

# Witch Hunt 1649

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<https://marthamcgill.co.uk/witchhunt1649>


## *The Dregs of Days*

(2-7 players)

### Setup

*The Dregs of Days* has the following components:

- 60 Asset cards; 36 Fate cards; 24 Black Mark cards; 7 Character cards; 7 welfare / reputation / defence tracks. Use any small items as track tokens.
- 13 Story cards (white backs) - optional.
- 2 Coin cards - optional. Some Fate cards instruct you to toss a coin. Feel free instead to roll a die, or use these cards by drawing one at random.

This game does not use the 9 Win conditions, 8 Character and 1 Rumour card with the  symbol.

Each player chooses a character. There are 3 pairs of allied characters: Agnes/Helen, David/ Elspeth and John/Mary. Isobel has no alliance.

We recommend the following character selections:

**2 players:** Any 2 characters (one each). See also the rules modifications below.

**3 players:** A pair of allied characters and Isobel, or any 3 non-allied characters, excluding Isobel.

**4 players:** 2 pairs of allied characters.

**5 players:** 2 pairs of allied characters and Isobel.

**6 players:** 3 pairs of allied characters.

**7 players:** All characters.

When everyone has chosen a character, shuffle the character cards under the table and draw one at random to determine the starting player. Each player should then place their character card in front of them. They should also take a welfare / reputation / defence track and set tokens on their character's starting welfare and reputation values, shown in the upper left and right of their character card. (The defence track is used only during trials.)

Sort the Asset, Fate and Black Mark cards into separate face-down decks, and shuffle each deck. During the game, discards should be placed face-up beside their respective decks. Turn 5 Asset cards face up in the middle of the table to make a pool of assets available for purchase.

Story cards provide historical context and set out trial rules. We recommend using them if you are playing for the first time. Arrange them separately face-down (note that there are different versions of Trial Card 4 for 2- or 3+-player games). Appoint one player as the Narrator. This player should turn over and read out Story cards when the text on the back of the card instructs them to do so (beginning at the start of the game).

## Aim of the game

The aim is to buy assets for your holding (home) to ensure subsistence, while trying to survive the spate of local witch hunts. There are 3 ways to win:

- 1) Be the first player to collect one set of **4** Asset cards of the same type and one set of **3** Asset cards of the same type - e.g. have 4 Farming assets (green) and 3 Industry assets (yellow), or 7 Fishing assets (blue).
- 2) Do not die or get banished, and be the ally of the first player to complete the above win condition.
- 3) Be the only player remaining who has not died or been banished. (A pair of surviving allies does not qualify.)

You can only win after at least one witch trial has taken place. See 'End of the game', below.

## Gameplay

Gameplay begins with the starting player. On your turn, do the following:

- 1) Draw a Fate card, read the scenario aloud, choose an option and follow the instructions. Welfare / reputation losses apply to **you**, the current player (or your ally if specified).
- 2) If the Fate card has a **X** symbol in the bottom left, add a **face-down** Black Mark card to your holding. If this is your third Black Mark card, a trial is triggered. Fully resolve it before proceeding.
- 3) Discard the Fate card to spend the coins in the bottom right to buy any number of assets from the face-up pool. After each asset purchase, apply any stated effects, place the asset face-up in front of you and replenish the pool. When you have finished buying assets, play proceeds to the left.

If you go to draw a Fate or Asset card and the deck is empty, make a new deck by shuffling and turning face-down the discard pile. If you run out of available Asset cards and no player has won, play on; the Asset deck will be replenished when a player dies or is banished.

## Welfare and reputation

Starting welfare and reputation values are shown on character cards. You can gain welfare and reputation beyond these values, to a max. of 10.

If you go to 0 welfare, you die. If you go to 0 reputation, you are banished. In either case, return your assets to the asset discard pile, and remove your character from the game.

## Assets

Assets come in 5 types: green Farming assets (🌱), salmon Livestock assets (🏠), yellow Industry assets (🏭), grey Domestic assets (🏠) and blue Fishing assets (🐟). They have a cost in the top right. You may spend coins from Fate cards on your turn to buy any number of assets. At the end of your turn, you lose any unspent coins.

After buying an asset, place it face-up in front of you. It is now part of your holding. If the asset cost 2 or more, it also has an effect, which you **must** apply immediately. You should then replenish the pool by drawing a new Asset card from the deck. That card is immediately available for purchase.

If you draw a Fate card with 2 coins and every asset in the pool costs 3, **discard the assets in the pool** and draw a new 5. If necessary, repeat this step until the pool contains at least 1 asset of cost 2 or less, or you have confirmed that the deck contains only 3-cost assets. You may immediately buy from the new pool.

If an asset allows you to give yourself or an ally +2 welfare / reputation, you cannot take 1 each.

*Agnes has a Fate card worth 2 coins. The asset pool contains assets costing 1, 2, 3, 3 and 3. She decides to buy the 1-cost asset. If the asset she draws to replenish the pool also costs 1, Agnes can buy it. Otherwise her leftover 1 coin is lost.*

## Character abilities

Your character has an ability, described on their card. You can use this once per game, at any point during your turn. Then rotate your character card 180 degrees as a reminder. Note: Mary can pay her ability cost as she wishes - e.g. if she draws a 2-cost asset she can lose 2 welfare, 2 reputation or 1 of each.

## Trials

You can never gain more than 3 Black Mark cards. When your third is placed in front of you, you are formally accused of witchcraft. (Reminder: Black Mark cards are placed **face-down**, **after** resolving the text on your Fate card but before spending the coins.) If you get your third Black Mark card during someone else's turn, that player completes their turn, then your trial takes place. If it happens during your turn, the trial takes place immediately. To conduct a trial:

1) If you have an ally, they must choose to **support** or **renounce** you. If they support you, they must sacrifice exactly 1 welfare or reputation point, or discard 1 asset card. This grants you 2 **defence**. (Tally defence on the custom track.) If you are subsequently executed, they take a Black Mark card, unless they have already been acquitted. If they renounce you, you are no longer allies.

- 2) You may lose any number of welfare and reputation points, and / or discard any number of assets. You gain 2 defence per point or card lost.
- 3) Turn over and read out the Black Mark cards one at a time, then total their points value.
- 4) If your defence value is **higher** than the total Black Mark points, you are acquitted. If your defence value is **less than or equal to** the total Black Mark points, you are executed. In either case, shuffle your Black Mark cards back into the deck.

Approximate acquittal chances for different defence values are provided on Trial Card 4 and on track cards (in brackets after defence values).

If you are executed, you have died. Return all assets from your holding to the asset discard pile, and remove your character from the game. If you have an ally, give them a Black Mark card.

If you are acquitted, **gain 1 welfare and 1 reputation** and flip your character card over. The game proceeds as usual. If you stood trial during your turn, you may now spend the coins from your Fate card. If you stood trial at the end of someone else's turn, the player whose turn was next plays.

If you have been acquitted, you cannot be re-accused, and you can no longer gain Black Mark cards. If you draw a card with a Black Mark symbol, **you may choose to give a Black Mark card to another player**. If every player at the table is dead, banished, accused or acquitted, nobody can gain Black Mark cards.

*John draws a Fate card and resolves the scenario. The card has a **X** symbol, meaning that he gains his third face-down Black Mark card and goes on trial. Mary, John's ally, chooses to support John and loses 1 welfare point to give him 2 defence. John then chooses to lose 2 reputation points and 1 asset, bringing his total defence value to 8 (~88% acquittal chance). He turns over his Black Mark cards. They have values of 3, 2 and 1 for a total of 6, so John is acquitted. He shuffles the Black Mark cards back into the deck, gains 1 welfare and 1 reputation, flips his character card over and continues to play by buying assets.*

## End of the game

The game ends immediately when a player gets a set of 4 Asset cards of the same type plus a set of 3 Asset cards of the same type, or if there is only 1 remaining

player.

There is one exception. If a player completes their asset sets or becomes the only remaining player before any trials have taken place, witchcraft is clearly at play! Give that player Black Mark cards until they have a total of 3, and conduct a trial in the usual way. If they are acquitted and still meet the win conditions, they win the game, along with their ally if applicable. Otherwise play proceeds as normal. If everybody has died or been banished, nobody wins.

## Timing

Games generally take about 10 minutes per player, but can last longer. If you need to end the game early, the winner is the player who would need the fewest additional cards to make a set of 4 assets and a set of 3 assets. Where 2 or more players are tied, the winner is the one with the highest combined welfare and reputation points. If this is also a tie, all tied players win. Surviving allies of winning players also win.

## 2-player games

Use the 2-player tracks and the 2-player Trial Card 4, and make the following rules modifications:

- Ignore alliances.
- All characters except Isobel start with an additional 2 welfare and 2 reputation. Max. welfare and reputation values are 11.
- To win the game, be the only player left in the game, or be the first player to collect one set of **5** Asset cards of the same type and one set of **4** Asset cards of the same type (or 9 cards of the same type). As in the main ruleset, a player can only win after a trial has taken place.
- A witch trial is triggered when a player has **4** Black Mark cards.
- If you are found guilty of witchcraft, you can bribe the jurors. Discard asset cards and / or lose welfare / reputation points, gaining only **1** defence each time, until you reach a defence value that is higher than the total of your Black Mark cards. You are acquitted, but do **not** gain welfare or reputation.


*Helen discards 2 asset cards and loses 3 welfare points for a total of 10 defence. She turns over her Black Mark cards; they total 11 points. Helen discards a further 2 asset cards, gaining 1 defence each time, to reach 12 defence. She has been acquitted, but does not gain welfare or reputation.*

## ***Lying Lips***




(3-6 or 8 players)

### **Setup**

*Lying Lips* has the following components:

- 9 Win conditions cards, 8 Character cards and 1 Rumour card, all marked with the  symbol.
- Asset cards (total dependent on player number). In this game, **ignore the effects on Asset cards**. The pertinent information is the asset card **type** - designated by colour and symbol - and the **points** - shown in the coin on the top right of the card.
- Black Mark cards for witch trial role-plays.

Prepare a starting deck per player, consisting of cards from a single asset type.

**3 players:** Use the asset types Farming (green, ) , Livestock (salmon, ) and Industry (yellow, ) . Starting decks consist of 1 x 3-point Asset card, 2 x 2-point Asset cards and 2 x 1-point Asset cards.

**4 players:** The same, but include also the asset type Domestic (grey, ) .

**5 players:** Use all asset types. Starting decks consist of 1 x 3-point Asset card, 2 x 2-point Asset cards and 4 x 1-point Asset cards.

**6 players:** The same as for 3 players, but with 2 decks for each Asset type.



**8 players:** The same as for 4 players, but with 2 decks for each Asset type.

Place each starting deck face-down, ordered such that a value 1 card is on the top. Shuffle the piles around until you don't know which is which. Remove the top card of one of the piles from the game **without looking at it**, and replace it with the **face-down** Rumour card. Shuffle the piles around again and give one to each player.

Players then take these cards into their hand.

Each player takes a Win conditions card corresponding to their starting asset type and places it face-up in front of them.

## Aim of the game

The aim is to build up your assets by trading, and to keep on top of the currents of gossip in the village (represented by the Rumour card). The game has 2 phases. To win the **trading phase**, accumulate points in other asset types. Your exact requirements are shown on your Win conditions card (e.g. in a 3-player game, a player with the starting asset type Farming needs to collect Livestock (salmon, ) cards with a total value of 5 points **and** Industry (yellow, ) cards with a total value of 4 points). The Rumour card does not belong to any of the asset types.

To win the subsequent **trial phase**, either become a commissioner or juror and correctly locate the Rumour card, or succeed in concealing the Rumour card.

## Trading phase

Randomly determine a starting player. Play then proceeds to the left.

On your turn, make a single trade by requesting an Asset card **of a specific type** from a player of your choice (e.g. "Emmay, give me a Farming card"). If the player has a card of that asset type, they must pass it to you face-down. If they have multiple suitable cards, they can choose which one to give you. You should simultaneously pass them any Asset card from your hand, also face-down. There is one exception to these rules: if you or the player with whom you are trading have the Rumour card, it can be passed face-down instead of an Asset card. *Hint: You may not always wish to trade the Rumour card immediately - or at all...*

If the player does not have either a card of the requested asset type or the Rumour card, no trade takes place, and your turn is over.

A player must announce when they meet their win conditions. The trading phase then ends and the trial phase begins.



## Trial phase

The winner of the trading phase becomes the trial commissioner. The other players at the table must reveal the total number of points in their hand (but not the specific cards). Note that the Rumour card is worth -1 point.

In a 3-player game there are no jurors. In a 4- or 5-player game, the player who reveals the highest points total becomes a juror. 6 player games have 2 jurors and 8-player games have 3 jurors (the 2 or 3 players with the highest points totals). Where 2 or more players are tied, the commissioner selects the jurors from among them. The commissioner and any jurors should then collectively decide which of the remaining players takes the role of the accused witch. Other remaining players become witnesses.

If you wish to role-play a trial, give each player a *Lying Lips* character card corresponding to their role. The cards explain how to play out the trial.

To end the trial phase, the accused witch should reveal their hand. If they hold the Rumour card, the commissioner and jurors win. If they do not, the player holding the Rumour card wins.

## Credits

Project lead and *The Dregs of Days* design: Dr Martha McGill; *Lying Lips* design: Emmay Deville (lead) and Luke Messom; graphic design and artwork: Abigail Rylance (lead) and Dr Martha McGill; additional research and logistical support: Dr Rebecca Stone, Bhavika Virji and Sophie Watson. We are very grateful to our historical consultants, playtesters, funders and other supporters, credited at <https://marthamcgill.co.uk/witchhunt1649/team>

Statistics on Scottish witchcraft were drawn from Julian Goodare et al, *The Survey of Scottish Witchcraft* (University of Edinburgh, 2003), <http://www.shca.ed.ac.uk/research/witches>

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