

Cheapass Games Presents

# CURSED HAND

A new Pairs game for 2-6 Players



**Cursed Hand** is a Halloween-themed Pairs game, loosely inspired by John Kovalic's **Shallow Ones** Pairs deck. You can, of course, play Cursed Hand with any Pairs deck.

In short, players are trying to avoid penalties. You will take turns passing a ghost hand, which is "cursed" if it contains a pair. You earn a penalty by passing a cursed hand and being discovered, or by falsely accusing a player who did not pass you a cursed hand.

As in the original **Pairs** game, there is only one loser. But unlike that game, this one has secret information, bluffing, and deduction!

**Players:** 2 to 6

**You Need:** A Pairs deck

**To Begin:** Shuffle the deck and deal a hand of seven cards to each player, or six cards each if there are six players.

Each player chooses one card to start their graveyard, which is a collection of faceup cards in front of you.

Reveal these cards simultaneously. The *highest unique card* will take the first turn. If there is no highest unique card, then randomly pick one of the highest cards to go first.

**Summary of Play:** Players will pass a "ghost hand," a hand of cards that grows by one card each time it is passed.

The ghost hand is "cursed" if it contains a pair (two cards of the same rank). *The ace is wild, and matches the highest card.*

**Starting the Ghost Hand:** If there is no ghost hand, start by drawing a card from the deck. Then you will create a new ghost hand using *any two cards from your hand*.

Pass this hand to the player on your left, face down.

**Receiving the Ghost Hand:** When you are passed the ghost hand, you have two options: to *call* it, which exposes the hand, or to *accept* it, which means you will take it and add a card. You should call the ghost hand when you believe it contains a *pair*.

**Call:** Reveal the ghost hand. If it is *cursed* (that is, if it contains a pair), then you were right to call, and the player who passed you the hand must add one copy of *each paired card* to their graveyard.

If the ghost hand was *not* cursed, then you were wrong, and you add the *highest card* to your graveyard.

Either way, the ghost hand is discarded and you will start the next one (unless the game is over).

**Accept:** Look at the ghost hand, add one card from your hand, and then pass it to the next player.

*If you accept the ghost hand but you have no cards left, the hand is revealed but the penalties above are reversed. In other words, you are only penalized if the hand **is** cursed.*

**Ace is Wild:** The ace (the one) is *wild*, and always matches the *highest card* in the ghost hand. This card is never taken as a penalty; you always take the natural part of any Pair.

**End of Game:** When a player collects a pair *in their graveyard*, the game is over and that player loses.

The game can also end if the deck, or any player's hand, runs out of cards. In this case, the loser is the player with the most points in their graveyard.

## Extended Variation:

Play until one player has lost a total of three times.

## Do you love PAIRS?

So do we! Come back for a new PAIRS game every month in 2018. More than 30 games and variations are already available in the *Pairs Companion Book*, from Cheapass Games. Look for the free PDF at [playpairs.com](http://playpairs.com).

**The Shallow Ones deck, illustrated by John Kovalic, features adorable little Lovecraftian horrors, and a game variant called "Monster."**



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