

## Mafia Story

*A game by Adam Kleizer*

This game is about a gang of Italian mobsters led by a Godfather with great influence over the local crime scene. Players create a gangster story while controlling the members of this group. They obey the orders but compete with each other at the same time to become the new Godfather.

## Setting

*Players agree about time and place of the fiction.*

The game can be played in any era and place where Mafia operates. Sicily in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Chicago during the prohibition are good examples for a setting with enough possibilities to drive any campaign of this game.

## Gang Creation

*The game begins with the creation of the gang, the members of which players will control during the campaign.*

Grab a sheet of paper. The host of the session starts with drawing a box on the paper and writing “Godfather” inside the box. The Godfather will be the head of the gang and no one can take control over him.

Then the next player clockwise around the table creates a new character by writing the name of the character inside a box and writing an adjective and a noun underneath the box. These two words will describe the character’s essence. Members of the Mafia are often from the same family. If the new character is related to an existing character connect the boxes in a way that’s descriptive about how they’re related to each other. When the player is done making the character the next player’s turn begins. Pass the right to make characters clockwise around the table.

After the first round, every player has the option to select an already existing character before creating a new one. Gang creation ends when every player has selected a character.

## Attributes and starting values

*Every player decides about strengths and weaknesses of his character.*

Everyone should now grab a sheet of paper and write the name of his character down. Characters will have four values associated to them. **Physical**, **Mental** and **Social** points are **style points** which the players can spend in conflicts to gain **Authority** points.

Every character starts with zero Authority points.

Players can assign values to the style points. Every character will have an aspect in which he excels, one in which he’s mediocre and one in which he’s far under the average. The actual numbers which can be assigned to style points depend on the number of players and can be found in Table 1: Starting style point values.

	3 players	4 players	5 players	6 players
Weak	6	8	10	12
Mediocre	12	16	20	24
Excellent	24	32	40	48

Table 1: Starting style point values

## **The gang leader**

*Players use the cards to decide who can give the orders.*

There's always a **gang leader** during this game who can give orders to the other characters. Later in the game, this will depend on the number of Authority points but since everyone starts with zero Authority points, there is another method to select the first gang leader.

Grab a deck of normal playing cards and shuffle it. Now, starting with the host of the session and continued clockwise, every player draws a card. The first player to draw a King is the gang leader. He gets three tokens.

## **Separating the cards**

*The two decks are separated after the gang leader is selected.*

Grab the deck of cards and separate it to face cards and numbered cards. Face cards are Jacks, Queens, Kings, Aces and Jokers. The deck of face cards will be the **Profit Deck** and the deck of numbered cards is from now on called **Conflict Deck**.

## **The first job**

*Of course the family has a goal they want to achieve.*

Players now agree on the first job. A job is a goal the gang is striving to achieve during the next few scenes. This is the first time players can discuss events ongoing in the story's present but shouldn't take more than one or two minutes. The gang leader has the last word when defining the job.

## **Starting actual play**

*Everyone gets their cards and the host starts narrating.*

Now the gang leader shuffles the Conflict Deck and deals everyone a number of cards equal to the number of players in the game. This means the game can be played by maximum six players, as there are only 36 cards in the Conflict Deck.

The **narration cycle** begins with the host of the session. This means he has 10 minutes of narration before the next player clockwise around the table can narrate. Of course the narrating player can pass the narration to the next player before his 10 minutes expire.

## **Narrating the story**

*Narrating the story is one of the most unbound player actions in the game but still has some limitations.*

The narrating player has control over every imaginative component of the game except the characters owned by other players. Other players' characters can do and say whatever the controlling player decides he wants to.

Every scene is an event that either promotes or sets the gang back in their effort to complete the job.

The narrating player decides if he wants to end a scene and start a new one.

Other players can narrate their character into any scene if the narrating player didn't do so before.

The Godfather can not be narrated into a scene. The Godfather can't give orders to the players' characters except by the rules stated hereinafter. The Godfather can not be dispossessed of his power over the family by narration.

A profit fact is always true and can't be changed by narration.

## Conflict

*Whenever a player wants to challenge another player's actions, a conflict takes place.*

Who shoots the other gang's leader, who wins a lady's heart, who convinces the police to let the characters go is most of the time subject of conflict.

Whoever wants to take place in the conflict places a numbered card from his hand face down on the table.

Players who don't want to participate get two tokens to decide the **conflict's style**. If every player is taking part in the conflict, everyone gets one token.

Players now place the tokens in the same time onto the style selection sheet. The style with the most tokens on its field is in the lead.

Players participating in the conflict can now get one token for each Authority point they'd drop from the **profit** of this conflict, and can place the tokens onto the style selection sheet.

The style with the most tokens is now the style of the conflict. If there's a tie, the player whose actions were challenged can decide between the tied styles.

Now one after the other, players announce the **traits** they want to use in the conflict. Players not in the conflict decide about whether the trait can be used. All of them shows their thumbs up or down according to their opinion. If there's more thumbs down, the trait can't be used; otherwise it's valid during the conflict. This goes until every participant states he doesn't want to use more traits.

After that, every participant turns his card laid on the table over. The descending order of the numbers defines the **bidding order**. If there are ties, the gang leader's position decides: the gang leader comes first, then other tied players clockwise around the table.

A bid contains style points and valid traits' grades.

Every bid must contain at least as many style points as the number of participants in the conflict. Every new bid must be higher than the ones before. Participants may bid as long as they want. If someone doesn't want to bid anymore, he must clearly state this. Bidding order never changes during the bidding phase.

Whoever bid the most wins the conflict. He loses the style point part of his last bid. Every other participant loses the style point part of their first bid. Winning the conflict means the winner's character comes out best of the situation, but the current narrator decides how this is happening.

The winner gets Authority points equal to the number of participating players minus the number of tokens he decided to put on the style selection sheet. The winner can decide to add one point of this profit to the **job pool** instead of his Authority score.

The winning player also gets to draw a card from the Profit Deck. Nobody can have more than one **profit card** in his hand however. If the winner already has a profit card, he can decide to play the card from his hand and draw a new one, or keep the one in his hand.

## Using a profit card

*A profit card can be used in three ways.*

Handing a profit card on the table face down means the player wants to influence the story with a **profit fact**. A profit fact contains one to three sentences and all narration rules apply to it, including the total control of every imaginative component of the story, except other players' characters. After declaring the profit fact the card is shuffled in the Profit Deck again.

Playing a Jack, a Queen, a King or an Ace is an important component of **style point refreshment** with which this document will deal later. Jacks, Queens and Kings can't be played if there's already a card with the same face on the table. A profit fact is the only use of these cards then. Aces can be played after one is already on the table.

Playing a Joker empowers the player to give an Order from the Godfather.

## Order from the Godfather

*The gang leader or the player with the Joker can give an Order from the Godfather.*

Orders from the Godfather are ways for the gang leader to manipulate the game's looks. Somehow his character receives an order he can share with the other members of the party.

An order contains a maximum of three sentences. It can declare facts about events happening in other locations and orders every character must obey. It can be very specific or very unclear, as the player likes.

The order costs the gang leader one of the tokens he received. If the order was given by playing a Joker, the card is shuffled in the Profit deck again.

## Empty hand

*If someone's hand is empty, it means the job was either completed or failed.*

A hand is considered empty if no conflict cards are held by a player after a conflict. Profit cards can't be played after this occurs.

If at least as many points as the number of players are in the job pool, then the job was completed. The characters' style points get a boost. Every player gets one token and one token for every Ace played. Aces are now removed from the table and tokens can be placed upon the Jack, Queen and King card if there's one.

The Jack represents the physical, the Queen the social and the King the mental style points. For each token on the card everybody gets the number of players to his appropriate style points.

If there weren't enough points sacrificed on the job, then the job wasn't completed, and there's no boost to the style points.

A new job should be agreed on before shuffling the Profit and Conflict Decks and dealing new conflict cards equal to the number of players to everyone.

	3 players	4 players	5 players	6 players
1 <sup>st</sup> milestone	7	9	11	13
2 <sup>nd</sup> milestone	14	18	22	26
3 <sup>rd</sup> milestone	21	27	33	39
4 <sup>th</sup> milestone	28	36	44	52
5 <sup>th</sup> milestone	35	45	55	65
6 <sup>th</sup> milestone	42	54	66	78
7 <sup>th</sup> milestone	49	63	77	91
8 <sup>th</sup> milestone	56	72	88	104
9 <sup>th</sup> milestone	63	81	99	117
10 <sup>th</sup> milestone	70	90	110	130

Table 2: Authority scores assigned to milestones

### Reaching a milestone

*If a player's Authority score equals a milestone, he announces this to the others.*

If someone reaches a milestone the first time in the group, he becomes the gang leader. The old gang leader loses any tokens he got left, and the new leader gets three tokens. If the old leader arrived first to the milestone, he can replenish the number of his tokens to three.

All players can now spend Authority points on Traits. Traits are means to save style points in conflicts. A Trait consists of one sentence and a grade. The sentence can contain one positive statement about the character. If the party finds this sentence is important in the conflict, the player can add the grade of the Trait to his style points when he bids. A Trait costs Authority points equal to the grade of the Trait. Traits can only be defined when someone reaches a milestone the first time in the party. The same is true to raising a Traits grade.

Other players reaching the same milestone later in the game don't become gang leaders, nor should they announce their current Authority score.

### Being defenseless

*You're defenseless if you've got no style points left to take part in any conflict.*

You need to have at least two style points of any kind to be participant in a conflict. If you don't have those points left, you're defenseless and you have to announce this to the party.

### Winning the game

*Who becomes the Godfather isn't a question of luck.*

At the beginning of every campaign, players should agree about which milestone will end the game. When a player reaches that milestone, he wins the game and his character becomes the new Godfather.

Another way for the game to end is all the players being defenseless. In this case, your group is disbanded by the Godfather and the only player keeping his job is the one with the least Authority points.

Style selection sheet

**PHYSICAL**

**SOCIAL**

**MENTAL**

