

Game Design Document (GDD)

Mask-a-Raid

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1. Introduction

1.1. Scope of the document

This Game Design Document (GDD) defines the core concept, mechanics, rules, and player experience of Mask-A-Raid, a social deduction card game developed as part of a Global Game Jam 2026. The document outlines the gameplay flow, objectives, roles, win conditions and core systems such as suspicion, trading, and elimination. It serves as a reference for understanding the game's design intent, structure, and mechanics for rapid prototyping and playtesting. Visuals, narrative tone and balance decisions are included only to the extent required for clear gameplay communication. This document does not cover final production assets or commercial scaling.

1.2. Elevator pitch

Mask-A-Raid is a fast-paced social deduction card game that blends strategy, bluffing, and storytelling into a highly replayable experience. With its unique prom-themed setting, hidden roles, and suspense-driven mechanics, the game keeps players engaged through constant interaction and shifting alliances. The mix of chance and strategy makes it accessible yet competitive, while the final Prom twist delivers a memorable climax.

2. Game Overview

2.1. Game concept

Mask-A-Raid is a social deduction and strategy-based card game where players navigate deception, trust, and risk in a high-stakes prom-night(**masquerade**) setting . Each player is secretly assigned a role - either an Invitee or the Imposter - and must **raid mask** shards, manage suspicion, and interact strategically to survive until the final phase. The core objective

for Students is to identify and eliminate the Imposter, while the Imposter aims to blend in and successfully form a pair at Prom.

The game focuses on player interaction, bluffing, and psychological play rather than pure luck. Players will constantly question motives, form temporary alliances, and make risky decisions based on limited information. The tension steadily increases as suspicion builds and eliminations begin. What makes Mask-A-Raid engaging is the emotional experience it creates - excitement, mistrust, surprise, and dramatic reveals. Players will enjoy the balance of strategy and social manipulation, making every round unpredictable and highly replayable.

2.2. Audience

Mask-A-Raid is designed for teens and young adults aged 13–25 who enjoy social, interactive, and strategy-driven games. The ideal players are those who like party games, bluffing mechanics, and deduction-based gameplay, and enjoy reading people as much as playing cards. The game appeals to fans of titles such as Among Us, Werewolf, Mafia, and Secret Hitler, as well as players who enjoy dramatic, story-led experiences. It is best suited for friend groups, college students, and casual gamers who enjoy lively discussions, deception, and social tension. Players who enjoy teamwork mixed with betrayal and fast-paced decision-making will find Mask-A-Raid especially engaging.

2.3. Genre

Mask-A-Raid falls under the Social Deduction and Strategy Card Game genre, blending elements of memory retention, bluffing and psychological gameplay. It combines hidden roles, player interaction, and suspense-driven decision-making, making it ideal for competitive yet social group play.

2.4. Setting

The game is set within a high school campus on the night of its annual Masquerade prom event. The environment includes multiple interior locations such as classrooms, corridors, staff rooms and a central prom hall decorated for the occasion. The setting is designed to reflect a formal yet secretive atmosphere, where masked attendees move between spaces under the cover of celebration.

2.5. Game structure

Mask-A-Raid follows a structured, phase-based design rather than an open or explorable environment. Players do not move freely through physical spaces; instead, they progress through a linear sequence of game phases and locations that represent different areas of the prom venue.

Each phase such as shard collection, event rooms, and the final Prom acts as a controlled stage where specific actions and interactions occur.

The progression is guided by game rules and turn order rather than player movement, ensuring balanced pacing and equal opportunity for all participants. While the setting suggests multiple locations, navigation is symbolic and driven through cards, events, and player decisions. This structured flow keeps gameplay focused, strategic, and easy to follow while maintaining narrative immersion.

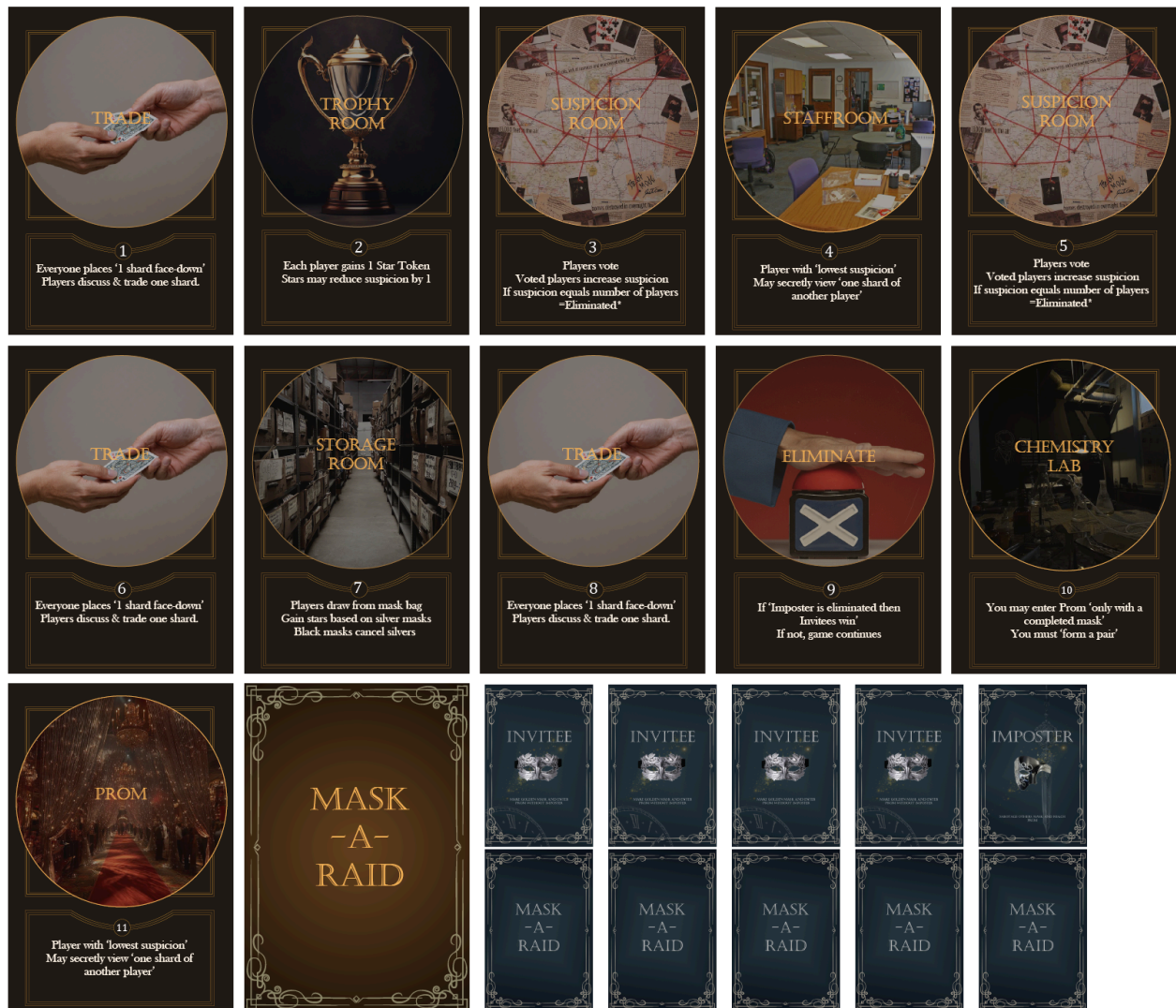
2.6. Player

Each player takes on the role of a masked student attending the prom, secretly assigned as either an Invitee or the Imposter. Mask-A-Raid is a multiplayer game designed for 5+ players.

2.7. Core loop

Players begin by drawing cards and collecting mask shards through dice rolls and events. They then interact with others by trading, bluffing or observing behavior while managing suspicion levels. Players participate in voting and event phases that influence eliminations and information flow. This loop repeats as tension increases, leading to the final Masquerade Prom phase where players form pairs and reveal outcomes, determining whether the Imposter or the Students win.

2.8. Look & Feel



3. Gameplay

3.1. Objectives

Main Objective:

The primary objective of the player is to survive until the final Prom phase and achieve victory based on their hidden role. For Students, this means identifying and eliminating the Imposter before they can successfully pair at Prom. For the Imposter, the goal is to avoid suspicion, manipulate other players, and successfully form a pair at Prom to win the game.

Secondary Objectives:

Secondary objectives include collecting the required mask shards, managing suspicion levels, gaining star tokens for protection against suspicion, and gathering information through trades and observation. Players are also encouraged to form temporary alliances, mislead opponents, and interpret social cues to gain an advantage. These objectives support the main goal by increasing survivability and strategic control throughout the game.

3.2. Progression

Players progress through structured phases rather than physical levels. Advancement occurs through shard collection, event participation, suspicion management, and elimination rounds. Each phase increases tension and limits player choices, naturally guiding the game toward the final Prom stage where the outcome is decided.

Phase 1 - Mask shard Collection

Phase 2 - Event action

Phase 3 - Prom (Finale action)

3.3. Play flow

The game begins with players receiving secret roles and collecting mask shards through dice rolls and limited trades. As rounds progress, players move through event stages that introduce suspicion, strategy, and hidden information. Players must balance gathering the correct shards with managing how suspicious they appear to others. Voting rounds increase tension, allowing players to eliminate suspected imposters. Special actions and star tokens provide opportunities to defend or mislead. The final phase, Prom, forces players to form pairs using completed masks. Correct deductions lead to victory, while a successful imposter pairing ends the game in deception.

3.4. Difficulty

The game offers medium difficulty, balancing luck, strategy, and social deduction. Simple mechanics make it easy to learn, while bluffing, hidden roles, and player interaction add depth. Skillful observation and decision-making increase success, making each round unpredictable and replayable.

4. Mechanics

4.1. Rules

Phase 1 Rules – Resource Collection

- Players roll the dice and pick the corresponding Element Shard card.
- If a shard pile is exhausted, players skip picking that element.
- By the end of Phase 1, each player must have 4 shard cards.
- If a player has fewer than 4 cards, they may pick the remaining required cards.
- If multiple cards are available, players with less than 4 cards draw from the Vault; the player with the highest roll gets priority pick.

Phase 2 Rules – Interaction & Deduction

- Trading: Each player must participate in 3 trade offers and may refuse only one.
- Suspicion Checkpoint:
 - Players increase their suspicion meter by 1 point for each vote received.
 - Players may reduce suspicion by 1 point per Corsage (star token) they possess.
- Storeroom: The player with the lowest suspicion may secretly view any other player's shard cards of their choice.
- Elimination: Players must unanimously vote to eliminate one player from the game.
- Chem Lab: Players form partners through discussion and persuasion. A player may reject a partnership if they suspect the other is the imposter, to prevent raid of the Masquerade Prom
- Trophy room : Everyone gets one star token(corsage).

4.2. Economy

Corsage(star token) is earned by successfully performing specific event actions and can be spent to reduce a player's own suspicion meter.

4.3. Character movement

The progression is guided by game rules and turn order rather than player movement, ensuring balanced pacing and equal opportunity for all participants. While the setting suggests multiple locations, navigation is symbolic and driven through cards, events, and player decisions.

4.4. Player interaction

Player Interactions:

- **Phase 1:** Players roll the die and collect resource cards.
- **Phase 2:** Players progress through event cards, engage in debate and discussion, trade resource cards, vote, and influence suspicion meters.
- **Phase 3:** Players debate to identify and expose the imposter (if still active in the game).

4.5. Assets

Suspicion meter

Star tokens

ID cards

Game cards - Resource, event, finale

Limo stand

Choice/ chance mask - Acquired from the clutch

Dice

5. Story and narrative

5.1. Backstory

Every year, the school hosts an exclusive masked prom where only students with complete ceremonial masks are allowed to enter. The masks symbolize trust, identity, and status. However, rumors spread that an outsider has infiltrated the event, hiding among the students. As preparations begin, tension rises, and suspicion grows as no one knows who can truly be trusted.

5.2. Main plot

The game revolves around a group of students attempting to prepare for prom by collecting mask pieces and forming alliances, while an Imposter secretly works to blend in and sabotage the group. Players must navigate social interactions, make strategic decisions, and uncover hidden intentions. The central conflict lies in identifying the Imposter before they successfully enter Prom.

5.2.1. Plot progression

The narrative unfolds through gameplay phases. Early stages focus on preparation and information gathering. Mid-game introduces rising suspicion, player eliminations, and shifting alliances. The final phase culminates at Prom, where identities are tested and the story resolves based on whether the Imposter is exposed or succeeds in blending in.

6. Characters

6.1 Invitee

Role: Primary playable character

Objective: Identify and eliminate the Imposter before the Prom phase

Students represent regular attendees of the prom. Their goal is to collect mask shards, participate in events, and observe other players' behavior to detect deception. Students must work together indirectly through discussion and voting while managing suspicion levels. They rely on logic, communication and trust to prevent the Imposter from succeeding.

6.2 Imposter

Role: Hidden antagonist

Objective: Blend in and successfully pair at Prom

The Imposter secretly poses as a Student while attempting to manipulate events, mislead players and avoid detection. Their role is centered around deception, strategic silence, and social manipulation. The Imposter wins if they successfully form a pair during the Prom phase without being eliminated.

6.3 Eliminated Player

Role: Spectator

Objective: None (no influence on gameplay)

Once eliminated, a player no longer participates in decision-making or voting. They may observe the remainder of the game but cannot influence outcomes, ensuring fairness and maintaining secrecy.