

# NEVERMORE™

For 3 to 6 Treacherous Players    Ages 14+    45-60 Minutes

## Pass With Care.

*Many are the paths to power:*

*brute force, subtle deception, cunning trickery.*

*You hold the cards... but you can't keep them all. What will you decide to collect for personal gain? And what are you willing to give in order to destroy?*

*The Ravens are gathering, many of whom used to be rivals.*

*Will you rise to power or simply be "Nevermore".*

### Contents:

60 Main Deck cards, 25 Light Magick cards, 25 Shadow Magick cards  
6 Player Health/Raven Markers, 30 purple Health cubes, 30 gold Victory cubes,  
Passing Direction Marker, 4 Resolution tokens (Attack, Healing, Radiance, Victory),  
Conspiracy of Ravens token, Skulking Ravens token, rulebook

### Object:

Be the first to gain 6 Victory Points (VP) or be the last player standing, with all your rivals having been turned into Ravens.

### Set Up:

Give each player a Health/Raven marker and place it Health side up.  
For 3-4 players, place 5 Health cubes on the marker. 5-6 players, 4.

Players begin with 0 Victory Points. Place all the gold Victory cubes in a pool to one side of the playing area.



Place the Passing Direction Marker at the center of the playing area, Left side (L) face up.

Above it, arrange the Raven tokens and Resolution tokens in a straight line, in the order shown:



Shuffle all three decks of cards separately -- the Main deck, as well as the Light and Shadow Magick decks -- placing all within reach of the players. Discard piles will form next to each deck.

Give each player one starting Shadow Magick card, facedown. (They may be read)

Choose a dealer: Have each player draw a card from the main deck, until a player draws a Raven. That player will be the first dealer.



## Playing the Game:

Play proceeds in two phases: Drafting, where players assemble their hands, and Resolution, during which each suit is played for its effects.

### Drafting Phase:

Each hand, players are dealt 5 cards from the main deck. However, even if you love the cards, you will be forced to pass a number of them away. Your playable 5 card hand must be built in the Drafting phase.

Each card will show one of five different suits, **Attack** (sword), **Healing** (heart), **Radiance** (white swirl), **Victory** (chalice) and **Raven** (raven). Each suit has 12 cards, for a main deck of 60 cards.



By amassing the most of any given suit, a player will be granted an action related to that suit (see The Suits & their Effects). The process by which players collect cards of a particular suit or give away cards they don't want occurs during the 'Drafting' phase of each turn.

In the first round of the draft, players will keep only two of their beginning five cards and pass the other three, face down, to the player on their left. The passed cards are added to the receiving player's hand. In the second round, two of your five cards are passed to the left. Finally, one of your five cards is passed left. These final five cards are referred to as the 'Final Drafted Hand'.

But take care – as you compile a stronger hand for yourself, you also need to manage what cards you pass to your opponent or risk making them too strong. Depriving them of a card they need or mixing up the suits you pass to weaken them is called 'hate-drafting' and is a very important strategy to keep in mind.

Note: Every draft, the direction in which cards are passed is reversed. Flip the Passing Direction Marker over to the opposite side to show the new direction for passing each hand.

### The Suits and their Effects:



**Attack:** The player with the most Attack cards (or tied for most) will assign damage to a single player of their choice. The amount of damage done is based on the number of Attack cards they have MINUS the number of Attack cards played by the player(s) who showed the second most number.

*Example: Nicole has 3 Attack cards. Brandon has 1 Attack card. No one else played Attack cards. Nicole assigns 2 damage ( $3 - 1 = 2$ ) to a player of her choice.*

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Attack Card} \\ \text{Attack Card} \\ \text{Attack Card} \end{array} - \begin{array}{c} \text{Attack Card} \end{array} = 2 \text{ Damage}$$

Players tied for highest both earn the power of the suit. If Nicole and Andrew both had 3 Attack cards and Brandon had 1 Attack card, both Nicole and Andrew assign 2 points of damage to a player of their choice. In such a tie, the tied player closest to the dealer, in the direction of passing for that hand, assigns their damage first. The dealer is always last to act when involved in a tie. It doesn't matter how many players tie for the 'second most number' of cards in a suit. It does not affect the calculation in any way.

If a player is reduced to 0 Health or lower, she is transformed into a Raven (see "Becoming a Raven" later in the rules). The player causing the transformation gains 1 VP.

If a player's Attack can inflict 4 or more damage, she may instead choose to do 1 damage to all players but herself - and gain 2 VP. This is the only way you may split an attack's damage among multiple players.



## The Suits and their Effects (continued):



**Healing:** The player with the most Healing cards (or tied for most) will heal, gaining lost Health cubes. The amount of healing is based on the number of Healing cards they have MINUS the number of Healing cards played by the player(s) who showed the second most number.

*Example: Tyler has 3 Healing cards. Laura and Devon both have 2 Healing cards. Tyler heals 1 point, gaining a Health cube back to put him from 3 Health to 4.*



**A player may not heal above maximum Health (5 for 3-4 player games, 4 for 5-6 players).**

**If a player is already at maximum Health and then plays enough Healing cards to Heal himself by 3 or more points, he gains 1 VP.**



**Radiance:** The player with the most Radiance cards (or tied for most) will draw a number of Light Magick cards. The number of cards drawn is based on the number of Radiance cards they have MINUS the number of Radiance cards played by the player(s) who showed the second most number. The earned Light Magicks may be played for special benefits and protections, as outlined on the cards (see Light and Shadow Magick cards).

*Example: Justin has 4 Radiance cards. Fred has 2 and Jonathan has 1. Justin draws two Light Magick cards.*



**A player who plays 5 Radiance cards (regardless of any played by other players) heals 2 points and gains 1 VP. They still earn Light Magick cards as well.**



**Victory:** The player with the most Victory cards (or tied for most) gains Victory Points (gold cubes). The number of Victory Points gained is based on the number of Victory cards they have MINUS the number of Victory cards played by the player(s) who showed the second most number. As 6 Victory Points wins the game, players do not often pass Victory cards away. Each is potentially worth a VP, after all.

*Example: Melodee, Chris and Kendra each have 1 Victory card. No one else played one. Tied at 1, each gets 1 Victory Point.*



**Ravens:** Ravens work quite differently than any other suit in the game. In general, Raven cards are 'bad' to have, especially in low numbers (1 or 2). Most players choose to pass them away because Raven cards will cripple your hand. For each Raven a player holds in their final drafted hand, a player **MUST** choose a card from another suit (Attack, Healing, Radiance or Victory - whichever they decide) and sacrifice it.

However, you must pass away Ravens with great care, for in higher numbers, Raven cards can be very powerful.



## RAVENS in Detail:

### Dark Omen: One or Two Raven cards in your Final Drafted Hand

A Raven card will always seek to kill and make useless a card from another suit. So, if you have one or two Raven cards in your Final Drafted hand, you get to choose which card(s) they will kill. The sacrificed cards are not immediately discarded, but held until the suit is called for by name in the Resolution phase (see The Resolution Phase). At that time, the Raven is played alongside the card it is killing (and any other cards of that suit if you hold more). The Raven card and the sacrificed card are immediately flipped face down, unable to score for that suit's ability or be considered against cards held by other players.

#### Examples:

*Jon has 3 Health cards and 2 Raven cards on his Final Draft.*

*He waits until Health cards are called for during the Resolution phase.*

*He plays his 3 Health cards and the 2 Ravens, which kill 2 Health cards, leaving only 1 Health card for potential scoring.*



*Greg has 1 Radiance, 2 Health, 1 VP and 1 Raven card.*

*He really needs Health and hopes his 1 VP card will score – or reduce another player's VP score... so he decides to sacrifice his Radiance card. When all players are asked to play Radiance cards, he will play his Radiance and his Raven, flipping them over for 'zero' Radiance.*





## RAVENS in Detail:

### A Conspiracy of Ravens: Five Raven cards in your Final Drafted Hand

If a player holds 5 Raven cards in their Final Drafted hand, they get a huge benefit (below) and then end the hand. Skip to The End Phase. No other player will play cards. This is checked for first, every hand (5 Raven token).

**The player holding 5 Ravens immediately deals 1 Damage to all other players, draws one Shadow Magick card and gains 1 VP.**



### Skulking Ravens: Remaining Raven cards at the end of the Resolution phase

If a final drafted hand contains 3 or 4 Raven cards, each must kill a non-Raven suited card the player holds, but, as they have more Ravens than cards of other suits, the player will end up with leftover Raven cards in their hand at the end of the Resolution phase.

The Skulking Raven (X) token reminds you to call for remaining Raven cards to be played at the end of the phase. The player still holding the most Raven cards (or tied) at the end of the hand, draws a Shadow Magick card(s). The number of cards drawn is based on the number of remaining Raven cards they have MINUS the number of remaining Raven cards played by the player who showed the second most number.



The earned Shadow Magick cards may be played to damage and confound other players and are often slightly more powerful than Light Magick cards. (see Light and Shadow Magick cards)

**Remember: Ravens MUST kill every non-Raven card during the Resolution Phase that they can. You will only have Skulking Ravens and earn Shadow Magick cards if you have killed all your other cards first. If a new player forgets this, recalculate all the previous Resolutions by retroactively canceling the cards they played and adjusting the outcomes. For this reason, all cards should remain in front of each player (even if they are sacrificed or forced to be discarded by Magick cards) until the end of the Resolution Phase.**

## The Resolution Phase:

Once players have a Final Drafted Hand, the Resolution Phase may begin.

During the Resolution Phase, cards will be played for effect, one suit at a time, simultaneously by all players. The order in which non-raven suits are played will change each hand, but will always begin by checking for A Conspiracy of Ravens (5 Raven) and end by checking for Skulking Ravens (X Raven).

The Resolution Tokens guide the order in which suits will be played each hand. For the very first hand each game, the Resolution tokens are placed as described in Set Up, in the following sequence, face up: Attack, Healing, Radiance, Victory. Thereafter, the sequence will be 'cloaked in shadow', where these four Resolution tokens are shuffled and placed face down between the 5 Raven and X Raven tokens. You won't know if Healing resolves before Attacks or if Victory is checked for at the beginning or end of the hand. This can be very important towards the end of the game or if you are in danger of becoming a Raven.

1st Hand  
Token  
Arrangement



Subsequent Hands:  
Hidden & Shuffled





## The Resolution Phase:

The dealer will start by asking if anyone holds **A Conspiracy of Ravens** (5 Raven cards). Assuming a player doesn't end the hand immediately by showing 5 Ravens, the dealer will proceed to call for each suit, one by one, as revealed by the tokens. For example, in the first hand, the dealer would ask for "Attack Cards". Any player holding cards of the called suit will ready those cards by placing them forward, but still hidden from other players. When all players signal they are ready, the cards are revealed simultaneously. Note that ALL cards of a specific suit must be played when called for, *including* any Raven card intended to kill one of the cards of that suit.

*Strategy Tip: Force players to decide which card they will kill with a Raven with as little information as possible. If you do NOT have any cards of that suit, place a card or two forward anyway. On the count of '3', you will either play ALL the cards you placed forward - or put them ALL back into your hand.*

Each suit is played and resolved before moving onto the next, flipping the next token only after the previous suit has been resolved, including all resulting scoring and abilities. Note: even if a Magick card forces an entire suit to be discarded, the suit still technically resolves, which may be important for other Magick cards and/or Raven players trying to get back into the game.

*Strategy Tip: After playing a few hands, players will begin to see that collecting a card of a given suit does far more than potentially grant you the ability of the suit, it can deprive an opponent of that ability or lessen its power. For example, you may find yourself collecting Attack cards, not necessarily to launch an attack, but to prevent yourself from being attacked.*

## Playing Light and Shadow Magick cards:

After gaining one of these cards, they may be played per the timing rules on the card, most playing before or after a given phase. There is no limit to the number of Magick cards you may hold or play during a hand.

- **Priority:** Cards play and resolve in the order they are played. If two or more players want to play cards at the same time, start with the player closest to the dealer, in the direction cards were passed this hand. Other cards cannot be played 'underneath' another. For example, if Zack plays a card that forces all cards to be passed left, Alex may not interrupt that effect to play one of his cards before having to pass it away.
- **"Play at Any Time":** The only cards that break the priority rule. These cards may be played at anytime after receiving the card, including playing them in reaction to a card or an attack, even one that would otherwise turn the player into a Raven.
- **Some Magick cards look like the suited cards** from the main deck. You may add such a card to your hand before any Resolution phase to have it behave as a card of that suit.
- **Raven symbol:** Some Magick cards have a block of text marked with a Raven symbol. These are for players who have been transformed into Ravens. A Raven player must use the special Raven effects instead of the card's normal effect. Only Raven players can use the effects listed. Unless otherwise stated, the timing rules for the Raven effect are the same as the normal effect.







## Becoming a RAVEN:

When a player is reduced to 0 Health, that player is transformed into a Raven. Flip that player's Health Marker to the Raven side as a visible reminder to all players. Ravens continue to play, but cannot win while still a Raven.

A Raven's return to human form (and back fully into the game) occurs during the End Phase, where the player has collected in their hand, either 5 of a kind of a suit (5 Attacks, for example) or one card from each of the 5 suits. Cards they were forced to discard because of Magick cards or sacrifice with a Raven card do not invalidate the fact that the player collected them into their hand. When they return to human form, any Victory Points they had earned are restored and they gain 4 Health (3-4 players) or 3 Health (for 5-6 player games). They may heal back to their starting maximum life as normal.

As a Raven, you continue to play with the other players, with the following conditions:

a Raven playing the most Attack cards, Healing cards or Victory cards cannot attack, heal or gain Victory points, but still counts as 'most' and prevents other players from gaining the suit's ability. In addition, a Raven who has the most of these three suits (or is tied for them) may PECK the player(s) who have the second most number of the suit for 1 point of damage. If uncontested (no other player scored cards of the suit), he may PECK all human players. This choice is All or None. They may not choose only some to Peck.

*Note: if Pecking damage transforms a player into a Raven, the pecking Raven gets a Victory Point – but still may not win, even if they now have six or more points. They must, during the End Phase, regain their human form for those VPs to score a win. However, if pecking removes all remaining human players, that Raven's curse is broken and they are transformed back to win the game immediately.*

A Raven can earn Light and Shadow Magick cards as normal, but does not Peck for having the most Radiance or Raven cards.

## Winning the Game: The game can be won in three ways:

1. When a human player has earned a total of 6 or more Victory Points, he/she wins the game immediately. If several players do so at the same time, the highest VP total wins. If tied, the highest Health total breaks the tie. If still tied, all players continue the game until a winner emerges.
2. If only one human player remains, that player is immediately declared the winner.
3. As noted above, if a Raven's PECK removes the last two or more human players, the pecking Raven transforms back to human form and wins the game.

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*"Take thy beak from out my heart,  
and take thy form from off my door!"  
Quoth the Raven "Nevermore."*

*We know well Poe's haunting  
words, of a visitor in the night, a  
raven who croaked only "Nevermore."  
Only this and nothing more."*

*But what came before? What  
shadowy curse lay upon the raven  
that it might utter such dark tidings?  
Is it bird - or is it something more,  
forced to walk the earth in darkness  
evermore?*

*Herein, you may yet learn the answer,  
first hand...*

*For in Nevermore, those who fall  
become transformed. They live  
out the rest of the game as  
Ravens, unable to win,  
as they struggle to regain  
their human forms - yet still  
able to bring doom to others.  
Some will succeed.  
Others will be ravens, forevermore.*

## Play Flowchart

Deal a Hand of 5

### Drafting Phase:

Round 1: Pass 3 cards

Round 2: Pass 2 cards

Round 3: Pass 1 card

### Resolution Phase:

(Dealer will announce and resolve each suit in turn)

- Call for A Conspiracy of Ravens (5 Ravens)
  - Reveal & Resolve Resolution tokens
  - Call for Skulking Ravens (X Ravens)

### End Phase:

Check for Raven players transforming  
back into Humans

### Clean Up:

Discard all played cards & shuffle Main deck.  
The deal passes to the previous dealer's Left.

Flip the Passing Direction Marker

Shuffle and Place Resolution Tokens

If any deck runs out of cards,  
reshuffle all discards to form  
a new draw deck.

## Special Hands



### Attack:

Reduce a player to  
0 Health: Gain 1 VP

Attack for 4 or more  
damage: you may do  
1 damage to all players  
instead and gain 2 VP.



### Healing:

Starting Health is maximum.  
3-4 players: 5 / 5-6 players: 4

Heal 3 or more points, when  
already at maximum Health,  
gain 1 VP.



### Radiance:

Play 5 Radiance,  
regardless of those  
played by others,  
heal 2 points,  
gain 1 VP.



### Conspiracy of Ravens:

Play 5 Ravens:

Do 1 damage to every  
other player, draw a  
Shadow Magick card,  
gain 1 VP.