

TOWER of MADNESS™

BY CURT COVERT




INVESTIGATE UNSPEAKABLE HORROR...
WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MARBLES!


TOWER of MADNESS™

Investigate Unspeakable Horror, Without Losing Your Marbles! Literally.

The veil between worlds is thinning; an ancient horror is awakening and the very existence of the world hangs in the balance. You must investigate a series of terrifying locations and discover the unknowable truth before the world ends – or go mad in the attempt to save it.

Find the paranormal gates that have opened onto our world – be stout of heart and strong of mind – only then will you discover how to seal the gates and save humanity.

 3-5 Players, Ages 8+

 45 minutes

Contents:



5 custom dice



12 Discovery



11 Spell



13 Madness



3 DOOM



1 Tracker

40 Marbles



10 Investigator cards



24 Location cards



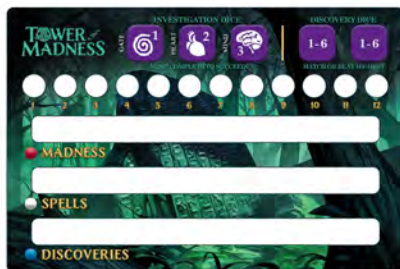
5 Unnatural Influence tokens



22 Spell cards



First Player token



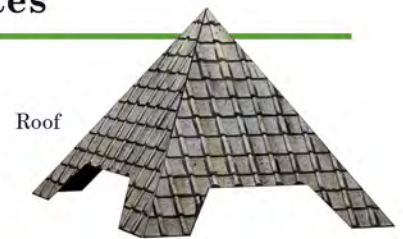
5 Tracker boards



30 Horrors (tentacles)



Base Tray



Roof

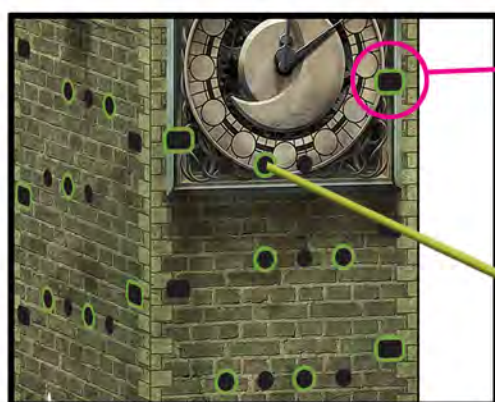


Tower

Assembly Instructions:

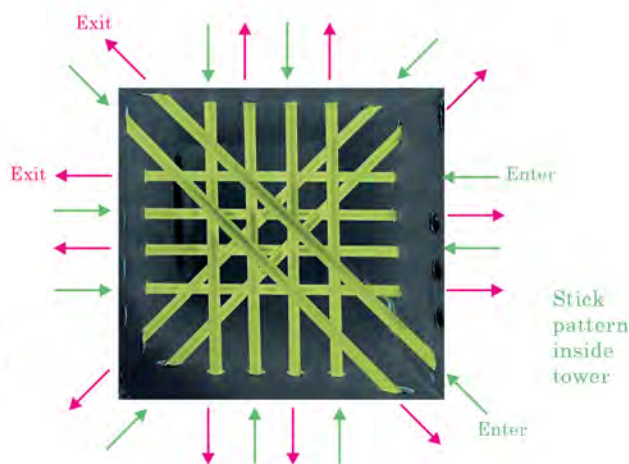
Place the tower onto the base tray, oriented so that the lower end of the tray ramp slants towards the tower door cut into the side of the tower. The tower should fit snugly on the tray and rest squarely on the tray floor.

Starting with the *bottom* rows, insert a tentacle stick into each hole in the tower which is outlined in green. The tentacle stick should exit the hole directly opposite the hole it entered (the exit hole will not be outlined in green). The holes on the corners of the tower are more oblong. Tentacles are placed diagonally into these holes and exit the corner hole on the opposite side, with no green outline. Continue placing tentacles until all 30 tentacles are placed.



Oblong holes for diagonal insertions

Tentacles enter at holes with green outlines.



Stick pattern inside tower

Place the one Yellow marble to the side for now. Mix the other marbles together and pour them all into the top of the tower. To distribute them throughout the tower, grip the tray's edge and gently "vibrate" the tower, by shaking it back-and-forth and side-to-side, with very small movements. As you do so, make sure that tentacles do not slide out of the tower by occasionally pushing them back in, between shakes (placing tentacles back in once the marbles have been added can be difficult). You will know the marbles are well distributed when at least one falls out of the tower opening. Add any fallen marbles back to the top.

Assemble the roof and place it on top of the tower.

Set Up:

Place the tower in the center of the table, in easy reach of all players.

To one side, place the Unnatural Influence tokens.

Shuffle the Spell cards and deal 2 to each player. Set the others to the side of the play area as the Spell deck.

Investigator cards come in two types, with and without abilities. Have each player choose an Investigator without an ability.

Alternatively, the group may decide to play *with* abilities, in which case the cards should be dealt out at random.

Give each player a Tracker board.

Set aside the Location card named “The Clock Tower.” Shuffle the rest of the Location cards and deal, face-down, a number according to the player count. Place the remainder back into the box.

3 players: 10 Locations / 4 players: 9 Locations / 5 players: 8 Locations

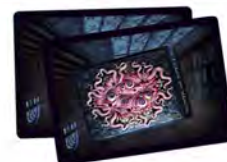
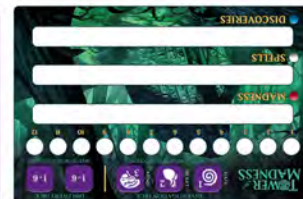
Place “The Clock Tower” face up on this stack to form the Location deck.

The owner of the game, or host, will start as the First Player. Give this player the First Player token, the Yellow Tracker marble and the set of 5 dice.

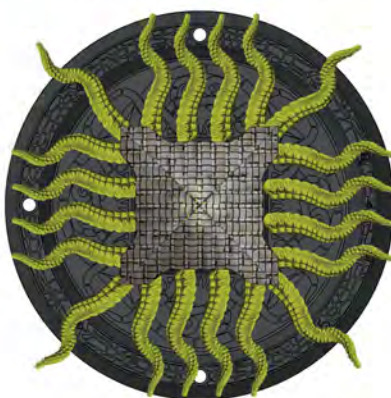
You are ready to begin.



4-player set up



Spell deck



Location deck



First Player token



Object of the Game:

Players take turns rolling dice to meet the horrific challenge of each Location - and earn Discovery points for conducting the best investigation at that site. Every Location card in the deck **must** be completed BEFORE the third green DOOM marble drops from the tower. If this can be accomplished, the Investigators save the world - **but** only the (non-Insane) player(s) earning the *most* Discovery points is declared the winner, having learned how to wield the power of things beyond man's comprehension.

If the third DOOM marble drops before every Location has been completed, the Investigators all lose, as the world is consumed. Insane players may cheer, briefly, as they are eaten last. However, if you are the Insane player that **caused** the final DOOM marble to drop, by drawing the Horror tentacle from the tower, you are declared DOOM BRINGER and win the game.

Playing the Game:

Tower of Madness is played in a series of Rounds equal to the number of Locations in the Location deck. During each Round:

1. Reveal a Location card (The Clock Tower is the 'revealed' Location for Round 1)
2. Each player takes their Turn, one after the other, in a clockwise rotation
3. Award Discovery Points to the Lead Investigator for the Round
4. Move the First Player token clockwise to the next player and reset for next Round

Reveal a Location card:

The First Player flips the card and reads aloud the card name, Discovery Points and the Special Rules. The Discovery Point value ranges from 6 to 12. These points are earned by the **Lead Investigator**, who is the player who has investigated the Location best on their Turn (per their Discovery Dice total, next page). This is the primary way in which points are earned to win.

All but The Clock Tower have Special Rules that greatly change play for the Round. Many make it much harder to roll a successful Investigation or may provide harsher penalties for failing. Some even have beneficial effects.

NOTE: Special Rules are in effect for ALL dice rolls for ALL Investigators at ALL times during the Round. For example, if an Investigator has succeeded, but subsequently rolls dice in the Round for any reason that result in a Fail condition, they are immediately considered to have Failed the investigation and now must face the penalty (see next page).

Dice Icons: If a card shows a set of dice, read it as, *"If you roll (x dice) in a single throw..."*

A plus sign (+) is read as, *"or more."*

So, the example pictured above reads,

"If two or more 4s are rolled in a single throw... Fail your Investigation."

For each Round (Location), each player will take a Turn, one after the other, starting with the First player and proceeding clockwise until all players have had a Turn. During the Round, players may play Spell cards, and earn/use Unnatural Influence tokens in their attempt to successfully investigate Locations and become the Lead Investigator.



Playing the Game:

Player Turns:

Investigating a Location: On their Turn, a player will investigate the Location by rolling a set of five dice. The die faces all have a number and a corresponding symbol and are referred to by both number and symbol throughout the game:



On every roll of the dice, a player **must** lock at least one die, but they may lock in as many more as they choose. A player keeps rolling until they have locked all 5 dice. When a die is locked, it is placed on that player's Tracker board board, and can no longer be rolled during the players' Turn.



Succeeding: In order for an investigation to **succeed**, a player must lock a Gate, Heart and Mind before the end of their Turn, placing the dice on the spaces provided.





The remaining two dice are locked into the Discovery Dice slots, a numeric measure of how *well* a player investigated the Location. The dice may be of any value, but a player will want the total to be as high as possible (12, unless augmented by Spell cards). The first successful Investigator of the Round marks the total of their Discovery Dice with the Yellow Tracker marble, in the holes provided. This player becomes the Lead Investigator, for now. Thereafter, any player who successfully investigates this same Location has a chance to take over as Lead Investigator by beating or matching the current leader's **Discovery Dice total**. If they do, they take the Yellow marble to mark the new score to match or beat on their Tracker. At the end of the Round, the Lead Investigator wins the Location card and the Discovery Points listed on the card.

Example: On Aubrey's first roll, she locks a Heart, a Mind and decides to risk locking a 6 into her Discovery. On her second roll, she rolls two Hearts. She is forced to lock a Heart (2) into her last Discovery slot to keep her Turn alive. With her last remaining unlocked die, she must roll a Gate... and does so! She has successfully investigated the location - and has a Discovery of 8. This ties Johnny's previous total this Round, making her the new Lead Investigator.

Failing: However, a player who is unable to lock a Gate, Heart and Mind during their Turn, **fails** their investigation and must draw a "Horror" tentacle from the Tower. Any marbles that fall as a result take immediate effect and are placed onto the player's Tracker board, according to the marble type. (Fallen DOOM marbles are placed on the tray wall, in one of the three holes along the edge.)

It is important to know that **not all marbles in the tower are 'bad'**; on the contrary, half are powerful and beneficial. After all, you are investigating for a reason - and may make Discoveries and reveal forbidden knowledge in the form of Spells. But, this comes at the risk of going insane or summoning Cthulhu.

Marble Types & Effects:

-  Discovery Marbles: Each is worth 3 Discovery Points towards winning the game.
-  Spell Marbles: Each allows the player to draw a Spell card. *(The marbles themselves have no value.)*
-  Madness Marbles: If a player gains 4 Madness marbles, they become Insane.
-  DOOM Marbles: When the third DOOM marble falls, Cthulhu rises and the game ends.

Jostling Penalty: Great care should be taken not to bump the table or the tower during play, as it may cause marbles to fall. If the offender is Sane, they take any Red marbles that fall and DOOM marbles count against the team. Place any Blue or White marbles back in the bag, out of the game. If the offender is Insane, all falling marbles are removed from the game, including any DOOM marbles, nearly assuring a Sane player will win.

Spell Cards:

Each Spell card has two sides, one for Sane players, the other for insane players. A player may only use the side matching their current state. The **timing** for when a Spell may be played is listed first. No player may play a *second* card with identical timing text, targeting the same moment. For example, a player could not play a second “At the end of your Turn” card on their own Turn. Likewise, two “At the end of their Turn” cards could not be played upon the same target player. (Though one of EACH could target the same moment, as the text is different). Only one “At the end of the Round” can be played, etc. The first to announce their intention earns the right to play the card. In the event of a timing conflict, resolve clockwise, starting with the player whose Turn it is.



Unnatural Influence:

As shown on every Investigator card, rolling *exactly* two 5's in a single throw of the dice (at ANY point during the Round) allows a player to take one of the available Unnatural Influence tokens from the pool. A player may claim more than one token per Round, if they roll double fives again, but the all rolls must be natural on a single throw. Note that these tokens may be used at any applicable point in a given Round, sometimes with surprising results. Each token can only be USED once per Round, so once it is used, flip it over. At the end of the Round, all tokens are automatically returned to the pool, whether they were used or not - except for the "Imprison" token, which can be kept for a second Round if it is unused.



Forbidden Knowledge: The player steals a Spell card at random from an Insane player OR moves a Spell marble into their Discovery marble track, counting it as 3 Discovery Points. Use immediately.

I'm No Madman: Give one of your Madness marbles to a player with the least Madness. If two or more players are tied for least, you may choose between them. If you hold this token at a time when you gain a fourth Madness, you may redirect that marble instead of going Insane.

Imprison: Place the token next to your character. You may cancel one Spell played by any player OR you may prevent any one Horror tentacle draw by another player (not yourself). If not used this Round, you may keep it for one (and only one) additional Round.

New Findings: At the end of the Round, just before a Lead Investigator (other than you) is awarded the Location card, you may use this token – but **ONLY** if your investigation was successful. You may reroll **BOTH** Discovery dice in an attempt to match or beat the leader. Lock one die; you may reroll the second. Note that this roll is still subject to the Special Rules of the current Location.

One Last Chance: If you Fail the investigation (at any point in the Round), you may reroll any or all of the dice thrown in your last roll.

Winning a Location / Starting New Round

After all players have had a Turn, the Round ends. The Lead Investigator (the player with the highest Discovery Total) wins the Location. That player is given the Location card and gains the Discovery Points listed on the card.

If no Investigator completed a successful investigation, the Location is discarded - unless it is the final Location in the deck. If everyone fails the final Location, it must be faced again.

Pass the First Player token clockwise to the next player, return all Unnatural Influence tokens to the pool (except Imprison, if it is being held for a second Round), and begin a new Round.

Going Insane:

When a player collects four or more Madness marbles, they go Insane. Going Insane is a permanent condition, even if they are able to remove Madness marbles later in the game. Insanity changes everything for the player, including their objective to win the game.

1. Insane players are no longer Investigators. They no longer care about Discovery Points. They continue the game, attempting to raise Cthulhu and force the other players to lose.
2. Insane players now use the Insane side of Spell cards.
3. Insane players no longer roll dice to investigate the Location and cannot gain Unnatural Influence tokens. Instead, on their Turn, they draw a Horror tentacle from the Tower.

Winning the Game:

- If the final Location in the deck is successfully completed before the third DOOM marble drops, the Investigator with the most Discovery points, from earned Location cards and Discovery marbles, **WINS** the game - and the world is saved!
- If the third DOOM marble falls as a result of an Insane player drawing a Horror from the Tower, that Insane player **WINS** the game - and is hailed as DOOM Bringer at the world's end.
- Otherwise, *no one wins*; the world is consumed and the Insane players may cheer, briefly, as Cthulhu rises.

Adjusting the Difficulty:

Tower of Madness is intended to be difficult to win, but if you consistently find it too hard - or too easy, adjust the beginning number of Locations in the deck by one (or two). **Or**, leave the Location deck as is and remove 5 Horrors, spaced out from all over the tower, which will shorten the game as well.

Credits:

Game Design: Curt Covert
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