

The X-Files
Collectible
Card Game

RULES ASSISTANT

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Introduction

The X-Files CCG Rules Assistant is an unofficial “successor” to the official FAQs, which are now no longer supported by NXT Games (the designers) or USPC (the manufacturer). The RA is intended to help X-Files players continue to enjoy the game and resolve rules questions in the absence of official support from the game’s erstwhile publishers. The Rules Assistant is not official ... but then neither is anything else about the X-Files CCG any more, except for the Rule Books and the cards.

The Rules Assistant focuses on the Advanced Game. It is laid out according to the plan of the Advanced Rule Book, but it does not reproduce the text of the Rule Book. It does reiterate much of the material in the Rule Book, but only because these items have proven to generate questions.

Chris Heard <chris@heardfamily.com> compiled the RA. The RA is based on the last official FAQ (dated 3/11/97) and has been enriched with entries suggested by discussions on the rec.games.trading-cards.misc newsgroup.

Abbreviations

101361: “Ten Thirteen Sixty-one,” the first and only expansion set

***P:** Either Conspiracy Point(s) or Resource Point(s)

CCG: Customizable Card Game

CP: Conspiracy Point(s)

CRC: Close Range Combat

CSM: Cigarette-Smoking Man

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions document

LRC: Long Range Combat

RA: Rules Assistant

Res: Resource

RP: Resource Point(s)

TTIOT: The Truth Is Out There (second edition)

v1: First edition

v2: Second edition (also TTIOt)

x1: First expansion (also 101361)

XF: X-Files

Terminology

Full Turn: When you play a card (like Core Training or Expert Briefing) that takes one of your Agents out of play for “one full turn,” that means one of your full turns.

EXAMPLE

Piper plays S.W.A.T. Training on her Agent Alex Krycek during her first turn. Krycek sits out Piper's second turn. On Piper's third turn, Krycek returns as an even more efficient killing machine.

Played: “Played” cards come from your hand, which is in turn drawn from the Bureau Deck. Agents from your starting Agent Team are not “played.”

Game Complexity Levels (Basic and Advanced)

Major Differences: The basic procedures of the two complexity levels are the same. In each complexity level, players earn permission to ask questions about their opponents' X-Files by having their own Agents successfully investigate Sites. The two complexity levels differ primarily in their handling of combat with Adversaries and the conditions necessary for card plays.

In the Basic Game, combat with an Adversary always results in one Agent being sent to the Hospital, wounded. In the Advanced Game, combat skills, Combat cards, and Adversary Game Effects combine for a more complex and interesting combat sequence that may have a variety of results.

In the Basic Game, each player may play up to three cards during the Investigation Phase. In the Advanced Game, players are not arbitrarily limited to three cards per Investigation Phase, but are limited or empowered instead by the size of their Conspiracy and Resource Pools.

Advanced-Only Cards:

Cards with a small green “X” in the upper left-hand corner are permitted in the Advanced

Game only. Most cards so marked relate either to combat or to the management of Resource and Conspiracy Pools.

The Bureau Deck

Size: A Bureau Deck must contain at least 60 cards. The starting Agent Team is not included within this 60. There is no prescribed maximum size for a Bureau Deck. However, the odds of getting a specific card from the Bureau Deck shrink as the number of cards in a deck grows.

Duplication of Cards: No more than two copies of any given card may be included in a Bureau Deck.

Depletion: When a Bureau Deck is depleted, the owner of that deck should shuffle his or her Discard Pile to replace the depleted Bureau Deck.

Shuffling as a Card Effect: If a card forces a player to shuffle his or her Bureau Deck, that player should only shuffle the cards remaining in the Bureau Deck. He or she should not shuffle his or her discard pile into the Bureau Deck at that time.

The Hospital

Leaving the Hospital Early: Cards that move Agents between sections of the table (such as Travel Arrangements) may not be used to circumvent the requirement that Agents sent to the Hospital due to injuries must have a current Health rating of 3 or their full permanent HEALTH (whichever is lower) to leave the Hospital.

Resource and Conspiracy Pools

Accumulation: The RP and CP pools are present and constant for the whole game. Players are never subject to penalty because they have RP/CP left at the end of the turn. In fact, strategy dictates that you save up RP/CP so you can get a certain card or card combination.

Playing Cards

Before-Draw Card Plays: It is conceivable that a Conspiracy Player might wish to play a card (such as Unexplainable Time Loss) before the Investigating Player draws her or his first card from the Bureau Deck. This is permitted in the Advanced Game if the Conspiracy Player announces her or his intention to do so before the Investigating Player actually draws the card. This is not permitted in the Basic Game.

Activators and MULTI Site Keywords: When the Investigating Player plays a Site with multiple X-File characteristic categories as Keywords, all of those Keywords are available to meet Activator requirements, regardless of which characteristic the Investigating Player plans to ask about.

EXAMPLE

Tom plays *Arecibo, Puerto Rico* planning to ask Bruce if his **AFFILIATION** is "Government." But since *Arecibo* has the Keyword **METHOD** as well as the Keyword **AFFILIATION**, Bruce sends his *Crew-Cut Man* to dispose of Tom's critical Agent.

Phases and Events: There is no general restriction of Event cards to one particular phase. However, some Event cards are constrained to particular phases by their Activators or Effect text (e.g., *Red Tape*).

Briefing Phase

Sale of Cards for CP: A card with an RP cost of "X" is worth zero CP if sold during the Briefing Phase.

Investigation Phase

Skill Contributions: Unless a specific card (e.g., *Cellular Phone*) allows otherwise, only Agents that were sent to a particular Site at the beginning of an Investigation Phase may contribute their skills to Skill Checks at that Site.

Guessing X-Files: A player may only guess an opponent's X-File once during his or her own turn, and only after successfully investigating a Site.

Combat

Order of Operations in Assigning Damage: An Agent cannot be reduced to a Health less than 0. Cards that reduce damage are applied to the total amount of damage before it is applied to the Agent. Cards that heal damage take effect after the damage has been applied to the Agent. Agents whose Health has been reduced to 0 may not contribute their skills to Skill Checks required by healing cards.

EXAMPLE

Agent Scully, while equipped with a Kevlar Vest, received 8 points of damage from an Adversary. The Kevlar Vest reduces damage by 3 points, so Agent Scully would sustain 5 points of damage. Agent Scully's permanent Health is 4, so her current Health would be reduced to 0. If the Agent Team were equipped with a Medi-Kit, another Agent in the team who had MEDICAL skill could use the Medi-Kit to heal 1 point of Scully's damage, bringing her current Health to 1 and keeping her out of the Hospital. However, since healing occurs after damage has been sustained, Scully could not contribute her own MEDICAL to the use of the Medi-Kit.

Playing Cards during Combat: Only Combat suit cards may be played during a Combat Skill Check Subroutine.

EXAMPLE

Jerry plays an Adversary against William, and William does not have any card in his hand that will negate the Adversary. A Combat Skill Check Subroutine begins. While the combat is ongoing (that is, until the Adversary has been discarded or all Agents involved in the combat have been sent to the Hospital), no card suit other than Combat may be played.

The Agent Suit

Dedicated RP Tokens: Some Agents' Game Effects take the form "Place 1 RP on this card. This RP may be used to pay for any Keyword X card. If you use this RP, replace it during your Briefing phase." This Game Effect does not reduce the total cost of the Keyword X card. The Game Effect simply provides a self-renewing RP outside of the player's Resource Pool that may only be used to pay for Keyword X cards.

EXAMPLE

Dean has Lt. Brian Tillman in his Agent Team. Tillman has a self-renewing RP dedicated to Keyword EQUIPMENT or COMBAT cards. Dean's Agents are in a CRC round with a fierce Adversary. He wants to play Block, which costs 3 *P. Dean takes 2 RP from his Resource Pool and 1 RP from Tillman, for a total of 3 RP, to pay for Block. During his next Briefing phase, Dean's next turn, he will replace Tillman's RP.

Agents Played from Hand: Agents played from the Active Player's hand act in all respects as the other Agents, except that they must be discarded at the end of the turn in which they are played unless another card (such as Assigned to the X-Files) permits the Agents to remain in play.

The Bluff Suit

Play Timing: Bluffs may be attached to Sites at the end of a Case Assignment phase or during an Investigation Phase. Bluffs attached to Sites during a Case Assignment phase are played face-down under the attached Site and do not have any effect until an Agent Team investigates the Site. Bluffs attached to Sites during an Investigation Phase are played face-up and take effect immediately (because an Agent Team has already begun investigating the Site).

Payment Timing: Bluffs attached to Sites during a Case Assignment phase are not paid for (at a cost of 1 CP less than listed on the card, with a minimum cost of 0 CP) until they are exposed and resolved. If the owning player cannot pay for an exposed Bluff or chooses not to pay for the exposed Bluff, the Bluff is discarded and has no effect.

Benefit Timing: Bluffs may generate certain benefits for their owners. Usually this will occur if the owner of the Bluff has a card in play that generates RP or CP when other cards having specified keywords are played. In such situations, the benefits accrue after the Bluffs are paid for; until that point they have not yet truly been "paid."

EXAMPLE

Darin has Dr. Osborne, who adds 1 RP to his owner's Resource Pool whenever a keyword GOVERNMENT or MEDICAL card is played. During James's turn, Darin attaches a Bluff with the GOVERNMENT keyword to one of James's Sites. Darin does not gain the 1 RP until James's Agents investigate that Site and reveal the Bluff.

Resolution Timing: In a two-player game, Bluffs are resolved in the order that the player who played them chooses, because it is assumed that this is how s/he would play in a last played, first resolved scenario. Players need to work this out with each other for the common good of the multiplayer game. The best general course of action for multi-player games would seem to be to resolve Bluffs on a last played, first resolved basis. However, some flexibility is required here, since one player's Bluff might interact in some way with another player's Bluff.

The Witness Suit

Duration of Effects: Witnesses who have the Keyword RESOURCE remain on the table until another card or game condition forces them to be discarded. Witnesses who do not have the Keyword RESOURCE are discarded at the end of the turn as a matter of course.

The X-File Suit

Mutual Cancellation of X-Files Powers: Players exercising the same X-Files power might cancel out each others' actions.

EXAMPLE

Chris and Mark are playing and they have both revealed that their X-Files' Motives are both Ideology. Chris is the Directed Player and has an Adversary in his hand with RESULT SITE as an Activator. Mark plays a MOTIVE Site. Chris may now use his X-Files power to change the Keyword MOTIVE to RESULT. But Mark may immediately respond by changing the Keyword back to MOTIVE, preventing Chris from playing his Adversary.

Individual Cards

Abduction: "Ten cards down" means "after the tenth card down." In other words, the abducted Agent becomes the eleventh card from the top of the Bureau Deck.

If the player whose Agent has been abducted has fewer than ten cards remaining in his or her Bureau Deck, he or she should shuffle his or her Discard Pile, add the shuffled cards to the bottom of the remaining Bureau Deck, and then place the abducted Agent ten cards down in the resulting Bureau Deck.

Agent Alex Krycek: Krycek's special ability applies only to points generated by his own Res attribute. Treat Krycek as if his Game Effect read: "Points generated by Agent Krycek's Res attribute may be added to either the Resource Pool or the Conspiracy Pool during the Briefing Phase." It is also permissible for Krycek to split his Res-generated points between the Resource and Conspiracy pools.

Agent Fox Mulder: RP generated by Mulder's Resource attribute must be used to purchase cards on the turn in which they are generated, or they are lost.

The Cigarette-Smoking Man Strikes: This card may not be used to change a Keyword on an Agent from the starting Agent Team. Agents in the starting Team are not considered to be “played.” (Cf. “Played” under “Terminology.”)

Core Training: The card should read, “The Agent is taken out of play for one of your full turns.” Cf. “Full Turn” under “Terminology.”

Crew-Cut Man: If Crew-Cut Man wins a combat sequence by sending the Agent he targeted to the Hospital, Crew-Cut Man is immediately discarded. He does not get to attack another Agent.

Expert Briefing: The card should read, “The Agent is taken out of play for one of your full turns.” Cf. “Full Turn” under “Terminology.”

In-Service Training: The card should read, “The Agent is taken out of play for one of your full turns.” Cf. “Full Turn” under “Terminology.”

Krycek, the Double Agent: This card forces the Investigating Player’s Agent Krycek to fight against one of the other Agents in that Krycek’s Agent Team. In effect, the Investigating Player’s Krycek temporarily becomes an Adversary who selects only one opponent (similar to Crew Cut Man).

Living Machine: The LRC should be “N/A” instead of zero.

The Manitou Stalks Its Prey: The Game Effect text should read, “Any Agent wounded by the Manitou may not heal wounds until a Keyword HEALING card is successfully used on her or him.” The only difference from the card as printed (besides gender inclusiveness) is the insertion of the word “Keyword,” although this is already implied on the card by the fact that HEALING is in all capital letters (alerting you that it is a Keyword). Thus certain Combat cards (e.g., First Aid), Equipment cards (e.g., Medi-Kit), and Event cards (e.g., Medical Treatment) can be used to help an Agent begin healing wounds inflicted by the Manitou, but Agent Janus’s built-in healing ability cannot be used for this purpose because Agent Janus does not have the Keyword HEALING.

It is not necessary for all the damage inflicted by the Manitou to be healed using Keyword HEALING cards. Once a Keyword HEALING card has been used on the wounded Agent, that Agent will continue to heal normally.

Margi Kleinjan and Terri Roberts: Margi’s and Terri’s Game Effect text allows them to attack “simultaneously.” Under such circumstances they are treated like an “Adversary Team.” They deal and receive damage separately but participate in the same combat sequence.

The doubling or tripling of Margi’s and Terri’s LRC, CRC, and HEALTH is activated by playing one of them at a Site where you just played the other one. Once they are played, the increased statistics are not dependent on the girls’ presence together. If one of them is killed by the Agent Team, the other retains the increased statistics until killed.

EXAMPLE

Wendy plays Margi, and then Terri, against Lisa’s Mulder and Krycek. Under these circumstances, Margi and Terri each have LRC 4, CRC 4, and HEALTH 4. In the LRC round, Margi and Terri each cause 4 points of damage. Wendy decides to allocate Margi’s 4 points to Krycek and Terri’s 4 points to Mulder. Lisa’s Krycek delivers 4

points of LRC damage and her Mulder delivers 2. Lisa allocates Krycek's 4 points to Margi and Mulder's 2 points to Terri. Now the LRC round is over and the current HEALTH scores are Margi 0 (dead), Terri 2, Krycek 1, Mulder 1. Now CRC begins and Terri deals 4 points of damage to one Agent. Krycek and Mulder combine to deal 4 points of CRC damage to Terri, reducing her HEALTH to 0. At the end of the CRC round, Terri is dead and either Mulder or Krycek must immediately go to the hospital (barring the play of healing cards).

Overwhelming Force: All Adversaries played in conjunction with this card must meet Activator requirements and be paid for at full Cost as normal. The only concession granted by Overwhelming Force is that the normal limit of one Adversary per combat sequence is increased to three Adversaries for one combat sequence.

Each Adversary played in conjunction with this card deals and takes damage separately. However, all participate in the same combat rounds (as if they were an "Adversary Team"). They count as one Adversary only for purposes of game text on other cards.

EXAMPLE

Mitch sends Assistant Director Skinner and Agent Alex Krycek to investigate a METHOD Site. Nicholas responds by playing Overwhelming Force. Nicholas has three Adversaries with the METHOD SITE Activator in his hand, but he only has enough CP to pay for two of them: Crew Cut Man and The Psychotic Attack. Nicholas wants things to happen this way: In the LRC round, the Crew Cut Man will deal 4 points of damage, which Nicholas plans to assign to Krycek, and The Psychotic Attack will deal 3 points of damage, which Nicholas plans to assign to Skinner. Nicholas realizes that Krycek will deal 4 points of damage in LRC, and Skinner will deal 2; Nicholas also knows that if the Crew-Cut Man targets Krycek, only Krycek can fight the Crew-Cut Man, so both the Crew-Cut Man and The Psychotic Attack will be around for CRC and will deal enough damage to send both Krycek and Skinner to the Hospital. But Mitch blocks Nicholas's plans altogether by playing Sheriff Mazerowski, who negates one GOVERNMENT PAWN. The Crew-Cut Man is a GOVERNMENT PAWN, but since he is under the umbrella of Overwhelming Force, the negation applies not only to Crew-Cut Man but also to The Psychotic Attack and the Overwhelming Force card itself.

Phoebe Green: Phoebe Green can only use her Game Effect on an Agent Mulder controlled by the same player. Green cannot "steal" an opponent's Mulder.

Green may not use her Game Effect to pull Mulder out of the Hospital before he has healed back up to a current HEALTH of 3.

Run for It: If Run for It is played on an Agent investigating a Site alone, the Adversary is discarded since there are no Agents remaining for combat. The Agent is then allowed to continue investigating the Site. However, NXT's official ruling was that the Agent "is a big sissy for running."

Samuel Hartley: An Agent kept in play by Samuel Hartley is fully healed, and remains in the current section.

Smoke Screen: For this card to work, you must have at least one Agent Team in the Bureau, and one team in the Field at the time the card is played.

S.W.A.T. Training: The card should read, "The Agent is taken out of play for one of your full turns." Cf. "Full Turn" under "Terminology."

Terri Roberts and Margi Kleinjan: See "Margi Kleinjan and Terri Roberts."

Trap: If the Agent selected for combat with the Adversary is sent to the Hospital before the Adversary is killed, the Adversary is immediately discarded. The Adversary does not initiate combat with a second Agent.

Travel Arrangements: This card may not be used to let an Agent move from a Team at one Site to join a Team at a different Site, since both Sites are in the Field. Travel Arrangements moves Agents between sections of the table.

This card may not be used to pull an Agent out of the Hospital before that Agent has reached 3 HEALTH.

X-Files Research: The card should read, "The Agent is taken out of play for one of your full turns." Cf. "Full Turn" under "Terminology."

Submitting RA Questions or Corrections

Newsgroup Submissions: The preferred forum for the submission of corrections to the RA or new questions to be addressed in it is the rec.games.trading-cards.misc newsgroup.

Direct Submissions: Corrections or questions from persons without newsgroup access, or from persons who simply prefer not to use the newsgroup, should be addressed to Chris Heard <chris@heardfamily.com>.