

BETRAYAL AT HOUSE ON THE HILL

Frequently Asked Questions

We'd like to thank everyone in the Avalon Hill forum and the BoardGameGeek discussion area who submitted questions for this FAQ.

First Posted 10/25/04

Revised 10/26/05, Revisions in Blue

Rooms

Why is the Underground Lake on the upper floor?

See, it's a special kind of levitating lake, and... All right, it's a misprint. Here's how to handle the Underground Lake. When you find the lake on the upper floor, the floor collapses, plunging you down through the ground floor and into the lake in the basement. Put the Underground Lake tile next to any door in the basement (put it next to the Basement Landing if no other tiles have been played in the basement yet). The spot where you intended to play this tile on the upper floor is still open and a different tile can be played there the next time it's explored. You're now in the basement on the lake tile.

Catacombs, Chasm, Tower -- The rules state "If you fail the roll, you can't cross the barrier, though you can still move back the way you came." But the tiles state, "If you fail, you stop moving." Which is correct?

Your movement ends if you fail the roll. *On your next turn you may either attempt to cross again or go back the way you came.*

Catacombs, Chasm, Tower -- Can an explorer fight with or interact in any other way with another explorer in the same room but on the opposite side of the barrier?
No.

Chapel, Gymnasium, Larder, Library -- Can you stay in one of these rooms turn after turn to increase an attribute?

No. Each character can receive the benefit from each room just once per game (one boost for each trait for each player, if all four rooms are in play). Most players find this easy to remember, but if someone gets argumentative, keep a simple, written record.

Chapel, Gymnasium, Larder, Library -- Can monsters use these rooms?

No. Unless a monster is actually a transformed traitor (a werewolf, for instance), its attributes usually do not change.

Attic, Graveyard, Junk Room, Pentagram Chamber -- If you fail the roll to exit from one of these rooms, do you stop moving besides taking damage?

No. You can exit freely, if you have the movement. The die roll is purely to avoid the damage.

Attic, Graveyard, Junk Room, Pentagram Chamber -- If something like the Mystic Slide causes you to leave one of these rooms involuntarily, do you still make a roll?

Yes. You roll no matter what causes you to leave.

Attic, Graveyard, Junk Room, Pentagram Chamber -- If you fail your roll, can you choose to stay in the room and try again on your next turn instead of taking damage?

Yes.

Attic -- If this room lowers your Speed when you exit it, and your new Speed would mean you don't have enough Speed to exit after all, do you make it out or not?

You make it out.

Coal Chute -- Does an explorer have the option of not going down the Coal Chute?

No. When you enter the Coal Chute, you always slide down.

Coal Chute -- If you use the Rope to climb the Coal Chute, can you end your movement there?

No. If you don't have enough movement to get beyond the Coal Chute, then you slide back down. You need to have an extra space of movement to get past it.

Collapsed Room -- When you turn over a room for the Collapsed Room to lead to, where do you put the new room?

Adjacent to any basement room already in play. If no basement room is in play, place it adjacent to the Basement Landing.

Collapsed Room -- If you land in a room with two parts, such as the Chasm, which half do you land in?

If anything transports you to a barrier room, you decide which side of the room to end up in. If the arrival causes a counter to be created, as with the Collapsed Room or the Secret Passage, then that counter is permanently on the side of the room you choose. Anything that takes you to the Vault, however, always leaves you outside the door.

Collapsed Room -- What if all the basement cards have already been played when the Collapsed Room is drawn?

Choose a basement room that has already been explored and put the Below Collapsed Room token there.

Collapsed Room -- Is a room drawn for this if the first being to use it is a monster (who would not normally draw a tile)?

If the first to go down from the Collapsed Room is a monster, choose a basement room that has already been explored and put the Below Collapsed Room token there.

Collapsed Room -- Could a monster or explorer intentionally choose to fall through the floor of the collapsed room to get to the basement?

Yes. A hero would need to roll and take damage; a monster or traitor would not.

Collapsed Room, Gallery -- If you use the Rope or flying to get up to these rooms, does it take a move, since it doesn't take a move to go down from them?

Yes, it takes a move. Going up is always harder than going down.

Gallery -- Can you jump down from the Gallery to the Ballroom if the Ballroom is not in play?

No.

Grand Staircase -- Does moving from the foyer to the grand staircase to the upper landing count as two moves or only one? That is, are the grand staircase and upper landing essentially the same tile that just happens to be on two floors?

These are two different rooms.

Mystic Elevator -- Can a group of heroes or monsters use the elevator in a group to attack their enemies, then retreat to safety?

No. Add the following rules:

1. Monsters and traitors can both use the Elevator to go wherever they wish without rolling. However, the elevator may only be moved once during each entire traitor/monster set of turns, the first time a traitor or monster enters it. In other words, if the traitor uses it during his turn, then it will not work later on if a monster enters it.
2. Heroes must roll for their destination floor each time they enter the elevator, or at the end of each entire movement phase that they spend in the elevator without moving.

Mystic Elevator -- If there is already one or more explorers in the Mystic Elevator when a hero enters it and rolls a 0, do all explorers in the elevator take damage?

Yes.

Mystic Elevator -- If the Collapsed Room, Secret Passage, Secret Stairs, or Revolving Wall lead to the Mystic Elevator, does the counter stay there even when the elevator moves?

Yes. It's Mystic, after all.

Vault -- Does the traitor have to roll to open the Vault?

Yes.

Can you enter the Vault using something like the Mystic Slide or the Collapsed Room?

No. Anything that takes you to the Vault always leaves you outside the door.

Omen Cards

Can all omen cards except for the Dog, Girl, Bite, and Madman be dropped, traded, or stolen?

Yes.

Do the Dog, Girl, or Madman omens have any stats? Their tokens show them stunned on the opposite side. Can they be affected by traps or attacked by monsters or the traitor?

These tokens have "stunned" printed on one side because in certain scenarios they may become monsters. The rest of the time, they act like items that can't be dropped, traded, or stolen. Unless they become monsters or their owner dies, their counters don't even need to be used.

When the Bite omen card is drawn, does the player being attacked get a defensive Might roll, just like with a regular attack?

Yes. Being bitten is exactly like being attacked by a monster.

If you use the Crystal Ball to search for a room, can you look through both the draw stack and the discard stack?

No. In fact, you can't use the Crystal Ball to search for rooms at all (even though the card text states that you can). The Crystal Ball can be used only to look through undrawn Item and Event cards (not discarded Item or Event cards).

Can the Dog be sent down the Collapsed Room, Coal Chute, Gallery, or Mystic Slide?

No. It can't go through one-way passages or any passage like the Revolving Wall that requires a roll. It can't use the Mystic Elevator, either.

Is the Dog's movement slowed by monsters?

No.

What exactly can the Dog carry?

If a haunt indicates that an explorer carrying a haunt-specific item takes two moves to enter a room, then a dog cannot carry that item.

Can the traitor move stunned monsters?

Yes.

Item Cards

The Armor card states, "Any time you take physical damage, reduce it by one." Is this applied only once on your turn, the way most items are used, or is it "always on"?

It is always on.

Armor -- If something specifically states lose 1 speed (such as a room roll failure or an item side effect), is the armor able to prevent the damage?

No. The armor doesn't protect you from things that cause you to lose Might or Speed (such as a loathsome illness). It only protects you from things that do physical damage, such as combat. It also doesn't protect you from having other items stolen through combat if someone beats your roll by two or more.

The Axe, Spear, and Blood Dagger all state, "Roll x additional dice when making a Might attack with this weapon." Does this mean you don't get any bonus when you're defending against someone else's attack while carrying the weapon?

Yes. The bonus is only for attacking.

Can I carry more than one of the Axe, Spear, and Blood Dagger and decide which one to use during an attack?

Yes.

If I have the Blood Dagger, can I decide not to use it in a particular attack?

Yes. The use of any weapon is optional. If you don't add the three dice for the Blood Dagger, then you don't lose any Speed. You still take two dice of physical damage if it gets stolen, however, regardless of whether you've ever used it.

Bell, Medical Kit, Mystic Coin, Rabbit's Foot -- Can these items really be used every turn?

Yes.

If the traitor ends up with the Bell and successfully makes the sanity roll of 5+, does he get to move as many heroes as he wants in his direction?

Yes.

Can the Bell be used to free heroes who are trapped in Webs, under Debris, or in the clutches of some loathsome monster?

No. The Bell can only move heroes who would normally be able to move on their own during their turns.

If the Druidic Charm is dropped accidentally (probably because of scenario instructions), does it still go off?

No.

Dynamite -- The card states that any explorer or monster that fails its speed roll takes four points of physical damage. I thought monsters didn't take physical damage. What does this mean?

A monster that fails its speed roll is treated the same as if it had been defeated in physical combat, so some monsters will be stunned and others killed, depending on the scenario. Incorporeal monsters such as ghosts that can't be attacked physically are not affected by the dynamite. Monsters that start the scenario with either no Might score or no Speed score are not affected by the dynamite.

Healing Salve, Smelling Salts -- Can you use these items to revive someone who is dead?

No. Even if you could, they'd turn into some kind of zombie anyway, so it sounds like a bad idea.

Can you use the Smelling Salts on yourself?

Yes.

Can the Toy Monkey attack multiple times in the same turn if it is carried through several rooms containing monsters and/or explorers?

No. Once the monkey has attacked, it cannot attack again until next turn. Bad monkey! If the room contains several possible targets, the monkey's owner decides which one it attacks.

Event Cards

Burning Man, The Beckoning, Funeral, The Lost One -- All of these cards can move you from one place to another. What if there is no clear path for you to get to where it tells you to go?

You go there anyway. Once you arrive, you can't remember what route you followed to get there.

If you've been pinned by Debris or trapped in Webs, can you take an action in the room (such as rolling a die)?

No. The only thing you can do while you're pinned is to roll and attempt to free yourself.

The Image in the Mirror (reversed) card lets you draw an item card. Why does it have text about discarding this card if you don't already have another Item card?

Ignore the boldface text on this card that states, "If you don't have any item cards ..." etc.

The Image in the Mirror Omen card causes you to lose an item. Does it affect omens that are also items, such as the Book?

No.

It is Meant to Be -- One option on the card allows you to roll 4 dice and write down the result. You can then use this number for "one future die roll of your choice." Does this die roll have to be your own die roll or can it be any die roll?

Only a die roll you make.

Does the Moment of Hope card affect traitors, too?

No. This card should state, "Each hero."

The Mystic Slide card states that on a Might roll of 5+, the explorer can end up in any explored room on a level below the slide. If the slide is discovered in an Upper Level room, can the explorer end up in a basement room, or does "a level below the slide" mean "one level below the slide?"

"A level below the slide" means any level. If you found this card on the top floor and controlled your slide, you could go to any room on the Ground Floor or in the Basement.

Revolving Wall -- This states, "Icons in [the newly drawn] room do not affect you this turn." Does this mean the icons affect you (thus ending your movement) on the next turn?

Errata: Any icon in the new room does affect you when you enter. Otherwise it is possible (though unlikely) to have a game with no Haunt.

Do the Secret Stairs and Secret Passage lead to a room that's already been discovered or a new room?

A room already discovered.

Does a "passage" leading from the Secret Stairs or Secret Passage use up a door space?

No.

Does using the Secret Stairs or Secret Passage count as an extra tile for movement purposes?

These cards state, "Moving from one Secret Passage/Stairs token to the other counts as moving one space." No matter how far apart the rooms actually are, you can move from one room directly to the other as if they were adjacent, meaning you pay one move. The passageway itself is not considered an additional space.

Can you use the Secret Stairs or Secret Passage on the turn they are discovered, even if you've used up all your movement?

Yes.

Do you draw an event card each time you use the Secret Stairs?

No. Only the person who draws the card gets to draw an event, and only if she uses the stairs right away.

Can monsters use the Secret Stairs, Secret Passage, Revolving Wall, and Mystic Slide to move around?

Yes. It's their house, after all. (Besides, it's possible for these to create areas of the house that can't be reached any other way, and some scenarios won't work if monsters can't reach all rooms.) Ignore the section of the rules that states, "unless those cards state that only explorers can use them." Also, a monster wouldn't need to roll to use the revolving wall.

With the Webs event card, if you fail the first attempt to escape when you draw the card, do you gain 1 Might if you succeed on the second or third attempt?

No, you only gain 1 Might if you free yourself when you first draw the card.

Rules

Certain scenarios state that things must be done a number of times equal to the number of explorers. Does this include explorers who get killed?

Yes.

Certain scenarios state to place the marker on the Turn/Damage track on the space marked zero. There is no zero on the track.

Just put it as far to the left as you can and then move it to "1" on the Traitor's first turn.

Certain scenarios tell the heroes to go through a deck and get a particular Item or Omen card. How do we decide which hero gets it?

If everyone can agree who would be best to have it, then that person gets it. If you can't decide, it goes to either the discoverer or the person to the left of the discoverer, whichever one isn't the traitor.

If someone in the house makes a knowledge roll to find out a particular piece of information (a mummy's name, a room that needs to be visited, etc.), do all the other explorers know this information automatically?

Yes. Perhaps they all have walkie-talkies.

Page 4 -- On Your Turn

Can you perform actions (such as attacking) in the middle of your movement?

Yes.

When you enter a room that has either an item, omen, or event icon, but also has text on the tile, such as the Gym, which do you do first?

End your movement and draw a card first. Then follow any instructions on the tile.

Can you make more than one die roll on your turn?

Yes. For example, if you discover the Vault, and the event card you draw there states that the Safe is present as well, you could attempt to open both on your turn. *You may also use as many items as you like during your turn, even after your movement has ended.*

You cannot, however, try to make the same roll more than once per turn. For example, you couldn't keep rolling to open the Vault until you succeeded. *Also, you cannot make more than one roll of a particular category specified in a scenario per turn. For example, if a haunt told you to make exorcism rolls, you could attempt to make a Knowledge roll for the room you were in, or a Sanity roll for an item you held, but not both rolls in the same turn, or rolls for two different rooms, or for two different items.*

Can you make a haunt-specific action on your turn and attack as well?

Yes.

Page 4 -- Discovering a New Room

The rules state, "Add each new tile as logically as you can, creating adjacent rooms with connecting doors. (Connect doorways whenever possible.)" What if it isn't possible, and you have to place a door or window next to a wall?

If two connected features don't match, then you've created a false door or window (not uncommon in haunted houses). You can't move through these false features. False windows between rooms do not count as windows for the purposes of any scenario or card.

What happens if a floor gets closed off so that there are no more available doors to explore or connect rooms to and you still need to add a room tile?

This is a rare occurrence, but it is a possibility. To correct it, add this rule:

*"You may not play a tile in such a way that it completely seals off a level. If a tile could only be played in such a way that a level would be sealed off with no free doorways left, then discard that tile and draw new ones until you draw one that leaves a free doorway. *If all the undrawn rooms for a level would seal the level off, then the person whose turn it is may rearrange the level until there are more free doorways. The Mystic Elevator would count as sealing a level off, even though it might subsequently move away. If a roll on the Mystic Elevator would cause it to move to a level that would be sealed off, then the elevator does not move.*"*

Page 5 -- Drawing Omen, Item, and Event Cards

You must stop moving when you draw a card, but can you do other things?

Yes, you can do other things after drawing a card; you just can't move. For example, on the turn you discover the vault (and draw an event card), you can also try to open the vault.

Do you draw a card only when you discover a room, or each time you enter it?

Only when you discover it.

What happens if I discover a new room because of the Collapsed Room or the effects of an event card, such as The Lost One or the Walls? If the new room has an icon, do I draw another card?

Yes.

What about if a room gets added to the board through some other means (such as the instructions for a scenario). Does the first player who enters it still draw?

No. You only draw for an icon in a room if your character physically entered it.

If I draw an Item card and decide I don't want it, do I still have to keep it?

Yes. By the time you've realized it may be dangerous, it is Too Late.

Page 7 -- Using Items and Omen Cards

If there are five heroes and a monster in a room, could each of them use, say, the Spear to attack that monster, then pass it on to the next person?

No. Add this rule: "For each item, during a turn an explorer or monster that can carry items may only perform **one** of the following actions: use the item, give the item to another explorer, drop the item, steal the item, or pick up the item. Using the item means making any attack or roll or other action in which the item is involved in any way."

Suppose one of my attributes is already at its highest level, and then someone gives me an item that would raise it even higher. If I lose that item again, would that attribute go down, even though I got no benefit from it?

No. Just make a note of how far your attributes go "over the top," and then adjust them accordingly when they go down again.

Can you use an item card outside of your turn (for instance, when you were attacked)?

The only items you could use outside your own turn are the Angel Feather, the Lucky Stone, and the omen Skull.

The manual states, "Some items, like the Armor, can't be traded, but they can be dropped or picked up." The Armor card states, "This item can't be stolen," but it doesn't mention anything about being traded. Which is correct?

The card is correct. When in doubt, assume that cards and tiles trump the rules.

Page 7 -- Attempting a Die Roll

What does "take 1 die of physical damage" mean?

Roll one die. If the result is 1 or 2, your character takes 1 or 2 points of physical damage. If the result is 0, you got lucky and take no damage.

The items Candle and Adrenaline Shot and the events Drip Drip Drip, Smoke, and A Moment of Hope all refer to "trait rolls." Can these cards also influence combat?

No. Combat is not considered a trait roll, even though it involves Might or some other trait.

Page 8 -- Making an Attack

When making an attack, what happens if you use an item that stuns monsters (such as the Druidic Charm) against creatures that are destroyed when defeated? Such creatures do not have the "S" stun symbol on the backs of their tokens.

The creatures would still be stunned, even though they don't have an S. Just remember to flip them back up at the end of their turn.

Do all attacks use Might unless there is a card or ability that states otherwise?

Yes.

Page 9 -- Making a Haunt Roll

What happens if you discover an Omen room after the Haunt has been revealed?

You draw and keep the Omen card, but you don't make a Haunt roll.

What happens if I draw an Omen card such as the Madman or the Bite that reduces one of my stats enough to kill me, and that Omen also triggers the Haunt? Am I dead or not?

You aren't dead; the damage was done to you before the Haunt actually began, so you can't be killed yet.

When making a Haunt Roll, the rules state the roll must be less than the number of Omens drawn, while the following example states less than or equal. Which is correct?

Both are. The example states that you had four Omens on the table when you drew a new one, and a roll of four or less will trigger the haunt. That's slightly confusing, but five Omens are in play when the roll is made, so the example is correct.

Page 12 -- Moving Past Opponents

Can heroes slow down monsters and traitors using the rules for Moving Past Opponents?

Yes.

Page 12 -- The Traitor's New Powers

The Traitor's New Powers and How Monsters Work rules state that traitors and monsters "ignore all non-damaging" room features and effects. What are some examples of non-damaging room features?

It might be clearer if it was worded like this: "Traitors and monsters can use any beneficial text on a room tile (such as the movement from the Collapsed Room or the Gallery) while ignoring any harmful text (any damage from these two rooms, or from the Furnace Room, the Crypt, and the Junk Room, or the turn-ending text on the Chasm and the Tower)." [Traitors and monsters can also pass through the Revolving Wall without rolling. Traitors and monsters still fall to the Basement Landing when they move onto the Coal Chute. Monsters, but not traitors, are able to climb up the Coal Chute, Collapsed Room, and Gallery without making a roll, so they can't be trapped on a floor.](#)

What happens if you are already being impeded by a previously-drawn event card (such as Debris, Webs, Lights Out, or Grave Dirt) when you become a traitor?

When you become a traitor, prior lingering bad effects from events such as these instantly disappear.

Traitors may choose not to be affected by event cards; does this also apply to Omens such as the Bite?

Yes.

When must the traitor decide whether to be affected by an event card he draws?

After reading the card but before making any rolls or doing any other action listed on the card.

When a traitor explores a new room with an icon, must he draw a card, thus halting his movement, or can he ignore the icon?

He must stop and draw the card.

Since the traitor can ignore event cards, does that mean he can't be harmed if a hero throws the dynamite at him?

No. Dynamite is an item, not an event.

Can the traitor decide where the Mystic Elevator goes when someone else attempts to use it?

No.

Does the traitor move like a hero or like a monster, i.e., does he roll for speed?

The traitor is still an explorer, so he does not roll for speed, can explore new rooms, can pick up items, etc., unless the scenario states otherwise. If he manages to find or steal an item that the heroes need, then they'll need to find a way to get it back.

What happens if a traitor gets killed?

Unless the Secrets of Survival book specifically states that the heroes win when they kill the traitor, the traitor does not need to be alive to win. A dead traitor can still move monsters, etc., during his turn.

Page 12 -- How Monsters Work

What happens if a monster gets trapped in the basement with no way up?

It isn't much of a horror movie if the heroes have perfect safety. Add the following rule: "If there is no possible way for a monster in the basement to reach heroes on upper floors, or for a monster on the upper floors to reach heroes in the basement, the traitor may on his turn go through the Room stack until he finds the **Stairs from Basement** tile and put it into play next to any open basement doorway." This rule does not apply if the scenario allows monsters to explore new rooms.

What happens if a monster rolls all blanks for its movement?

As the rules state on page 12 under "Moving past opponents," all creatures capable of movement can always move one space no matter what happens to them.

Do monsters move one at a time or all at once?

The traitor should move one monster and have it take all of its actions, then go on to the next one, just like the explorers.

When a scenario states that a monster is forced to move toward a hero, does it move in a straight line toward the hero, or does it take the best path?

It follows whatever path would lead it to the hero in the fewest moves.

Since a monster can ignore barrier rooms, does the traitor still have to decide which side of the barrier it is on if it ends its move in one?

Yes.

Can you attack a monster that is stunned?

You could, but there would be no additional effect. A stunned monster can't be stunned more. However, if the monster had items, then you could steal one using the stealing rules. If the monster can be killed by a particular item, then you can still attack a stunned monster with the item to destroy the fell beast. Stunned monsters still roll their normal dice to defend themselves, but if the attacking hero loses, she takes no damage.

Page 13 -- Winning the Game

What happens if the traitor gets killed?

Killing a traitor does not help the heroes win unless it is listed as necessary in the Secrets of Survival victory conditions.

Page 13 -- Heroes and Secrets

Are all trait scores and carried items/omens public knowledge, or can you refuse to answer questions about them?

They are public knowledge. Keep your character card and your Item and Omen cards face up.

When do the heroes find out the traits of a monster?

When the monster has to roll dice for a trait. All dice rolls are open.

How much do you have to reveal about what you are doing to the other side?

You should announce the purpose of any action you are taking to the other side -- for instance, "I am making an exorcism roll now," or "This roll is to see whether the house blows up." You don't need to reveal what number you need to roll.