

ULTIMATE SCHEME



HOW TO SCHEME
LIKE A VILLAIN...AND WIN!

ULTIMATE SCHEME

Zombies? Ninjas? Alien technology? It's all a part of your ultimate scheme.

Welcome to *Ultimate Scheme*! You are an evil genius with a plan to take over the world—your, well, **Ultimate Scheme**. Of course, any master plan is made up of many smaller steps, so to achieve total victory you must execute a variety of **criminal, subversion, and genius schemes** to reach your goal. You have a number of **minions** to carry out your nefarious plans—your playing pieces in the game of world domination.

Victory is simple: Complete your Ultimate Scheme before your rivals beat you to the prize.

HOW TO WIN

Be the first player to complete your Ultimate Scheme. To complete your Ultimate Scheme, you must execute criminal, subversion, and genius schemes, making **progress** toward your Ultimate Scheme. In addition, you must also meet the condition required by the **x-factor** card in play for the current game—for example, hoarding unobtainium or maximizing world anarchy.

You win if, at the end of a game turn, you can meet your Ultimate Scheme's victory requirements and the x-factor condition.

SETUP

- Shuffle the Faction cards and deal one face-up to each player.
- Shuffle the Ultimate Scheme cards and deal one face-down to each player. (You can look at your Ultimate Scheme, but don't show it to anyone else!)
- Shuffle the X-factor cards. Deal one X-factor face-up in the designated spot on the board.
- Place two minions on your faction's home base.
- Shuffle the Action Card deck.
- Sort the Scheme decks into Criminal, Subversion, and Genius decks. Shuffle the scheme decks and place them in the designated spots on the board.
- Each player draws one scheme from each deck, and one Action Card.

GAME COMPONENTS

The *Ultimate Scheme* game includes the following components:



63 Scheme Cards



48 Action Cards



10 Faction Cards



10 Ultimate Scheme Cards



5 X-factor Cards



Anarchy Marker



20 Control Markers



20 Minion Markers



40 Finance Tokens



40 Occult Tokens



40 Science Tokens



20 Unobtainium Tokens



First Player Token



Ninja Token



10 Depleted Tokens



Plague and Rendition Tokens

Game Board with
12 Sites
6 Hidden Sites
Anarchy Track
Progress Track



THE FIRST PLAYER

To begin the game, determine who goes first. The player whose birthday falls latest in the year is the First Player on the first turn.

Play goes clockwise (to the left) after the first player.

At the beginning of each new game turn, the First Player rotates one seat to the left—so in the next turn, the player who went second in the first turn becomes the First Player.

OF COURSE YOU SNEER AT RULES, BUT FROM TIME TO TIME IT SUITS YOUR PURPOSES TO PRETEND TO CONFORM. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE TIMES.

THE GAME TURN

A game turn consists of the following steps. During each step, you act in player order. So, first each player takes turns drawing a scheme, then each player takes turns moving a minion, and so on.

Draw a scheme (but not on the first game turn)

Move one minion

Move one minion

Resource collection from one site

Resource collection from a different site

Execute schemes (as many as needed)

End turn

THE DRAW STEP

The new First Player takes the First Player marker. If any player has only 1 minion in play, that player adds a minion in their headquarters site.

There are three scheme decks: *criminal schemes*, *subversion schemes*, and *genius schemes*. You can draw your new scheme from whichever deck you wish.

Do NOT draw a scheme on the first game turn.

DECK TENDENCIES

Each scheme deck contains a different mix of scheme types.

The *criminal* deck leans toward Finance and Science results, and has more Ninja schemes.

The *subversion* deck favors Finance and Occult results, and has more Anarchy schemes.

The *genius* deck favors Occult or Science results, and more unobtainium schemes.

THE MOVE STEP

Each turn, you get TWO moves. Go around the table in turn order—each player moves one minion. Then go around the table a second time; each player moves again (you can move the same minion both times).

A move is defined as moving **one minion from its**

current site to an adjacent site. Sites are adjacent if they are directly linked by black lines on the map.

You may have more than two minions on the board at a time. If so, you have to decide which you want to move and which stay put for the turn.

Some sites are **hidden**. (Those are the sites that are marked by dashed circles.) You can't move into a hidden site unless you have **access**.

Any number of minions can be in the same site at one time. Enemy minions don't block your movement in any way.

If an action card or faction ability gives you a special movement ability, it still counts as one of your moves. In other words, if you use the *Charter Jet* action card, that's one of your two moves for the turn.

THE RESOURCE STEP

Collect the resources indicated on the board from sites occupied by your minions. Go around the table in turn order—each player chooses one site where he or she has a minion, and collects the resources there. Take the indicated resources from the game “bank” and add them to your vault (or your loot, your stash, the pile of stuff that is yours at the moment).

Choose sites to collect resources from TWICE each turn.

Collecting resources in a site **depletes** that site for the rest of this turn. If two players have minions in the same site, the first player to choose that site for resources gets the goodies.

If you have more than two minions on the board, your “extra” minions don't collect resources this turn.

IF YOUR RIVALS DEplete THE SITES WHERE YOU HAVE MINIONS BEFORE YOU COLLECT RESOURCES, TOO BAD. YOU'RE AN EVIL GENIUS, PLAN BETTER NEXT TIME.

Choose 1: You can choose a Finance, Occult, or Science resource token.

The ninja: There is only 1 Ninja token in the game, so only one player at a time can control the Ninja. If you collect resources in Okinawa, you get to take the Ninja from any other player who currently controls it. (You can also get control of the Ninja by playing the right Action card.)

THE EXECUTE STEP

You may now execute schemes that are in your hand. Begin with the first player and proceed in turn order. **To execute a scheme,**

you must have a minion in the scheme's site, and you must pay the resource cost. Return resources you spend to the game bank.

You can execute as many schemes as you wish, as long as you can meet the resource cost and you have minions in the right sites. When you execute a scheme:

- Spend the necessary resource tokens.
- You don't "spend" the Ninja; you keep it until someone takes it away from you.
- Score Progress points as shown on the scheme card. Move your marker on the game board Progress score track. Collect any bounty in your new Progress score box if you're the first player to reach that point.
- Some schemes provide special rewards, such as bonus resources, access to hidden sites, new minions, or the opportunity to draw new scheme cards.
- Some schemes increase global Anarchy.

Display your executed schemes face-up by your edge of the board—everybody is allowed to know which schemes you've successfully accomplished.

Progress Track: The boxes beneath the score track provide you with a special reward if you're the first player to reach or exceed that progress total. Turn order matters—if another player moving ahead of you executes a scheme and gets to the bounty before you, too bad.

MAKE SURE YOU GLOAT OVER YOUR RIVALS WHEN YOU BRING YOUR PLOTS TO FRUITION. GLORY IN YOUR EVIL GENIUS! IF YOU DON'T, WHO WILL?

THE END STEP

At the end of the turn, each player in order performs some or all of the following actions:

- Any minions in hidden sites **must** return to your headquarters site.
- Use your faction ability (if your ability is resolved in the end step).
- Confirm your victory if you're eligible to win!

You win if you meet or exceed the progress target on your Ultimate Scheme card, you have met any requirements for executing specific types of schemes, and you can meet the special condition of the X-factor card.

WHAT'S IN A SCHEME?

A typical scheme card looks something like this:

The top left corner shows you what *site* the scheme can be executed in. **You need to have a minion in that site.**

Requirement: The *Requirement* line shows the resources you need to execute the scheme. If the scheme requires Yellow or Orange global anarchy, it's shown here too. In the *Piracy* example, you need 4 Finance tokens and 1 Science token plus the Ninja, and the world must be at orange or red anarchy.

Rewards: Below the art you'll see a line that tells you how many *progress points* this scheme is worth. Also, if executing the scheme provides any special reward it's shown here. Your reward for executing *Piracy on the High Seas* is 2 progress points, +1 step on the anarchy track, and a new minion.

Success Symbols: The symbols at the bottom of the scheme card indicate what type of scheme you're pulling off: Finance, Occult, Science, or Unobtainium. Schemes can have multiple types. The *Piracy on the High Seas* scheme counts as an Asia scheme. It also counts as two Finance successes for victory.



THE GAME BOARD

In case you're not from around here, the game board depicts the Earth and some of the more useful or mysterious locations on its surface.

SITES

Cities and locations on the board are called *sites*. These are places where your minions can go. The black lines between sites indicate which sites are adjacent to each other.

Any number of minions can occupy the same site at once.

HIDDEN SITES

Sites marked with dotted circles are **hidden**. You can't move a minion into a hidden site until you have **access** to it.

There are three primary ways to gain access to hidden sites:

- An agent who collects resources in Doha gains access to one hidden site of your choice.
- Some schemes grant access as a reward for execution.
- A number of Action Cards provide access.

You keep your access to a site once you have it—using the site doesn't expend your access. However, some Action Cards can take away your access.

When you gain access, you must choose where to use it immediately. To indicate sites you have access to, place a control marker on the hidden site.

Return to Headquarters:

During the End Step, all minions in hidden sites automatically return to your faction's headquarters site.

YES, YOU CAN JUST BUY A PLANE TICKET FOR KATHMANDU OR TAKE THE TRAIN TO MACHU PICCHU. BUT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PARTS THEY KEEP THE TOURISTS OUT OF? THAT'S WHY THEY ARE HIDDEN, FOOL!

SCHEME REWARDS

In addition to making progress toward the Ultimate Scheme, some schemes offer special rewards.

Access: You gain access to a hidden site. Take a control marker and place it on the site you want to have access to.

Draw: You can draw a card from the Scheme deck of your choice.

Resources: Immediately add any resources listed under "Reward" to your stash.

Minion: You gain a new minion! It appears in the same site where you executed the scheme that provided it as a reward.

Anarchy: Every time you execute an Anarchy scheme, increase the global Anarchy track by 1.

ANARCHY

Particularly spectacular or heinous schemes have the Anarchy symbol. When you execute one of those schemes, you increase the global Anarchy track by 1. All players contribute to the Anarchy track—it's one score that all players share at the same time.

ACTION CARDS

Action cards can only be played in the part of the player turn indicated on the card. For

example, *Minion-Con* must be played in your Draw step.

Reaction: Some Action Cards can't be played on your turn. You can only play them as "reactions" on another player's turn after that player takes a specific triggering action. For example, *Ambush* is a reaction you play on another player's Move step when they move a minion into the same site as one of your minions.

Play Order: In general, Action Cards are resolved in the order they are played. For example, if you move a minion into New York and play *Liquidate* on an enemy minion, that dude is dead and can't play *Ambush* to kill you first. However, some cards interrupt other cards:

- The *Neutralizer* card cancels whatever card was just played.
- The *Big Apple*, *Safehouse*, and *Skyhook* cards let you protect a minion that otherwise would be destroyed.

GAINING AND DESTROYING MINIONS

Minions are expendable, but useful. You are limited to 5 minions in play at the same time.

- When you destroy an enemy's last minion, the enemy

immediately respawns a new minion in his headquarters site.

- If you begin a game turn with only 1 minion, gain a second minion in your headquarters site (the New Luddite Front always begins a game turn with at least 3 minions).
- Minion Resource Icon: You can gain a minion in Moscow or Bogota when you collect the site's resources.
- Many Action Cards give you minions.

REGRETTABLY, MINIONS OFTEN COME TO BAD ENDS, BUT THAT'S AS IT SHOULD BE—IF THEY WERE IMPORTANT, THEY WOULDN'T BE MINIONS, WOULD THEY?

WINNING THE GAME

If, during your End step, you meet or exceed the Progress score required by your Ultimate Scheme and you can meet the condition stated on the X-factor card, announce your victory and reveal your Ultimate Scheme card.

Players following you in the turn order complete their End steps normally. It's possible that more than one player might achieve their Ultimate Scheme in the same game turn. If so, determine the winner as follows:

- If only one player completed their Ultimate Scheme this game turn, he or she wins.
- If more than one player completed their Ultimate Scheme, the player with the most progress points wins.
- If two players win and have the same progress score, the player with the most unobtainium in his or her vault wins.
- If two players have the same score and the same amount of unobtainium, then the player who completed the most individual schemes wins.

MEET THE VILLAINS!

Cult of Tentacly Doom: Followers of a god of primordial evil, the Cult is known for its excellent beach parties. All the cool kids are joining up! *lä! lä! Cthulhu fhtagn!*

Dark Masters of Darkness: What happens when you mix families with titles, ancient books of black magic, and a little bit of boredom? A whole lot of fun! The Dark Masters have been scandalizing the aristocracy for centuries and they're not about to stop now.

Das Moon Reich: Sure, everybody thought these guys were beaten in 1945. But when you've got UFO technology and a never-say-die attitude, victory is inevitable!

Gigaton Industries: Telecommunications, energy, manufacturing, extraction industries . . . chances are you've got a Gigaton product in your home right now and you don't even know it! Gigaton Industries: The future is ours.

New Bolsheviks: The historical dialectic cannot be denied—worldwide revolution is at hand, and the New Bolsheviks are ready to step in and lead the proletariat to its inevitable triumph. Workers of the world, unite!

New Luddite Front: The Earth would be a pretty nice place if there just weren't any humans around to muck things up. NELF has some exciting ideas about what you can do with your car, your cell phone, your air conditioning, your television, your electricity . . .

Professor Roboto is into champagne, videos that make you say "Aww!", cuddling, and long walks on the beach by moonlight. He describes the perfect first date as a light-hearted felony or two to break the ice, followed by dinner, drinks, dancing, and mass destruction.

The Six Fingers: The world's premier assassins, the Six Fingers are an ancient order dedicated to achieving global domination one stabbing at a

time. We're afraid they don't play well with others.

W.R.A.I.T.H. stands for World-wide Revolution, Anarchy, Immorality, Terrorism, and Havoc. They want to overthrow *everything*, then set it on fire and pee on the ashes. Or is it pee on everything and overthrow the ashes? It's not really clear.

The Zero Percent: They're the 1 percent's 1 percent . . . 1 percent (which is not technically zero percent). Naturally, they are very, very, very rich, and they have plans for all that money. The defense budget of the United States? It's a rounding error to the Zero Percent.

FAQS

Q. Can I use the Friendly Natives action card to remove enemy access to a hidden site while an enemy minion is there?

A. Yes, but the minion stays put until the End step, then goes home as normal. If you want to screw the other player, play the card **before** he or she moves the minion into the hidden site.

Q. Can the Cult of Tentacle Doom kill one of its own minions with its faction power?

A. That's thinking outside the box! But sorry, no, you only sacrifice nonbelievers to Great Cthulhu.

Q. What if we run out of cards?

A. If you run out of Action Cards, shuffle the discards; that's the deck now. If you run out of schemes, you're just out of schemes. Collect resources until you can execute some of the schemes you're holding in your hand.

Q. How does the Rendition action card work?

A. The enemy player uses up one of his moves, and the minion you targeted winds up somewhere else. Mark that minion with the Rendition marker. That minion can't collect resources and can't execute schemes.

Q. Can I use 'What Brings You to Okinawa?' to take the Ninja away when an enemy is executing a scheme?

A. No. When a player announces that he's executing a scheme, it's already done. You need to take away the Ninja before the scheme is announced, or after it's finished.

Q: Why is there a gray pawn in the box?

A. You are not cleared for that information.

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