.
- 2. Day Action Phase:** Players place their character standees on the available spaces of the **Day** or **Anytime** zones of the board and perform actions there.
- 3. Night Action Phase:** Players place their character standees on the available spaces of the **Night** or **Anytime** zones of the board and perform actions there.
- 4. After Hours Action Phase:** Players place their character standees on the available spaces of the **After Hours** or **Anytime** zones of the board and perform actions there. The **initiative** for the next round will be determined by the actions players take during this phase.
- 5. Clean-Up Phase:** Players clean up and prepare for the next round.

If you're playing with 2 (or 3) players, you should check the Rising Star rules on page 23.

ENDING THE GAME

The game is over following the Clean-Up Phase at the **end of the ninth round (December)** or any round in which at least **one of the players has 50 or more Fame**. You will still collect Royalties and pay your Manager, but you will skip the other Clean-Up steps and proceed to End of Game scoring (page 22).

PREP PHASE

Perform the following steps in order:

- 1. Reveal a new Event card** from the deck and read it aloud. The effect indicated prevails over all game rules for the rest of the current round.
- 2. Reveal a new Random Gig card** for the Night Phase. Remove the old Random Gig card from the game.
- Players who have **Jobs that require them to Work a variable shift** (e.g., the Executive Assistant or the Massage Therapist) must roll the die to see when they are expected to Work during the current round. These players may wish to put a cube of their color next to the name of the phase on their Job card as a reminder.
- If anyone is playing as **Doc Sapphire**, this is the only time when they may (but are not required to) give one of their Sapphire Ability tokens to another player of their choice.



ACTION PHASES (DAY, NIGHT, AFTER HOURS)

Play proceeds according to the Turn Order markers (guitar picks) placed in the Turn Order section in the upper left of the board, and will remain the same until the Clean-up phase (see page 20).

During each Action Phase (☀️, 🌿, 🌙), each player, in turn order, will:

- Optionally, before their action(s), consume Candy 🍬 once (see "Candy" on page 13); then
- Take **one action**, plus any additional actions the player gets from Candy, card effects, or their character's special ability.

To take an action, put your standee on an available space of the game board and gain the **benefit listed**, after first making sure that the space's **requirements** are met and paying any specified **cost**. A slash / indicates that you can choose between either of the elements on each side of the slash. For example, for you to place your standee on this space, you must have a demo or a record contract (**requirement**). You must then pay \$2 (**cost**) to gain 2 Reputation and 1 Fame (**benefit**). A space is available if it is in the Anytime section of the board or the section matching the current phase AND the space is empty (i.e., has no standee in it) or is an Open Space [see below]. If you cannot pay the cost of an action, or if you do not meet any applicable requirements (such as having certain minimum stats), you may not use that space (unless a card or special ability provides otherwise). The specific actions that can be taken during each phase are listed below.



If you have extra actions from Candy, you decide the order in which to take your actions. Once you leave a space to take an extra action, the space you left is unblocked. Other players who go after you during the proper phase may use that space (as long as it remains available).

Open Spaces: If an action has an infinity symbol ∞ in its space, it may be used by any or all players. Otherwise, only one player may use each action space at a time. Players placing their standee on an Open Space ∞ with the Push icon must place them to the left of any standees already placed on that space. You're the star here! Just push them out of your way.



Limited Spaces: If a space is not an Open Space, it is considered a Limited space. Limited spaces may contain only one standee at a time unless a card or ability permits otherwise.

Anytime Actions: Most actions must be taken during a specific phase, but a few (Donate Blood, Write a Song, Buy/Sell Candy—known

collectively as “Anytime Actions”) may be taken during Day, Night, or After Hours. They are explained in more detail on page 20.

Once all players have finished their actions for the current phase, the following phase begins using the (possibly) new turn order. As soon as everyone is done with their After Hours actions, the players may move on to the Clean-Up Phase.

CANDY

*He handed me my coat
And walked me to the door.
I held out a piece of candy
And whispered, “Just one more?”*

— Kimmy Kim, “A Little More”

Sometimes, rockers need a little something extra to get them through their difficult, busy day, even though they know it probably isn’t good for them in the long run. Whether it’s too much coffee, adoration from an ever-greater number of fans, or anything else that gets your heart pumping, “Candy” is just the boost your character might need—a way of potentially getting extra actions in one turn, at the risk of long-term consequences.

Every time you consume Candy (other than Sugarless Candy), your Craving for sugar goes up by one. This may eventually result in Low Blood Sugar if the Candy you consume doesn’t contain enough sugar to satisfy your Craving. The more Candy you consume, the greater your Craving, and the greater the risk.

CONSUMING CANDY

Consuming Candy in Rock Hard is a three-step process:

1. Discard a Candy token in your possession and draw a card from the **Sugar Rush** deck.
2. If the card you drew was anything other than Sugarless Candy, increase your Craving level by 1 (the card will remind you). Then roll the die and compare the result to your Craving level:
 - If the number you roll is **lower than your Craving level**, you have not satisfied your Craving and must flip your Low Sugar token from “Off” to “On” (see “Low Blood Sugar” below).
 - A die roll **equal to or higher** than your Craving level is safe.
3. Take your regular action plus any extra actions you gained from the Sugar Rush card (or if you are Eric Fairchild, from your special ability if you are using it). You take these actions and play out the round even if your Low Blood Sugar token was flipped to “On.”

Note that certain cards and special abilities (such as those of Kimmy Kim and Lisa Boyd) may allow you to re-roll the die or modify the number you roll if you have not already used that ability this round.



Some action spaces will include this icon to indicate that they have a limitation related to the use of Candy. Check the relevant section of the rulebook for details.

Do not reshuffle the Sugar Rush deck after consuming Candy. The deck should only be shuffled at the end of each round.

LOW BLOOD SUGAR / RECOVERY

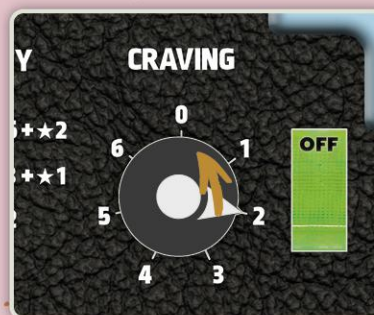
A character whose Low Sugar switch gets flipped to “On” **MUST** go to the Recover space at the end of the Clean-Up Phase and remain there for their next Day action—or lose 5 Fame if the game just ended. Note that you do not go immediately to Recover after your blood sugar becomes low: you will take your action(s) and finish out the round normally, going to Recover (or losing Fame) during Clean-Up.



5★

RECOVER SPACE

When you go to the Recover space, you will take no Day actions. Instead, you simply reset your Low Sugar switch to “Off” and reduce your Craving by 1.



Voluntary Recovery: You may also voluntarily take the Recover action during the Day Phase to lower your Craving level preemptively by 1.

*Boppity-boo, bippity-bop,
It's a long way to the top.
Bippity-bop, boppity-boo,
When you're stuck at number two.*

– Doc Sapphire, “Bippity-Bop”

RADIO STATION



Interview

1

REHEARSAL STUDIOS



Studio B

2\$
2

Studio A

1\$
1

HIRE INDIE PROMO



3\$
2
2



2\$
2
1

HIRE PUBLICIST



1\$
1
1

HIRE CREW



1\$
3\$
5\$



2\$
4\$
6\$



3\$
5\$
7\$



4\$
6\$
8\$



5\$
7\$
9\$

RECORD DEAL

3 3 3

5 5 5

8 8 8



ROYALTY

1. \$2

2. \$3+★1

3. \$5+★2

SUGAR RUSH



RECOVER



∞

REHEARSE

Rehearsing is one way to become better at your dream job and improve your character's “Chops” (musical ability and stage presence).

Depending on the number of players, there can be up to two Rehearsal Studios available in the Day Action Phase:

- Studio A costs 1\$ and adds 1 to your Chops.
- Studio B costs 2\$ and adds 2 to your Chops.



You may only use one Rehearsal Studio per phase, even if you have extra actions available.

INTERVIEW AT THE RADIO STATION

Rock stars on TV? Dream on! Everyone knows FM makes careers. Doing an Interview at the Radio Station is free and gets you 1 Reputation.

HIRE ACTIONS

There are three actions that are considered “Hire Actions” related to the effects on several cards. These actions are Hire Indie Promo, Hire Publicist, and Hire Crew, and are explained below.

- HIRE INDIE PROMO
- HIRE PUBLICIST
- HIRE CREW

HIRE INDIE PROMO

Getting airplay is hard and payola is illegal. But the Indie Promo guy doesn't care. There are two spaces that allow you to hire an independent promotion person to get your music played on the radio while keeping your own hands clean.



The first Indie Promo space costs 3\$ and requires you to have a Record Deal. It increases your Reputation by 2 and earns you 2 Fame.




The second space costs 2\$ and requires you to have either a Demo Tape or a Record Deal. It increases your Reputation by 2 and earns you 1 Fame.

HIRE PUBLICIST


Visit this space to hire a publicist for 1\$ and increase both your Reputation and Fame by 1 each.

HIRE CREW





 Crew (at first just roadies, but eventually sound and lighting experts, too) are needed to play venues larger than clubs or Random Gigs.

To Hire Crew, you must pay the cost and take a Crew token from the supply. Keep your Crew tokens in front of you so that other players can see how many you have. You may have a maximum of three Crew.



 You may hire only one Crew per round, even if you have extra actions available.

There are several spaces available for this action, some cheaper than others, and each space can only hold one standee at a time. So, the first to get here gets a better price for their Crew, but as the labor pool is now shrinking, players getting there later will see an increase in price.

 In addition, Crew becomes more expensive the more you hire as they become more specialized. Each space shows three prices. When you hire your first Crew , you pay the lowest price in the space you use. If it is the second one , you pay the price in the middle, and if it is the third , you must pay the most expensive price.

There may never be more than one standee on any Hire Crew space - not even with Nigel Hawthorne-Dawe's (manager) ability or the Beautiful Weather event.



GET OR RENEGOTIATE A RECORD DEAL ROYALTIES



If you have a Demo Tape (which can be acquired After Hours) AND your character has at least the required Chops, Reputation, and Songs listed on a row of the Royalty Chart, your character can get a Record Deal. Characters with Record Deals earn Royalties and possibly Fame during the Clean-Up Phase each round.

The Record Company is a limited space and only one player may visit each round. When you visit the record company for the first time, exchange your Demo Tape for a Record Contract token of your color and keep it in front of you, visible to all players.



You may also use this space to renegotiate and improve your Royalty rate if you already have a Record Deal.

You may not visit this space simply to block it: you must actually qualify to improve your Royalty tier.

Your Royalty tier is based on your stats at the time you negotiate or renegotiate your deal:

| RECORD DEAL | | ROYALTY |
|---|---|-----------|
|   3  3  3 |  | 1. \$2 |
|  /  5  5  5 | | 2. \$3+★1 |
|  /  8  8  8 | | 3. \$5+★2 |

Keep track of your tier with the cube on the Royalty Track of your amplifier. You will gain the indicated money and Fame for your tier during each Clean-Up Phase. All players start the game with a Royalty of 0.

RECOVER

See the discussion on Candy on page 13.

A

The red player in a 4-player game does not yet have any Crew. On their turn, they place their standee on the first Hire Crew space and pay \$1. It is then the blue player's turn.

B

The blue player already has one Crew. They place their standee on the second Hire Crew space and pay \$4 to hire their second Crew.



NIGHT ACTIONS



The bees head back home after another grueling day. As the beautiful and strange leave their lairs to hunt and play.

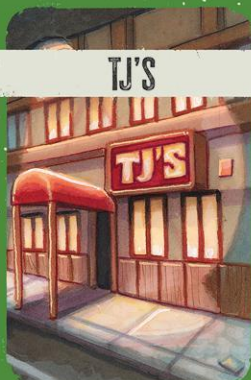
— Donovan Sterling, "Nimrods of the Night"

REHEARSAL STUDIOS

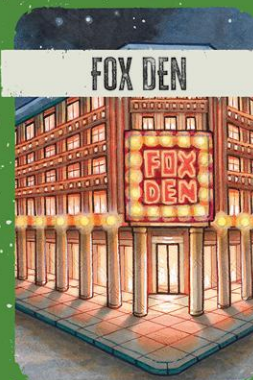


Studio B **2\$**
↓ 2

Studio A **1\$**
↓ 1



3 1 1



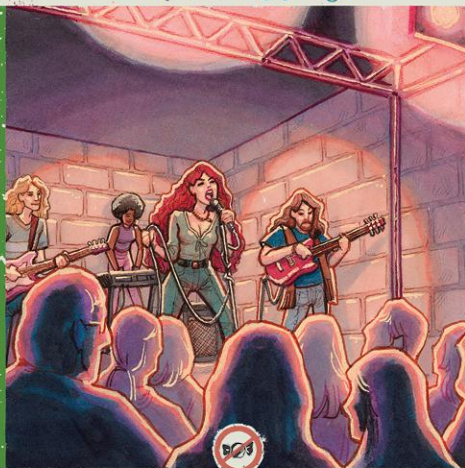
3 1 1



↓

PANDA PALACE

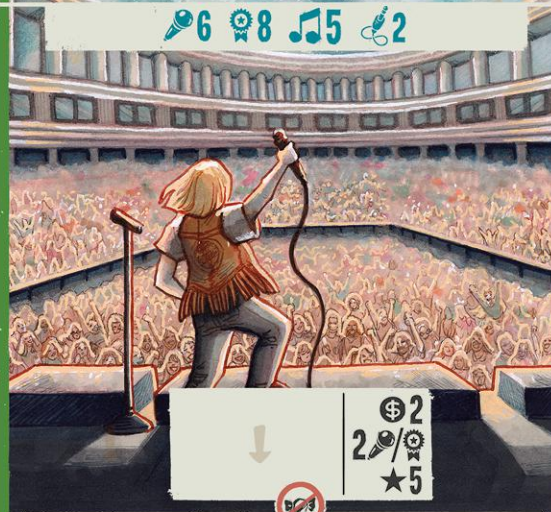
4 / 5 3 1



↓ **\$1** 1 / 3 3

YENSER ARENA

6 8 5 2



↓ **\$2** 2 / 5 5

↓ **\$1** 1 / 5 6

CARTER STADIUM

+ = 19+ 8 3



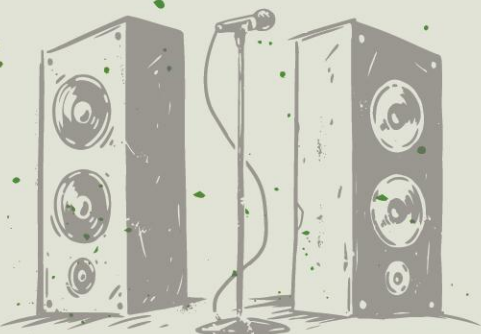
↓ **\$3** 3 / 8 8

↓ **\$2** 1 / 8 8

↓ **\$2** 1 / 8 8

★10

∞



REHEARSE

The Rehearsal Studios are open at night. Rehearsing at night works the same as daytime Rehearsal (see page 14).

PLAY A GIG

This is what we're here for after all. It's not like you'd be wearing those clothes to work, right?

Players who meet a venue's minimum requirements, as listed under the venue's name on the game board, may Play a Gig there as long as there is an available space (or they have the ability to use an occupied space).



Note that Panda Palace, Yenser Arena, and Carter Stadium require you to have a certain number of Crew in addition to minimum Base Stats. Managers are not Crew and will not work a Gig.

Carter Stadium also requires that you have a Record Deal.



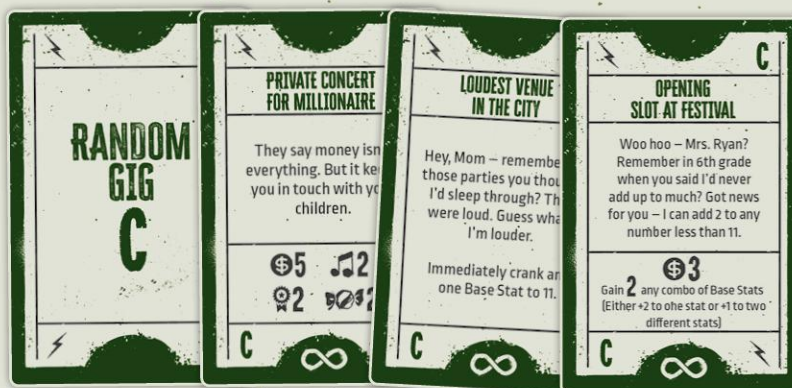
You may play only one Gig per round, even if you have extra actions available. Extra actions at Night may be used to Rehearse, Work, or perform an Anytime action before or after Playing a Gig.



RANDOM GIGS

Random Gigs change every round and are all considered Open Spaces ∞ . They do not have any minimum requirements, nor do they award any Fame unless Fame is specifically listed on the card as a benefit.

You will reveal a new **Random Gig** during the Prep Phase each round. "A"-level Random Gigs are played during the first three rounds. "B"-level Gigs are played in the next three rounds, and "C"-level Gigs are played starting in Round 7. Used Random Gigs can either be placed at the bottom of the Random Gigs deck or removed from the game.





AFTER HOURS ACTIONS



The show is over, and now's the time to relax and chill, right? Not a chance! The night is young and so are you. What's the point of being a rock star if you can't have a little fun? Besides... you never know who you might meet.



The player standees placed on the board during this phase of the game will determine the order in which you will play your actions during the following round. The number on the space occupied by each player will set the new turn order: The lower the number, the earlier you'll play [see "Arrange the New Turn Order" under "Clean-Up Phase" on page 21].



GO TO BED EARLY



1

∞



RECORD DEMO



6

7



4\$



3\$



GO TO BED EARLY

Going to Bed Early is the best way to secure a good position in the Turn Order for the next round. This is an Open Space, meaning that more than one player may use it. Note, however, that there is no "push" icon in this space. The first person to claim it is guaranteed to go first during the following round, the second to go second, and so on.



You may not Go to Bed Early and take any other action that phase (before or after), unless a card effect specifies otherwise. In particular, you may not consume Candy and then Go to Bed Early.



RECORD DEMO

Recording a Demo Tape at a Recording studio is required in order to get a Record Deal and to take the cheaper Hire Indie Promo action.

In a 2- or 3-player game, there is one Recording Studio and Recording a Demo costs 3\$. In a 4- or 5-player game, there is also a second studio, which costs 4\$.



When you Record a Demo, take a Demo Tape token of your player color.



HANG OUT

To Hang Out, move your standee to an empty space at one of the five Hang Out locations (Backstage, Hoover's, Bud's, Jax, or Slinky's). Note that each Hang Out location will have a different Hot Hang Out token, which will change every round. These help determine the Turn Order for the following round.

Each Hang Out location offers a different type of Life Experience (Romance, Fun, Business, Glamour, or Wild) and a corresponding benefit that is generally (though not always) as follows:

- Backstage (Romance , Boost to Reputation or Songs)
- Hoover's (Fun , Candy or money)
- Bud's (Business , Various rule-breaking advantages)
- Jax (Glamour , Boost to Fame or Reputation)
- Slinky's (Wild , No special benefit, just a good time)

When you Hang Out, you will do three things, as set forth in more detail below:

1. Score Hot Hangouts;
2. Draw a card from the matching deck; then
3. Form and score a set, if able.

HANG OUT

BACKSTAGE



SLINKY'S



JAX



HOOVER'S



BUD'S



Score Hot Hangouts



During the Prep Phase each round you will randomly assign a Hot Hang Out token to each location. These indicate which Hangouts are the hottest spots in which to be seen that month. Naturally, you will stay longer in those and need to sleep in a little later the following day (they have a higher guitar pick value—See “Arrange the New Turn Order on page 21). This will cause you to go later in the next round but has a corresponding benefit: **If you visit the hottest Hang Out, you immediately score ★2. If you go to the second-hottest spot, immediately score ★1.**

Draw a Hang Out Card



Hang Out cards have icons on both sides to form sets and score points, as well as special benefits on the reverse side. When you place your standee at a Hang Out location, draw a card from the deck for that location.

Read the card you drew and do what it tells you to do. You may have a choice of effects. If so, you choose now.

If the card allows you to gain a benefit by paying for it in some way, you must be able to pay in full, unless the card says otherwise. For instance, if a card says you may buy 2 Candy for \$1, you may not gain any Candy if you have no money. Similarly, if a card allows you to increase your Chops by 3 by losing 2 Reputation, you may not gain the Chops if you do not have at least 2 Reputation to lose (i.e., your Reputation is less than 2).

You may not ignore a card if you are able to perform its effect unless that effect is optional (i.e., it says “you may” do something). If you are unable to perform any action on a card, nothing special happens: you just gain the card and may form sets with it when and if able, as discussed below.

Most cards have immediate effects, but some (particularly cards from Bud’s) may affect an action during the next or a later round. In such a case, keep the card face up as a reminder and flip it face down once you have used it or its effect no longer applies.

If you are ever required to discard a card, place it face up underneath its deck. In the unlikely event that any face-up cards ever reach the top of a deck, shuffle the entire deck (other than cards in play, if any) and place the deck face down again.

Cards that have effects which haven’t been used yet can still be included in a set (see below). Simply leave those cards face up with its text visible, but grouped with the face-down cards used in the same set, until its active effect has been fulfilled, then flip it face-down as well.

Forming and Scoring Sets

★5



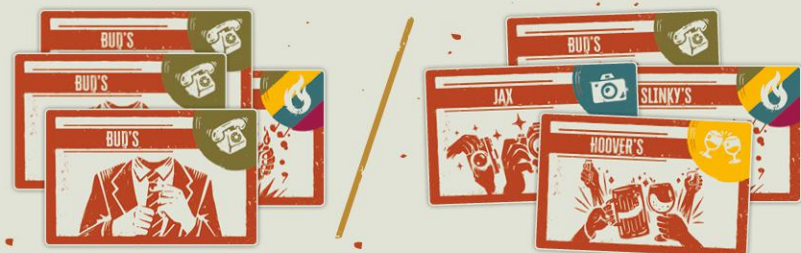
If you now have **four** Life Experience cards (including your Starting Life Experience cards) that are either all the same type, or all a different type, you **must group them together** at this time to create a set and immediately gain ★5. These cards may no longer be used to make another set.

You may not refuse to complete a set when you can, and you may not use any of the cards in that set to make any subsequent-sets. However, Life Experience cards that are part of a set still count for the purpose of scoring Bonuses or Personal Goals, such as having the most Life Experience cards of a particular type at the end of the game.

For the purpose of completing a set, a Wild card from Slinky’s can take the place of a Life Experience of any type. If a Wild card can complete more than one set, you choose which set to complete.



You have three green Business cards, two yellow Fun cards, and one blue Glamour card. You then visit Slinky’s and gain a Wild card. The Wild card can take the place of a Business card, giving you a set of four Business cards (all the same type), or since you already have at least one card of three other types, it can act as a Romance card, giving you a set of four different Life Experiences.



Wild cards are not, however, actually considered to be Life Experiences of any type other than Wild. For instance, if a Bonus requires you to finish the game with the most Romance cards, Wild cards do not count toward that Bonus, even if you used them to replace Romance cards when forming a set.



ANYTIME ACTIONS

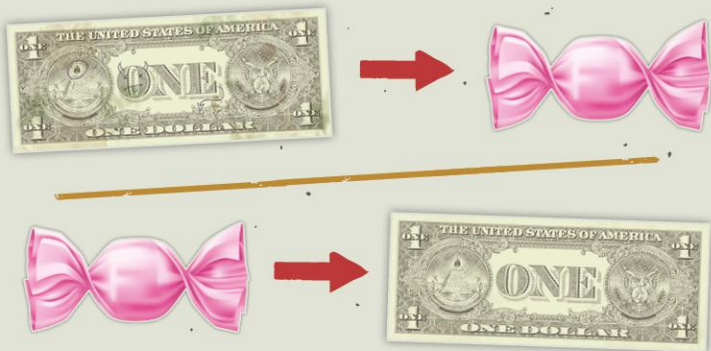


The following four actions run along the top part of the board and may be taken during any of the action phases (☀️, 🌱 or 🌙). Additionally, while other actions may only be taken once during a given phase, Anytime Actions (other than Work) may be taken multiple times if you have extra actions available (except that you may not Work twice in the same round).

All of these are Open Spaces ∞, so each of these actions may be taken by any or all players. Players placing their standee on an Open Space ∞ should shove anyone already there out of the way and place their own standee to the left of any standees already placed on that space. You are reminded of this by the 🖐️ symbol.

☀️🌱🌙 BUY OR SELL CANDY

You may use this space to Buy or Sell up to three Candy tokens for \$1 each.



☀️🌱🌙 DONATE BLOOD

Donating Blood is a way to earn extra money if you find yourself short of cash or simply want more. When you Donate Blood, take \$1 from the supply.



☀️🌱🌙 WRITE A SONG

Writing a Song lets you increase ➡️ the number on your Songs dial by 1.

Note that while it can be tempting to think of Write a Song as an action of last resort, ignoring your songwriting is not a good idea. Original songs are required for playing larger venues, for getting a Record Deal, and for completing certain Goals and/or Bonuses.



☀️🌱🌙 WORK

Provided your character has a Job, you may take the Work action during the phase listed on your character's Job card. To Work, place your standee in the Work space in the Anytime Actions section of the board. If you do not Work during the appropriate phase for any reason, take a Missed Work token (unless your Job card provides otherwise). See page 9 for details on the Job cards.



You may Work only **once per round** even if you have extra actions from Candy available.



CLEAN-UP PHASE

*Don't let them kid you
It's all about the fame.
Or maybe it's the money,
And maybe they're the same.*
— Leo Love, "Love Machine"

As soon as the last player has completed their After Hours action(s), do the following:

! If you just played December or if any of the players now have 50 or more Fame, the game is over immediately. Anyone whose Low Sugar is "On" immediately loses 5 Fame. Then do points 1 and 2 of the Clean-up (see below) and move on to scoring the End Game Bonuses and Goals (see next page). Otherwise, continue with the Clean-Up as follows:

1 COLLECT ROYALTIES: Players with Record Deals collect their Royalties (money and, if applicable, Fame).



2 PAY MANAGER: If indicated on the Round Track, players must pay their Manager as follows: end of June—1\$; end of September—3\$; end of the game—5\$. If you don't have enough money, pay whatever you can then lose 3 Fame for every \$1 you are short.



3 ARRANGE THE NEW TURN ORDER: Before taking back the character standees from the board, check their current positions on the Anytime Actions and After Hours sections of the board. Place the Turn Order guitar picks for the next round using the values next to each of these spaces, with the lowest value going first. If more than one character standee is occupying the same space (other than Go to Bed Early), the one(s) who arrived there latest will go earlier in the next round (i.e., add their picks left to right).



4 TAKE BACK THE STANDEES: Straighten Manager cards to their upright position. Take back cubes if relevant. Return Action tokens to your characters if relevant.



! If you're playing with 2 or 3 players and you are using the **RISEING STAR** rules, advance her cubes to the next space at this point (see page 23).

5 CHECK FOR LOW BLOOD SUGAR: Characters whose Low Blood Sugar switch is "On" must go to the Recover space. Place their standees there now (see page 15).



6 SHUFFLE THE SUGAR RUSH DECK: If anyone consumed Candy or peeked at a card in the Sugar Rush deck that round, return any used cards to the deck and shuffle it.



7 TAKE THE HOT HANG OUT TOKENS AND ASSIGN them randomly to the different Hang Out locations then flip them face up.



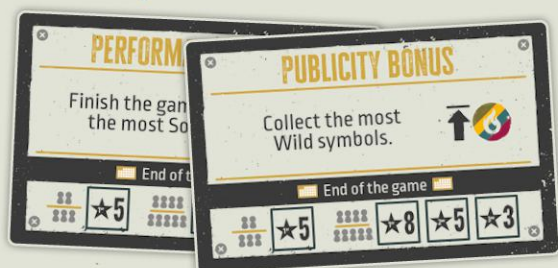
8 ADVANCE THE ROUND MARKER: Now begin the following round with its Prep Phase.



END-GAME SCORING

In addition to Fame scored or lost during the game and the final Clean-Up Phase, players receive Fame at the end of the game for:

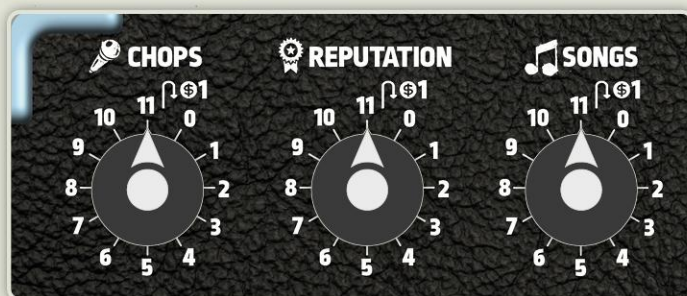
- Any End-Game  Production, Performance, and Publicity Bonuses they achieved;



- Any End-Game  Personal Goals they achieved;



- ★2 for each Base Stat is at 11, plus ★2 additional if all three Base Stats are at 11; and



- ★1 per \$3 of cash on hand, rounded down.



If at any time anyone scores over 50 points, just go around the scoring track and add the final number to 50. As explained on page 12, if two or more people tie for an End-Game Bonus, they will score a lower amount of Fame.

No Fame is awarded for Crew, Managers, Candy, or other tokens.

The player with the most Fame wins the game and is dubbed the **Best New Artist of 1977!**

Ties for Fame are broken in the following order:

1. Highest Reputation
2. Most cash on hand
3. Highest final Royalty tier.

If there is still a tie after that, the players share the victory.

THE RISING STAR - RULES FOR 2 AND 3 PLAYER GAMES

No matter how hard you try, there is always someone else trying at least as hard. This is the Rising Star.

In a 2-player game, you will play following the base rules detailed up to this point, but you will also need to use three cubes of a non-player color to represent the Rising Star. The Rising Star blocks or occupies a space in each area of the game board, as set forth below.

You may also choose to use the Rising Star in a 3-player game if you'd like to make the game more challenging, but it is not required (in which case, just ignore this section of the rules).

During Setup, place one cube of the Rising Star's color in each of the three spaces on the game board that correspond to those listed next to the number 1 (April) on the Rising Star card.

These are the spaces the Rising Star will occupy during each of the three phases: Day, Night, and After Hours.

During the Clean-Up Phase, you will move the Rising Star's cubes to the space in each area of the game board that corresponds to the next-highest number on the Rising Star card, (which will always match the current round number).

For example, during Clean-Up for Round 1 (April), you will move all three Rising Star cubes to the spaces numbered "2" (May) on the



Rising Star card. The Rising Star will occupy the corresponding spaces on the game board during Round 2 (May). At the end of May, you will move those cubes to the next highest number spaces as indicated on the Rising Star card and so on.

The Rising Star behaves exactly as a player would when she occupies a space, except that she does not affect player order. **If she is on a Limited Space, she blocks it.**

For reference, the spaces the Rising Star occupies each round are as follows:

| | MONTH | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | APRIL | Radio Interview | Rehearse (Studio "B") | Backstage |
| 2 | MAY | Rehearse (Studio "A") | TJ's | Hoover's |
| 3 | JUNE | Crew space 1 (cheapest) | Fox Den | Bud's |
| 4 | JULY | Crew space 2 (2nd cheapest) | Panda Palace (2nd space/opener) | Jax |
| 5 | AUGUST | Record Deal | Panda Palace (1st space/headliner) | Backstage |
| 6 | SEPTEMBER | Hire Publicist | Yenser Arena (3rd space/opener) | Hoover's |
| 7 | OCTOBER | \$2 Hire Indie Promo | Yenser Arena (2nd /middle space) | Bud's |
| 8 | NOVEMBER | \$3 Hire Indie Promo | Yenser Arena (1st space/headliner) | Jax |
| 9 | DECEMBER | Crew space 1 (cheapest) | Carter Stadium (headliner) | Slinky's |

TIPS FOR NEW PLAYERS

- 1 PRODUCTION, PUBLICITY, AND PERFORMANCE BONUSES:** Many of the Bonuses score as soon as they are achieved. It is easy to forget to score them, so it is a good idea to check them from time to time.
- 2 SETUP AND CLEAN-UP:** It is quite easy to skip a step accidentally. It is recommended that you go through them one by one, even after you have a good many games under your woven leather belt.
- 3 SCORE SWINGS:** Scores can change rapidly, especially if there are a lot of "When Achieved" Bonuses in play. Don't be discouraged if you seem to be falling behind at first. Just focus on your own Bonuses and Goals and don't forget the small things. Fame from Royalties, Gigs, and popular Hang Out hotspots add up.
- 4 REMEMBER—BEING A ROCK STAR IS FUN!** Save your sweat for the stage and don't worry about playing the game perfectly. It's okay to miss a rule here and there. Feel free to play your role and fill in your backstory as much or as little as you'd like. And if your group enjoys background music while you game, check out the designer's evolving '70s playlist on Spotify.
- 5 "WHEN ACHIEVED" Bonuses and Personal Goals** tend to make the game shorter, leaving you less time to fulfill all your own goals. Adjust your own actions accordingly.
- 6 IF YOU STILL FEEL OVERWHELMED,** you can easily play the game without using your Manager's or your characters' unique abilities. You can add them in once you are comfortable with the overall flow of the game. Alternatively, or in addition, you can play your first game or two without Candy. Just ignore the part of any card that makes reference to Candy, and if you are using character abilities, do not play with Eric Fairchild or Kimmy Kim.



JACKIE FOX



Jackie Fox is a Los Angeles-based designer whose games include the narrative adventure trilogy *The Adventures of the Chubby Slugz*. She is an avid gamer and a regular guest on numerous board game streams, including Boardgamegeek's Game Night! (where she is still looking for that first win).

In the 1970's, Jackie was the bass player for the "Famous Five" version of the groundbreaking all-female teenage rock band, **The Runaways**. The band's music—including their hit "Cherry Bomb"—has been featured in dozens of feature films and television shows, including *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Stranger Things*, *Fear Street*, *Riverdale*, *The Boys*, *True Blood*, *Lucifer*, *Entourage*, *Highlander*, *Mrs. America*, *The Deuce*, *The OC*, and *90210*.

Jackie is also a four-time **Jeopardy!** champion and former entertainment attorney who has been featured in several documentaries, including *Edgeplay: a Film About the Runaways* and *Look Away* for Sky Media.

And yes—many of the events in *Rock Hard* were inspired by her experiences in the entertainment industry. Only she isn't telling which ones.



"Jackie Fox has seen the rise and fall and rise-again of L.A. 's seventies' music scene and all its indelible characters. A writer par excellence and essential role-model to many, Fox is a treasure for all-time."

— Cameron Crowe [director *Almost Famous*, *Jerry Maguire*, *Singles*, *Say Anything*]

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CREDITS

Author: Jackie Fox

Illustrator: Jennifer Giner

Rules Consultant: Ferran Renalias

Editor: David Esbrí

Proofreader: William Niebling

Layout: Meeple Foundry

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www.devirgames.com
DEVIR CONTENIDOS S.L.
 Via Augusta 153-157
 Entlo. Local 4
 08021 – Barcelona