

Stepping into the Oblivion

Stepping into the Oblivion is a dice-less and GM-full TTRPG about the reunion of a group of friends, and the fading memories of a great trip they made. The game builds around a growing sequence of dominoes, each holding a relevant detail about the trip. What happens when the tiles stop fitting together?

This TTRPG has 2 different game modes - Journey Revival and Story Remembrance).

Travel Provisions:

- 3 to 4 players | 2 to 4 hours
- Small post-its, pen/pencil
- This game | 1 to 2 dominoes sets

Aspects: memories are defined by key-aspects - each one corresponds to a question answered.

- *Where?* - the place where the memory happened;
- *Who?* - the people present in the memory;
- *How?* - the emotions running around in the memory;
- *Why?* - the unexpected occasion that made it all memorable.

Character Generation: Each player plays as 2 entities: as Storyteller (one of the friends gathered to remember a journey), and as Traveller (the storyteller, but at the time of the journey). There's no character sheet, just note down these points.

- Name of the Player | Name of the Storyteller/Traveller | Role
- Shortly describe your Storyteller | Create an **Unforgettable Memory**
- Each Player suggests an adjective that describes your Traveller, you add 2 adjectives of your choice.
- Note down a particular habit of the Storyteller and another of the Traveller.

Unforgettable Memories: Every Storyteller possesses a strong memory of an unforgettable moment. Each player, at the start of the game, will draw a random dominoes tile, pick one Aspect (doesn't have to be the same given by the Role) and write down a broad memory that is connected to said Aspect. Only in play the memory will be detailed.

At any point of the session, if the tile can be played, and the memory makes some narrative sense, the storyteller can introduce it to the remaining players.

Game Structure:

- 1) Players make characters, prepare the dominoes and agree upon a travel destiny
- 2) Storytellers gather at a place and greet each other

Online Alternatives:

- A shared whiteboard (Milanote, Miro, Jamboard)
- A domino sandbox ([Roll20](#), Tabletop Simulator, [mathsbot](#), [PlayingCards.io](#), ...)

Roles: different people prioritize different memories. Each role is tied to an Aspect. In a game, each player should have their own Role. **In play, when defining the associated Aspect, a player can draw a second tile if the first doesn't fit.**

- *The Cartograph* ("where?");
- *The Socializer* ("who?");
- *The Empath* ("how?");
- *The Chronicler* ("why?").

3) Traveller narrates his action / Storyteller remembers a moment

4) Players try to place a tile and react accordingly

5) Repeat 3 and 4 until end of session

6) Storytellers tie loose ends, and say goodbye

Dominoes Setup: The dominoes are core to the SitO experience. Players choose if they want to use 1 or 2 dominoes sets. All tiles with 2 equal halves are removed (1:1, 4:4, ...), and players randomly pick the tile for their Unforgettable Memory. Then, add the removed tiles and shuffle all, store them aside.

Reach an agreement for the travel remembered (real or fictional), and place a randomly selected starting tile in the middle of the table. Game will be built from here.

To play a tile: it must make narrative sense, and it must fit somewhere - this is, a tile is randomly drawn, and must be placed where it shares an edge with the same number as a previous tile. It is more similar to Scrabble than to usual dominoes.

Journey Revival:

The most hiking-friendly player begins by narrating what their Traveller is doing (**present tense**). **When you want to insert a relevant Aspect, play a tile, and state what is is.** If it fits, the memory is real and the next player anticlockwise continues in the person of their Traveller. If it doesn't fit, the Storyteller gets stuck trying to remember how it really was. The scene ends, and therefore new Aspects can be defined (but keep notes of the previous ones). The next player starts a new Scene.

At the end of the session, Storytellers may go back to these undefined memories. Depending on who has the Role responsible for a given unsolved Aspect, the player can suggest a possible memory that ties the loose knot, and the others vote for it. If it isn't accepted, Storytellers leave the gathering with an unpleasant feeling of an encroaching Oblivion.

In every Scene transition, players should focus on the Storytellers and the place they're gathered at - an opportunity to roleplay how they react to the new Aspects revealed, and to the oblivion of memories.

Session ends when:

- there are no tiles left, and the Storytellers end their attempt at tying the unsolved ends;
- when no tile is placed for 3 consecutive Scenes, and all the trip's memories are devoured by Oblivion.

Scenes: This game is played with scenes because memories are not continuous. A transition of scene can mean new Aspects since the place might be another, the people different, the emotions new, etc...

Story Remembrance:

The last player to have read/watched a book/movie about adventure begins by retelling a moment of their choice from the travel (**past tense**). **For every relevant Aspect introduced, you must play a tile, and state what it is.** If it fits, the memory is real and the Storyteller *may* continue narrating.

If it doesn't fit, the focus changes to the Storytellers at the gathering place. The next player clockwise can argue, as Storyteller, with the friend, and explain how things really happened - then, a tile must be played, and if it fits now, this second player becomes the main Storyteller. If it still doesn't fit, the 2 Storytellers may argue further, but no answer shall be reached. A third player clockwise will have to start a new Scene.

The playing of dominoes can be involved into the Storyteller roleplay, as they're also gathered playing this game.

Session ends when:

- there are no tiles left, and the Storytellers end their attempt at tying the unsolved ends;
- the narration circles the table twice and nobody was able to place 2 tiles in a row, or 3 tiles between all players. All the trip's memories were devoured by Oblivion.

Game Dials:

- Play with 2 dominoes sets for longer games;
- For very short games, play with the tiles 0 to 4, less memories will be forgotten;
- If there's an audience, the Storyteller scenes at the gathering place are the best opportunity to interact;
- Dominoes can work as a great random generator (double-sided 0:6 or sum of 0 to 12)