

RULEBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The celestial gaze of Cosmoctopus falls upon you! As devotees to the Great Inky One, harness the power of bizarre objects and experiences to better understand this mysterious galactic cephalopod. Exploit your hard-earned knowledge to gather tentacles, proving yourself to be the most dedicated follower by summoning Cosmoctopus from the Inky Realm!

⚠ *First time player? Read the lore sheet included to set the scene.*



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OVERVIEW AND GOAL

You will move Cosmoctopus through the Inky Realm, a configuration of tiles, gathering resources and obtaining cards that represent relics, scriptures, hallucinations and constellations. By playing these cards and combining their effects, you will aim to be the first player to gain 8 tentacles and win the game.



COMPONENTS

88 devotee cards

(22 of each type)



back

4 First Contact cards

(These have a purple cost icon)



back

12 Inky Realm tiles

8 basic tiles:



4 special tiles (★ icon at bottom of tile):



3 generic discount tokens



4 resource multiplier tokens



30 miniatures

1 head + 29 tentacles

4 reference cards

(with optional starting hands)



4 Forbidden Knowledge tiles

(1 of each type)



96 resource tokens

24 of each type



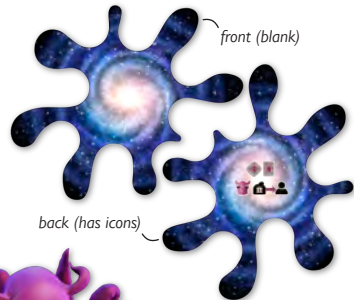
ink

coins

whispers

stars

4 summoning tiles



front (blank)

back (has icons)

The components below are used when playing with the Private Investigator (see page 10)

8 behaviour cards



back

1 progress tracker card



back

3 revelation cards



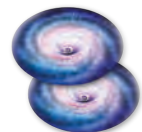
back

2 magnifying glass tokens







The tokens below are used for an optional game mode (see page 13)

2 cosmic bridge tokens



SETUP


Randomly choose 1 of the 4 special Inky Realm tiles and add it to the 8 basic Inky Realm tiles. Shuffle and lay out the resulting 9 tiles; for your first game arrange them in a 3 x 3 grid **(A)**. In future games you might like to try a different Inky Realm layout (see page 12). Place Cosmoctopus' head on the  tile **(B)** and place the tentacles nearby **(C)**. Shuffle the devotee cards and place them face-down to form a devotee deck **(D)**, then reveal 3 cards to create the card row **(E)**. Set the 4 Forbidden Knowledge tiles face-up nearby **(F)** with the resources **(G)**, resource multiplier tokens **(H)** and First Contact cards **(I)**, then give each player a summoning tile (blank side up) **(J)** and reference card **(K)**. Each player starts the game by drawing 5 cards from the devotee deck **(L)** and taking 2 of each resource **(M)**. Determine a first player, and give any remaining players the following generic discount tokens: 2nd = , 3rd = , 4th =  **(N)**.

(i) Generic discount tokens may be discarded at any time to gain a one-off discount against a generic card cost (card cost is covered on page 5).



TAKING A TURN

Your turn is made up of 3 steps:







1. Move Cosmoctopus () , then
2. Play a card (optional), then
3. Discard down to 8.

At the end of your turn, rotate Cosmoctopus to face the next player.

MOVE COSMOCTOPUS


 *You must always move Cosmoctopus on your turn.*

Move Cosmoctopus to an adjacent tile in the Inky Realm (Cosmoctopus cannot move diagonally), then gain the bonus shown on the tile that Cosmoctopus lands on:

 <p>Gain 3 ink / coins / whispermans / stars.</p>	 <p>Discard the card row, then take a card from the new row.</p>
 <p>Gain 1 ink / coin / whisper / star and take a card from the card row.</p>	 <p>Draw and keep the top devotee deck card, then gain a resource matching the card type.</p>
 <p>Gain 2 resources of the <u>same type</u>.</p>	 <p>Take all cards of the <u>same type</u> from the card row.</p>



For example, if Cosmoctopus was on the centre tile of the Inky Realm, they could be moved to any of the 4 tiles shown above.

1 The most reliable way to get cards is to visit  Inky Realm tiles, but some card effects also grant them. Gaps in the card row are filled immediately. You rarely draw from the devotee deck; do not do so unless a tile or card tells you to. If the devotee deck runs out, shuffle the discard pile to form a new devotee deck. You may look through the discard pile at any time.

Paying Tribute

If you wish to move Cosmoctopus further in the Inky Realm, you may spend a resource of any type for each additional tile moved. Cosmoctopus cannot return to the same tile they were on at the start of the Move Cosmoctopus action, and you only gain the bonus shown on the final tile that Cosmoctopus lands on, not the tiles on the way.



For example, this move would require 1 resource to be spent as Tribute.


PLAY A CARD

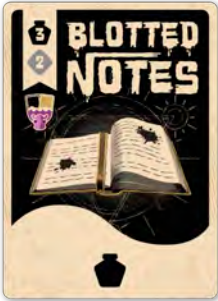
① *Playing a card is optional.*

On most of your turns, you'll play a single card from your hand. Do not play more than 1 card unless you are using the effect of another card that allows you to do so.

Card Types


There are 4 types of card in the game, distinguishable by their colour and card frame shape:

Scripture 




Relic 



Hallucination 





Constellation 



Card Cost

Cards are played by spending resources: ink () , coins () , whispers () and stars () .



Most cards have a specific cost (**A**) and a generic () cost (**B**). You must pay the total cost to play a card.



For example, to play the card on the right would cost a total of 5 resources; 3  plus 2 of any combination of additional resources.







Discarding Cards for a Discount


If you're running low on resources, you may discard any number of cards from your hand to discount the cost of a card you wish to play:


For each  discarded, discount the cost by 1 .

For each  discarded, discount the cost by 1 .

For each  discarded, discount the cost by 1 .






For each  discarded, discount the cost by 1 .










① *You may discard cards of any type to discount the  cost of a card.*






① *You may also discard cards to discount Forbidden Knowledge (; see page 8).*

Over the next two pages, we'll explain how each type of card works, with some examples.



SCRIPTURES


Scriptures are permanent upgrades that discount all other costs by the resources shown at the bottom of the card. These discounts can be stacked, and  discounts can be used against Forbidden Knowledge (; see page 8).

 discounts cannot be used against  card costs.  discounts only work against  costs and cannot be used against  unless the Forbidden Scripture icon ( is shown in the bottom right corner.


Scriptures with the  icon below their cost have the **Submerge** effect which resolves once, immediately, when the card is played. To Submerge, discard each  and  card in the card row, then perform a Move Cosmoctopus action () for each card discarded, gaining the tile bonus for each  performed. The ongoing effect of these cards works as normal.




This card provides a 1  discount against all cards that cost  for the rest of the game.

It also has the Submerge icon (); this effect will resolve when the card is played.




This card provides a 1  discount against all generic card costs for the rest of the game.







It also has the  icon, allowing the discount to be used against any Forbidden Knowledge.

RELICS



Relics are permanent upgrades that provide on-going effects; usually a resource-related boost. Relic effects can be stacked.


When you play a relic with the  icon below its cost, you may immediately draw and keep the top card of the devotee deck. The ongoing effect of these cards works as normal.



This card adds an extra 3  resources every time you gain any amount of  from any source. For example, if you would gain 1 , gain 4  instead; if you would gain 3 , gain 6  instead.




Every time you gain a tentacle () , this card immediately provides 3  resources.


It also has the  icon, allowing you to draw a devotee deck card when you play this card.


HALLUCINATIONS

Hallucinations bestow powerful one-off effects. The effect resolves immediately when the card is played and the card is then discarded.

Hallucinations with the  icon below their cost allow you to play another card in the same turn, if you have the resources to do so.





This card immediately provides 8  resources when played; the card is then discarded.

It also has the , allowing you to play another card in the same turn, if you wish.



This card immediately provides a tentacle when played; the card is then discarded.



If you possess Forbidden Knowledge (), you may also Move Cosmoctopus (.







CONSTELLATIONS

Upon completion, constellations grant a tentacle and additional one-off effects. To complete a constellation, you must fill all 4 slots on the card with resources. Every time you gain a resource, you may either keep it, or place it onto an open constellation slot with the matching icon. The top-left slot (A) is always open and must be filled first. Once a slot is filled, all slots it connects to (via an arrow) are classed as open and may be filled. Once all 4 slots have been filled, resolve the card effect, return the 4 resources to the bank and discard the card.

 You cannot fill constellation slots with resources gained before the constellation was played.



When completed, this card will grant a tentacle () and allow you to play another constellation card from your hand for free (.

You must always start filling constellations from the top left slot (A). In this case, the top left slot is a  slot. Once the  slot is filled, the  slot will open and may be filled. Once the  slot is filled, both the  and  slots will open; you can fill these in any order but all 4 slots must be filled to complete the constellation and resolve its effect.

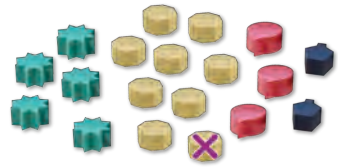
① You'll find an icon guide on the back of the lore sheet and on your reference card. Card clarifications can be found on page 14.




DISCARD DOWN TO 8

At the end of your turn, you must discard resources and cards until you have at most 8 of any single resource type and at most 8 cards in hand.

① *If your hand is nearly full, remember that you can discard cards to discount card costs (see page 5) and Forbidden Knowledge (see below).*




This player will need to discard 1  as they have 9, but can keep the rest of their resources.


The Gaze of Cosmoctopus

Once you've finished your turn, rotate Cosmoctopus to face the next player. If Cosmoctopus is looking at you, it's your chance to prove your devotion!




GAINING TENTACLES

When you gain a tentacle ()¹, add it to a gap in your summoning tile. The first player to gain 8 tentacles wins.









Constellations () will always provide a tentacle when completed, and some other cards will grant a tentacle at the time they are played (for example, the hallucination shown in the image to the right).

Another way to gain tentacles is Forbidden Knowledge.

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

If you end up with 13 resources of a single type on your turn (perhaps you saved 8 from a previous turn and gained 5 this turn), you may obtain the Forbidden Knowledge () matching that resource. Pay 13 matching resources, immediately gain 2 tentacles and take the corresponding Forbidden Knowledge tile. No other player may gain the same Forbidden Knowledge type for the rest of the game.



① *Remember, /// discounts provided by scriptures can be used against , but  discounts cannot, unless the card features the  icon. You can also discard cards to discount .*

FIRST CONTACT

The first player to gain a tentacle may immediately select 1 of the 4 First Contact cards and take it into their hand. When other players gain their first tentacle, they may choose 1 of the remaining First Contact cards. These cards are free to play, but still count as the 'play a card' step of a turn.



i First Contact cards have purple cost icons and a cost of 0, making them easy to find if they are accidentally shuffled into the devotee deck.

WINNING THE GAME

The game ends immediately when a player gains their 8th tentacle. The winning devotee may take Cosmoctopus' head and place it in the centre of their summoning tile, completing their portal to the Inky Realm!



You can share a photo of your victory on social media using the hashtag #cosmoctopus; feel free to tag us in @paperfortgames!

Next, we'll cover how to play co-operatively or solo using the Private Investigator. For details of the express game, ways to alter the game's difficulty and alternative Inky Realm tile layouts, see page 12. The optional cosmic bridge game mode is explained on page 13.

THE PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR



The Private Investigator (PI) is a non-player character that can be introduced into the game to convert a multiplayer game from a competitive experience to a co-operative one, or to allow solo play.

To win, every player must gain 8 tentacles before the PI does.

Can you stop the PI from uncovering the secrets of the Great Inky One?

① In multiplayer games with the PI, when each player gains their 8th tentacle, they immediately return their tentacles to the supply. Then, they flip their summoning tile to the side with icons and discard all of their cards and resources. On future turns, they perform the Move Cosmoptopus step only, donating the bonus to another active player of their choice. They no longer play cards.

Setup



Set up the game as for the core game (see page 3). In addition, shuffle the 8 PI behaviour cards and place them face-down to form a PI behaviour deck **(A)**. Choose 1 of the 3 PI revelation cards and place it next to the PI progress tracker card with the 'I can see the patterns...' side up, forming a complete book **(B)**. Return the rest of the PI revelation cards to the game box. Place a tentacle on the '0' spot of the progress tracker card **(C)**, then reveal the top card of the PI behaviour deck **(D)**. Take the 2 magnifying glass tokens **(E)** and place 1 on each of the 2 Inky Realm tiles with an icon matching the icon shown in the top left of the PI behaviour card. These 2 tiles are being 'investigated' by the PI. Choose a difficulty (see bottom of page) and give the PI the corresponding starting resources.



① In your first game against the PI, we recommend choosing the 'Naïve' difficulty level.

Difficulty	●●● Naïve	●●● Tenacious	●●● Relentless	●●● Obsessive
PI starting resources	1 of each type	2 of each type	3 of each type	5 of each type

Playing Against the Private Investigator



The active behaviour card shows the currently investigated Inky Realm tiles (**F**) and the effect that will resolve when the PI gains a tentacle  (**G**) or Forbidden Knowledge tile  (**H**).





If you move Cosmoctopus onto an investigated Inky Realm tile for any reason, give the PI a resource matching the investigated type from the bank. Moving through an investigated tile is free.



The PI wins if they gain 8 tentacles before all other players do. When the PI gains their 5th tentacle, flip over the progress tracker card and the revelation card to reveal the rest of the tracker and a new game rule.

The PI always takes their turn last. On their turn, perform the following steps in order:

1. Give the PI a resource matching the type of each individual card in the card row.
2. Check whether the PI has 13 or more of any single resource. If so, and the Forbidden Knowledge corresponding to that resource is still available, return 13 of these resources to the bank, advance the progress tracker tentacle by 2, remove the associated Forbidden Knowledge tile from the game and resolve the  effect on the PI behaviour card. If not, move to the next step.
3. Check whether the PI has 8 or more of any single resource. If so, and the Forbidden Knowledge corresponding to that resource is no longer available, return 8 of these resources to the bank, advance the tentacle on the PI progress tracker by 1 and resolve the  effect on the PI behaviour card. If not, move to the next step.

⚠ The PI does not take First Contact cards. Resolving  and  effects may result in the PI gaining additional resources that pushes them over the threshold for gaining additional  and/or . Resolve each effect in sequence, allocate any resources and then recheck if any new thresholds have been met.

4. If the PI gained any tentacles this turn, discard the active behaviour card, reveal a new one and move the 2 magnifying glass tokens to the new tiles being investigated. If the behaviour deck is empty, shuffle the discarded behaviour cards and form a new deck. If the PI did not gain any tentacles this turn, the current behaviour card remains in play.
5. Check whether the PI has 8 or more tentacles. If so, the PI wins; if not, the PI's turn ends and play moves on to the next human player.

⚠ Unlike players, the Private Investigator does not discard resources at the end of their turn.

GAME DURATION, STARTING HANDS & DIFFICULTY

- For a **quicker game** (ideal for busy devotees or new players), each player starts with 3 tentacles. This express game mode usually lasts less than an hour.
- When playing with new or younger players, you might like to use the optional **3-card starting hands** shown on the back of the player reference cards. Use these in place of a random 5-card starting hand for every player. The effects of these 3-card combinations have been designed to complement each other.
- Once you are familiar with the game, you might like to **draft starting hands** to give you more control over your strategy. To draft a starting hand, each player keeps 1 card from their 5 starting cards, then passes the remaining 4 cards to the player on their left. Each player then keeps 1 card from the 4 cards they received, passing the remaining 3 cards on. This continues until all players have chosen and kept 5 cards.
- Some **Inky Realm layouts** are more challenging than others; read on to find out more.

ALTERNATIVE INKY REALM LAYOUTS

After a few games of Cosmoctopus, you might like to try different Inky Realm configurations. In the layouts below, tiles are shown as squares for ease of interpretation and any overlapping tiles are considered adjacent for the purposes of moving Cosmoctopus.



••• *Infin-Eight*



••• *And then there was Naught*



••• *X marks the Splot*



••• *Threeping*



••• *Pentaglyph*



Design your own Inky Realm

THE COSMIC BRIDGE

This optional game mode can be used to add even more variety and tactical depth to your games of Cosmoctopus. The cosmic bridge allows players to teleport Cosmoctopus around the Inky Realm, and can be included in competitive, co-operative and solo games. It is compatible with any Inky Realm layout and allows players to design new, 'disconnected' Inky Realm layouts for their games.

Setup Changes

During game setup, when constructing the Inky Realm, lay out the Inky Realm tiles face down. Place the 2 cosmic bridge tokens (each representing one end of the cosmic bridge) onto any 2 non-adjacent Inky Realm tiles, then turn over all of the Inky Realm tiles and continue setup as normal.



Using the Cosmic Bridge

Inky Realm tiles which have a cosmic bridge token on them are considered adjacent for the purposes of moving Cosmoctopus, even if they are at opposite ends of the Inky Realm.

On your turn, during the Move Cosmoctopus step, you may discard a card of any type from your hand to move one of the cosmic bridge tokens onto a new Inky Realm tile. The cosmic bridge tokens must always be on different tiles, and discarding cards to move cosmic bridge tokens does not count as the 'play a card' step of your turn.

Disconnected Inky Realms

The cosmic bridge allows players to design new, potentially bigger, 'disconnected' Inky Realm configurations, where the main way to get between separated sections is via cosmic bridge teleportation. To the right is a suggested 10-tile layout of this type, which uses the 8 normal Inky Realm tiles and 2 (rather than the usual 1) of the special Inky Realm tiles. When playing with disconnected layouts, 1 cosmic bridge token must stay within each section of the Inky Realm.












An example of a disconnected Inky Realm layout with 2 sections. Players can move either token, but each token must remain within its section.

















Have you designed a great Inky Realm layout? You can share it with fellow devotees on social media using the hashtag #inkyrealm; feel free to tag us in @paperfortgames!





CARD CLARIFICATIONS



-  **Resonating Manuscript**
-  **Tales of the Inexplicable**







These 'Forbidden Scripture' cards have the  icon. Normally,  that provide a  discount cannot be used to discount . However, Forbidden Scripture can be used to discount any  by 1 resource (as well as providing its  discount against card costs). This discount can be stacked with other  discounts.


-  **Atlas of the Branching Paths**
-  **Blotted Notes**
-  **Ringbound Tome of Riddles**
-  **Story of the Salt-Scarred Shipwreck**





The ongoing effect of these cards works as usual. They also have the Submerge effect ( icon) which resolves once, immediately, when the card is played. To Submerge, discard each  and  in the card row, then perform a Move Cosmoctopus action () for each card discarded, gaining the tile bonus for each . For example, if the card row contained   , you would discard the  and , then perform 2 Move Cosmoctopus actions.




-  **Angler's Gaslamp**
-  **Drowned Effigy**
-  **Sentient Inkpot**
-  **Spaceborne Geode**





If you have one of these cards in play,  slots matching the specified resource type are immediately filled from the bank when they open. If there are matching open slots when the card is played, they fill immediately. These cards can be combined to fill multiple slot types. See page 7 for more about  slots.

-  **Ancient Astrolabe**
-  **Clockwork Hummingbird**
-  **Ever-Expanding Puzzlebox**
-  **Impossible Tuning Fork**
-  **Mariner's Bauble**
-  **Scratched Prism**

The effects on these cards provide bonuses every time you gain a tentacle (). If you gain multiple tentacles in a single turn (including from obtaining Forbidden Knowledge), receive the bonus for each tentacle you gain.


-  **Behold the Yawning Darkness**
-  **Echoes of a Forgotten World**
-  **Remains of a Dead Planet**
-  **Witness Stellar Collapse**

These cards always grant  when played. However, if you possess  you may also perform a Move Cosmoctopus action () paying Tribute if you wish (see page 4) and gaining the tile bonus as normal.

-  **Dance of the Inky Flames**
-  **Float Upon the Ephemeral River**
-  **Obey the Smiling Eclipse**
-  **Trapped in a Timeless Existence**

When played, these cards allow you to immediately play a card from the card row for free. The card type that can be played for free is shown on the card; the icon shows the card in the middle slot of the card row, but you can choose to play any card of the matching type regardless of its card row position.

QUESTIONS & REMINDERS

When does the card row refill?	Every time a card is taken from the card row, the empty slot is immediately refilled.
Can I look through the discard pile?	Yes, you can look through the discard pile at any time.
When I play a constellation, can I fill the slots with resources from my resource pool?	No; you cannot fill slots with resources gained before a constellation was played (see page 7).
If I am able to complete multiple constellations in the same turn, can I choose the order that the cards resolve in?	Yes, but all effects on each card must be fully resolved before moving onto the next constellation.
When using a card effect to automatically fill constellations, must the matching slots be 'open' before they will autofill?	Yes, the corresponding constellation slots must be 'open' (see page 7). Remember, resources used to autofill come from the bank, not your personal resource pool.
If a specific Inky Realm tile destination is shown after a Move Cosmoctopus effect (🐙➡️) and Cosmoctopus is already on that tile, what happens?	Cosmoctopus does not move, but you still get the tile bonus.
Can I use scripture cards that grant a  discount to discount a , , , or  cost?	No;  discounts can only be used against  costs. The only exception is Forbidden Scripture cards (see page 6)
Can I use scripture cards that grant , , , or  discounts to discount a  cost?	No;  ,  ,  , or  discounts can only be used against matching card costs and Forbidden Knowledge of the matching type.
Can I discard cards from my hand to discount a  card cost?	Yes.
Can I discard cards from my hand to discount the cost of Forbidden Knowledge?	Yes.
Can I discard cards from my hand to pay Tribute?	No. Tribute (see page 4) can only be paid with resources.
If a card effect grants an additional Move Cosmoctopus action (🐙➡️), do I still get the bonus shown on the destination tile?	Yes. You may also pay Tribute (see page 4) to move Cosmoctopus further, if you wish.

CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Thank you to every devotee who has playtested Cosmoctopus, provided feedback on the rulebook and helped spread the word of the Great Inky One; your support is hugely appreciated!

A WORD FROM THE DESIGNER

To be honest, I didn't design this game. Rather, I witnessed my hands construct the first prototype without my permission. The pieces began to gather on my table in mysterious formations. I saw rivers of ink run across a page to reveal the rules. Then, suddenly, in a single tick of the cosmic clock, the game was finished, and I was left with the impression that the Great Inky One used me to make their game - an immense privilege!

Now you are in possession of this peculiar game. It is filled with secrets and cryptic messages that are beyond my understanding, but perhaps you can decipher them. Although I do not know this game's true purpose, I believe that the Great Inky One gave us this gift to bring us closer together with our friends and family. Enjoy!

-Henry

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