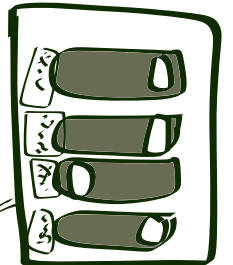


# Cryptkeeper



by @pancelor



# Cryptkeeper

"Cryptkeeper? Hello? Ah, hi, yeah we're back... sorry to bother you again. We... we don't know, er, there's, um, there's a bit of a situation with the crypt... hmm? Okay, yeah. So, um, what happened this time is we were investigating that column with all the moss and sigils on it, you know, the one that sometimes shows up around floor six or seven? yeah, so we accidentally let loose the big rat king guy, and he cursed all our food, but we got out of there okay and just threw out the bad food. BUT, we had the Flask of Unlimited Memory in Jordan's pack and I think that got cursed too because when we poured it on the Amulet of Campy-, uh, Carpy-, um, Cabny- -- yeah! the big greenish one, with the moon thingy at the top? yeah, so we poured the flask on the Amulet of Cnaprybe and it got all dark purple-ish and weird and did NOT give us the Controlled Chaos buff and then the whole crypt got sorta dark and... sideways-feeling? like, my ears popped, and there was this electric hum for a bit but it stopped pretty quick. Stuff just kinda felt wrong, but not in a cool "you summoned the final boss" sorta way, more like we broke something. The gargoyles didn't even notice us when we walked past the stairs, and after a few minutes there was this horrible wrenching noise and then the crypt sorta, uh, vomited us out... yeah, I think we broke something. Sorry. Can you fix it?"

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## You will need:

- A deck of 52 playing cards (you will only use 26 of them)
- A flat area, like a desk or table
- A small token to mark your position in the crypt. Maybe a coin, or some dice?

## Your goal:

The crypt is malfunctioning! Find and cleanse the Amulet of Cnaprybe. Hopefully that will fix everything? Try to manage the crypt's glitches, and don't get ejected!

## Setup:

- Sort the cards into 4 piles, one for each suit.
- Choose one red suit and one black suit; remove the two other suits.
- Choose any black card and place in your hand. This is your starting item.  
(Some good beginner options: Jack, Queen, or 6)
- Shuffle the red suit and place the stack facedown on the table. This is your deck.
- Deal the black suit into a face-down grid, 3 rows tall and 4 columns wide.  
This is the map.
- Place your player token on any map tile (any card)

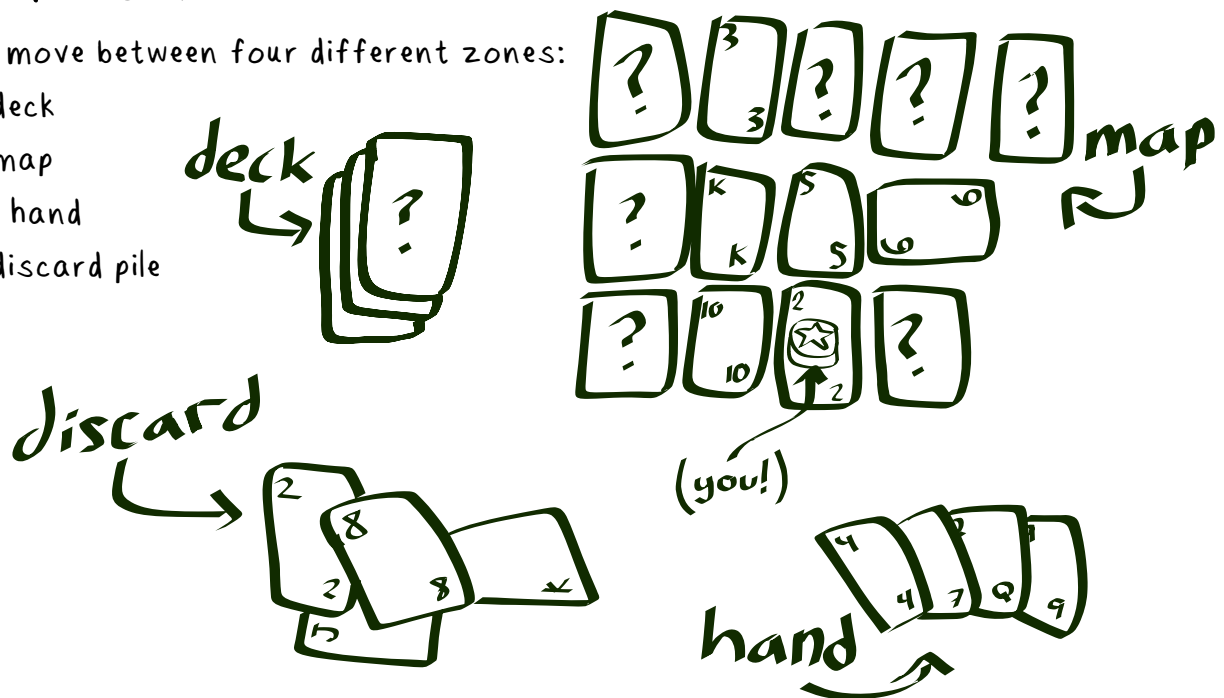
## Basic Overview:

Every card serves dual purposes. If you explore a card as a tile on the map, it will trigger an Event Effect. However, if you instead draw the card as an item, you can use that card at any time to trigger its Item Effect. The map and the deck swap places every floor, so be careful about what you discard, because it'll come back as a map tile on the next floor!

## Card Zones:

Cards move between four different zones:

- the deck
- the map
- your hand
- the discard pile



These zones are not size limited; for example, you might find yourself in a situation where you have fifteen items in your hand, and the map has only two tiles!

## Gameplay Basics:

- On your turn, move your token to any adjacent map tile. Flip the card face-up and activate its Event Effect (If the card is already face-up, don't reactivate it)
- At any time, you may use any item in your hand, activating its Item Effect and discarding the card.
- When certain effects "reveal" map tiles, turn the revealed tile face-up and sideways, to show the card but signify that you haven't activated it yet.
- If an effect tells you discard more items than you have, discard all of your items and continue playing. However, if you have no items and are told to discard, the crypt ejects you, like a cat "ejects" a hairball. (thankfully, nothing worse happens to you) Reset the cards and try again!

## Descending to the next Floor:

The stairs leading down from each floor are guarded by imposing gargoyles. To sneak past them, you'll need to activate the Rune of Calcification on each floor to freeze them in place.

When you're ready to advance to the next floor:

- Make sure the Rune of Calcification (Ace) was activated this floor
- Make your way to the stairs (King)
- Shuffle the discard pile into the deck and set aside (this will become the map)
- Shuffle the map together. This is your new deck for next floor
- Deal out the new map face-down, making columns three tiles tall repeatedly until you run out of cards



# The Amulet of Cnaprybe

How did the amulet get into such a bad state? It looks incredibly unstable. Is it dripping... honey?? When you pick it up, its chaos begins to consume your mind. Luckily, your mind is not particularly tasty to the accursed amulet, so the amulet instead consumes your items and disappears in a puff of lemon-scented smoke.

- You only have a single turn to cleanse the amulet; if you pick up the amulet and do not cleanse it immediately, discard twelve items.
- The Offish Altar (10) does not enjoy idle chit-chat. If you encounter it but don't have the amulet, it sinks into the floor with an annoyed huff. Find it again later!
- To cleanse the amulet, place it in the Offish Altar and pour the Flask of Unlimited Memory (Ace) on it. With one final, stilted groan, the crypt stops shuddering and shifting. You win! Head out of the crypt and try to catch a nap before those kids break something else.



## Clarifications / Q&A

Q: "The deck is empty; how do I draw an item?"

A: Sorry, no item for you. Go to the next floor to get a new deck!

Q: "The deck has only one card; how do I draw two items and discard one?"

A: Draw the item and either keep it or discard it; it's up to you.

Q: "Do the stairs (King) force me to descend? (I froze the gargoyles already)"

A: No, you can choose to stay on the current floor as long as you want.

Q: "This floor has no Rune of Calcification (Ace) / no stairs (King). Help?"

A: Try using your items to spawn the tile you need, or restart and try again!

Q: "How do I win?? This game is hard"

A: It's meant to be difficult! Think carefully about how to use your items and stack the deck so that you can win. If you'd prefer an easier ruleset, you can omit the Flask (Ace) from the cleansing ritual.

## Event Effect

## Item Effect

2

Decrypt the Gnome Cipher:  
Draw 2 items; discard 1 of them

Gnomish Passageways:  
Move your current map tile next to any other tile

3

Examine suspicious rocks:  
Draw 3 items; discard 1 of them

Backtracking Algorithm:  
Move any map tile on top of the deck

4

Venture through the stony crag:  
Draw any item from the discard pile

Load-Bearing Rubble:  
Deal any discarded card into the map and reveal it

5

Mimic attack!  
Discard 1 item

Mimic Recycling Plant:  
Place any 2 discarded cards on top of the deck

6

Do I smell... citrus?  
Reveal any row of map tiles

Olfactory Enhancements:  
Reveal any column of map tiles

7

Visit the scrying cave:  
Peek at the next 3 cards of the deck

Confident Acquisition:  
Draw 2 items

8

Scrying malfunction:  
Reveal the 4 adjacent map tiles and discard 1 of them

Reboot the scrying cave:  
Discard the top card from the deck

9

Quakes and tremors:  
Discard any column from the map

Hasty Construction:  
Deal a new map column from the deck

10

Offish Altar:  
If you have the Amulet (10) and the Flask (Ace), you win!

Amulet of Cnapyrbe:  
If you still have this card next turn, discard 12 items

J

The walls lurch horribly!  
Discard any row from the map

Summon the Prefab Module:  
Deal a new map row from the deck

Q

You Have Angered The Rat king:  
Discard 3 items

Earn a Royal Favor:  
Draw 2 item. Discard 1 item

K

Stairs, guarded by gargoyles:  
When used, descend to the next floor

Admin's Crowbar:  
Cancel any Event

A

Rune of Calcification:  
Freeze the gargoyles; the stairs may now be used

Flask of Unlimited Memory:  
Reveal the 8 map tiles directly around you. Required for the cleansing ritual

# Credits

Cryptkeeper, a solo TTRPG

game design by pancelor ————— <https://pancelor.com/>

typeface and playtesting  
by cryss ————— <https://princryss.itch.io/>

game format inspired by the Carta system,  
by Peach Garden Games ————— <https://peachgardengames.itch.io/carta-srd/>

page layout made in inkscape ————— <https://inkscape.org/>

thanks for playing!

hopefully the crypt hasn't completely collapsed  
before the next time you play... no promises

