

# Endless Nightmare

*You're Caught in an endless, ever shifting nightmare hunted by The Shadow – an ominous all devouring presence. You try to outrun it and avoid going insane from the horrors of the nightmare, but it's just a matter of time until you succumb.*

In Endless Nightmare you can never win, you must press on from one nightmare to another to stay ahead of The Shadow for as long as possible. You *will* be caught and devoured, but the further you get, the more Victory Points you'll earn.

Two versions exist: Basic and Active. For the Basic version read until the headline "Endless Nightmare – Active" and refer to the Nightmare descriptions on page 3 as needed during play.

For the Basic Version you need 11 small markers (one of which, called the **Nightmare End Marker**, must be different than the others), one six sided die (d6) and a print out of the game board.

## The game board

The game board has 9 tracks divided into 3 groups of 3 tracks. Each track has a marker on it that initially is placed on the space on the track that's black. The first space on all the 7 non-circular tracks is numbered 0, the next 1 and so on.

The first set of three tracks concerns position and movement and is placed on the left side of the main game board.

- **Nightmares Survived** tracks the number of Nightmares you have survived. 
- **Progress** (circular) tracks your progress in the current Nightmare (movement is clockwise). 
- **The Shadow** (circular) runs outside the Progress track and is matched space by space to it. It tracks the position of The Shadow (movement is clockwise). *If the markers on The Shadow and Progress tracks are ever on neighboring spaces or pass each other you lose the game.* 

The next set of 3 tracks is related to your sanity:

- **Horrors** track experiences, which threaten your Sanity. 
- **Incantation** protects you from Horrors. 
- **Sanity** tracks your sanity. It can never be increased. If it goes to 0 you go insane and lose. *Any time you've rolled the d6 you can choose to decrease sanity by 1 and add or subtract 2 to your roll.* Modifications that take the die roll above 6 (or below 1) results in a 6 (1). 

The final set of three tracks deals with your courage:

- **Scares** track experiences, which threaten your Courage. 
- **Mantra** protects you from Scares. 
- **Courage** tracks your courage. You lose if it goes to 0. 

Often the rules will specify that you must **increase** one of the tracks by a number. This is a short hand for saying that you must move the marker on that track a corresponding number of spaces in direction of increasing space numbers (or clockwise in the case of the circular tracks).

If this movement would take a marker beyond the highest numbered space the marker must stay on that space (except for the circular tracks where movement will continue round and round).

The word **decrease** is used in exactly the same way; the markers are just moved in the opposite direction.

## Turns

In the game you'll be having one Nightmare after another. Each **Nightmare** has special rules that will influence gameplay.

The game is played in turns of five phases performed repeatedly in the order listed until the game ends:

1. **Nightmare selection:** At the beginning of the game and after ending a Nightmare, you use this phase to select a Nightmare at random from a list of 12 Nightmares.
2. **Nightmare Event:** Some Nightmares have a special rule called a Nightmare Event that's executed each turn during this phase.
3. **Player Action & Action Event:** You choose an Action and roll the d6 to see if you're successful, if so perform the Action. Some nightmares have a special rule called an Action Event that's executed together with your action.
4. **The Shadow:** The Shadow may move closer to you.
5. **Scares & Horrors:** Determine whether you must increase Scares or Horrors, and determine whether these are so high that your Courage or Sanity should be decreased.

## Phase 1 – Nightmare Selection

If this is the first turn of the game or if you ended a Nightmare in the previous turn then you must select a new Nightmare now.

Roll the d6. If the result is 1-3 you'll get a Nightmare from the left column of the Nightmare table (in the bottom of the game board), while 4-6 gives you a Nightmare from the right column. Roll the d6 again and count down the number rolled from the top of the chosen column to find your Nightmare. Place a marker on the Nightmare. In some cases two Nightmare titles are mentioned together. For the Basic game you then need to use the one prefixed with "B:".

After selecting a Nightmare find the number written after the Nightmare name, this is the length of the Nightmare. Count out this number of spaces clockwise from the Progress Marker and place the **Nightmare End Marker** on this space.

If you ended a Nightmare last turn then as the last part of this phase increase Nightmares Survived by 1. The special rules from the ended Nightmare are no longer in effect.

## Phase 2 – Nightmare Event

Some Nightmares have a **Nightmare Event** (see the list of Nightmares on page 3). The Nightmare Event is performed in this phase.

## Phase 3 – Player Action & Action event

Select a **Player Action** from the list below, and then select a number (1-5) of **Action Points** to go for. The number of Action Points determines the effect of your action.

Now roll the d6. If you roll more than the number of Action Points, then you succeed and get the Action Points, otherwise

your Action fails. So if you choose 3 and roll 4, then you succeed and get 3 Action Points for your Action, but if you roll 3 you fail.

If you succeed on the roll perform your Player Action (remember that the action must be selected *before* rolling the d6):

- **Move:** Increase the Progress track by the number of Action Points. If this takes the Progress marker to the space with the Nightmare End Marker or beyond, then the current Nightmare ends. If you don't do a Move Action, you'll be standing still.
- **Defy Horrors:** If you succeed decrease Horrors by the number of Action Points.
- **Defy Scares:** If you succeed decrease Scares by the number of Action Points.
- **Perform Incantation:** If you get more Action Points than the current Incantation marker's position, then increase it by 1.
- **Perform Mantra:** If you get more Action Points than the current Mantra marker's position, then increase it by 1.
- **Calm Yourself:** Increase your Courage marker by the number of Action Points.

Some Nightmares have an Action Event which is performed together with the Player Action and can modify it. In the "Spiders" Nightmare for example you must increase Scares by 1 after each successful Move Action.

## Phase 4 – The Shadow

After the Action Event, take the d6 roll from phase 3 and subtract the number of Nightmares you've survived. Look up the result on the table marked **The Shadow** on the game board. If a number of The Shadow symbol (an eye) are shown, then increase The Shadow track by this number.

## Phase 5 – Scares & Horrors

Your d6 roll also controls increases of Scares and Horrors. If you rolled 1 or 2 increase the Scares marker by 1. A roll of 3 means an increase of Horrors by 1, and 4-6 means nothing happens.

If the Horrors marker is ahead of the Incantation marker subtract the difference from your Sanity, this happens whether you rolled a Horrors increase or not this turn. Thus if Horrors is at 4, Incantations at 2, and Sanity at 5, then move the Sanity marker to 3. Similarly if the Scares marker is ahead of the Mantra marker, you decrease your Courage by the difference.

## Endings

A Nightmare ends when your Progress marker reaches or goes beyond the Nightmare End Marker. The only exception to this rule is the "Falling" Nightmare.

You lose the game if the Progress and The Shadow markers ever pass or are next to each other, if you run out of Courage or Sanity, or if a Nightmare specifies that you die.

When you lose (the game can't be won) compute your score by multiplying Nightmares Survived by 10 and add the number of spaces you've moved in the current Nightmare. My own record in the current version of the game is 60.

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## Endless Nightmare – Active

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When you've grokked the basic game try out the alternate version of the game called Endless Nightmare – Active.

You'll be much more active in this version of the game. In the "Drowning" Nightmare for example you'll have to play while holding your breath. The Active Nightmares are described on page 4 (they replace the Nightmares from the Basic Version).

The Active Version requires an extra game board, 6 more markers and a stopwatch (you probably have one on your phone).

Use a d6 with rounded corners and skip Nightmares with time pressure until you know the main rules by heart.

My record in the Active version is 70 points.

## D6 Replacement

In addition to the Nightmare Events and Action Events, Nightmares in the Active Version can define a D6 Replacement. A D6 Replacement is an alternate mechanism that provides a number instead of the d6. If your current Nightmare has a D6 Replacement then you must use that instead of the usual d6 in phase 3 of the turn order.

## The Die Board

An extra board called the **Die Board** is added in the Active version. It's divided into five Zones marked "2" to "6". All the area outside the border of the Die Board is considered to be Zone 1.

In some Nightmares you'll be asked to roll the d6 onto the Die Board. The d6 must hit your table before entering the Die Board, and it must enter the Die Board through Zone 2, if it doesn't do this the d6 is considered to have ended in Zone 1.

Instead of getting the result of the d6 roll from the pips on the d6 the result is the number of the lowest numbered zone that the d6 touches. So if the d6 ends up lying on the line between Zone 2 and Zone 3, you'll be considered to have rolled a 2. (Remember that all the area outside the Die Board border is Zone 1, so if the d6 leaves the board or lies on its border you'll have rolled a 1).

The "Buried" Nightmare also uses the Die Board, but the Zone the d6 ends up in doesn't replace the value of a d6 roll.

The symbols on the Die Board apart from the numbers have no gameplay meaning.

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## Variants

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### Strategist's Variant

If you want more influence on the game and add a layer of strategy you can choose Nightmares instead of rolling for them. You can't choose the same Nightmare twice.

### Veteran's Variant

Start the The Shadow marker only 5 spaces behind the marker on the Progress track.

### Mix & Match Variant

Mix and match Nightmares from the Basic and Active version as you want.

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# The Nightmares – Basic

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This appendix describes the Nightmares in the Basic Version. If there's a conflict between the rules here and the main rules, the rules for the Nightmares take precedence. The rules for each Nightmare only apply when you're in the Nightmare.

In the cases where two Nightmare names are written in the same box on the game board the Basic version uses the ones prefixed by "B:".

The d6 symbols before the name of the Nightmare is the rolls during Phase 1 that will select the Nightmare. The number after the Nightmare name is the length of the Nightmare.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Apocalypse** (9) – *No words can describe the horrors that infest the entire world while reality tears itself apart.*

*Action Event:* During each successful Move Action increase Horrors by 1 because of the unspeakable events you experience.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Buried** (5) – *You're in a coffin with three feet of earth above you.*

*Action Event:* Subtract 2 from the points you get for successful Move Actions for digging your way up.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Decay** (7) – *Your teeth crumble and fall out one by one, soon all that are left are the rotting gums and the rot spreads its tendrils through your body.*

*Nightmare Event:* The decay is terrifying. During this Nightmare the Scares & Horrors table is 1-3: Scares; 4-5: Horrors; 6: Nothing.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Exposed** (9) – *You're giving an important presentation at work, but suddenly find out that you're only wearing your underwear. You must use all your courage to stay and finish the presentation.*

*Nightmare Event:* At the beginning of each turn except the first one roll the d6. If the result is larger than the Courage marker's position spend Phase 3 this turn attempting a Move 5 Action.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Falling** (9) – *You're falling. Rushing towards the ground. You pull the line on your parachute, but nothing happens.*

*Nightmare Event:* Set the Courage marker to 1 at the beginning of the first turn of this Nightmare. Each turn (including the first):

1. Roll the d6 (this roll cannot be modified using Sanity). If you roll lower than your Courage then you become calm enough to fix the parachute. This ends the Nightmare without you dying.
  2. If the above roll didn't end the Nightmare then increase the Progress and The Shadow markers by 2. If this or a move Action ends the Nightmare you smash into the ground and lose the game.
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☐-☐, ☐ **Impostor** (6) – *Finally everybody found out that you're actually completely talentless and have faked your way through everything.*

*Action Event:* You've lost faith in your own abilities and get 1 point less from every successful d6 roll.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Lost** (8) – *You can't find your way, but The Shadow moves relentlessly closer.*

*Action Event:* If you fail a Move Action decrease the Progress marker by the amount of points you attempted to get.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Monsters** (8) – *Monsters of unspeakable origins and impossible shapes are everywhere and try to catch you.*

*Nightmare Event:* Roll the d6 at the beginning of the turn. If you roll 1-3 the monsters are blocking you, so you can't choose a move Action this turn.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Old Factory** (6) – *You're in a rusty and abandoned factory standing on a conveyor belt that pushes you inexorably towards The Shadow.*

*Nightmare Event:* Decrease the Progress marker by 1 at the beginning of each turn.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Spiders** (9) – *You're in a cramped earthen tunnel. The walls and floor are covered by spiders crawling on each other, but you must press on.*

*Action Event:* After each successful Move Action increase Scares by 1.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Temptation** (9) – *Your innermost desires lure you, but they will be your doom. Steel your willpower to forsake the temptation.*

*Nightmare Event:* At the beginning of each turn except the first roll the d6. If the result is larger than the Courage marker's position skip your Player Action. When you skip your Player Action, you must still roll the d6 and perform phases 4 and 5.

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☐-☐, ☐ **The Test** (6) – *You suddenly remember that you should be at the finals exam in school. It starts in minutes and you've forgotten to prepare. Hurry to get there in time.*

*Action Event:* After each failed move Action increase Scares by 1 as you get more panicked for not getting to the finals in time.

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## The Nightmares – Active

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In the Cases where two Nightmare names are written in the same box on the game board the Active version uses the ones prefixed by “A”.

The d6 symbols before the name of the Nightmare is the roll during Phase 1 that will select the Nightmare. The number after the Nightmare name is the length of the Nightmare.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Blind** (5) – *The world turns to darkness.*

*Action Event:* If you’ve chosen a Move Action roll the d6 onto your table so that it ends up at least 30 cm (or 1 foot) from the edge of the table. Put your hands below the table and close your eyes. Now move one of your hands towards the d6. Unless you in one smooth movement touch the top of the d6 with the tip of your index finger your Move Action fails.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Buried** (5) – *You’re in a coffin with three feet of earth above you.*

*Action Event:* Subtract 2 from the points you get for successful move Actions for digging your way up.

For every Move Action you attempt until you’re successful the first time: Setup the six extra markers on the spots marked by “X” on the die board and roll the d6 onto the Die Board through Zone 2. The d6 must roll through the line formed by the six markers, so that at least two of the markers move and the die stay within Zone 5 and 6 in order for you to break through the lid. If you don’t succeed on doing this you fail your Action.

The Die Board is only used for this extra test it’s not used to determine the result of the d6 roll for the Move Action itself.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Decay** (7) – *Your teeth crumble and fall out one by one, soon all that are left are the rotting gums and the rot spreads its tendrils through your body.*

*D6 Replacement:* Use the Die Board to roll the d6. If the d6 landed fully within the Die Board replace it by one of the extra markers (until you run out, markers pushed out by later rolls are reused). If the d6 hits one of the markers then you’re considered to have rolled a 1 and don’t place a marker.

The Markers represent that the decay gradually makes you lose control of your body.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Drowning** (6) – *The lack of air burns your lungs as you look for the dark surface of the water far above you.*

*Nightmare Event:* Hold your breath while playing this Nightmare. At any time you draw your breath decrease the Courage marker by 2.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Falling** (9) – *You’re falling. Rushing towards the ground. You pull the line on your parachute, but nothing happens.*

*Nightmare Event:* Set the Courage marker to 1 at the beginning of the first turn of this Nightmare. Each turn (including the first):

1. Roll the d6 (this roll cannot be modified using Sanity). If you roll lower than your Courage then you become calm enough to fix the parachute. This ends the Nightmare without you dying.

2. If the above roll didn’t end the Nightmare then increase the Progress and The Shadow markers by 2. If this or a move Action ends the Nightmare you smash into the ground and lose the game.
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☐-☐, ☐ **Impostor** (6) – *Finally everybody found out that you’re actually completely talentless and have faked your way through everything.*

*D6 Replacement:* Use the Die Board for rolling the d6. Since you’ve lost faith in your own abilities you must use your left hand (or the right hand if you’re left handed).

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☐-☐, ☐ **Lost** (8) – *You can’t find your way, but The Shadow moves relentlessly closer.*

*Action Event:* If you fail a Move Action decrease Progress by the amount of points you attempted to get.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Monsters** (10) – *Monsters of unspeakable origins and impossible shapes are everywhere and try to catch you.*

*D6 Replacement:* Use the Die Board for rolling the d6. After every Move Action where the d6 ends up on the Die Board leave a marker in its place (up to a maximum of 6 markers, markers pushed outside the board are reused for later rolls). If the d6 hits one of the markers the monsters make you miss your Action, but you still perform phases 4 and 5.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Old Factory** (6) – *You’re in a rusty and abandoned factory standing on a conveyor belt that pushes you inexorably towards The Shadow.*

*Nightmare Event:* Use a watch. Decrease the Progress marker by 1 whenever the watch passes a multiple of 15 seconds.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Spiders** (9) – *You’re in a cramped earthen tunnel. The walls and floor are covered by spiders crawling on each other, but you must press on.*

*D6 Replacement:* Use the Die Board for rolling the d6. After every Action where the d6 ends up on the Die Board leave a marker in its place (up to a maximum of 6 markers, markers pushed outside the board are reused for later rolls). If the d6 hits one of the markers increase Scares by 1.

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☐-☐, ☐ **Temptation** (9) – *Your innermost desires lure you, but they will be your doom. Steel your willpower to forsake the temptation.*

*Nightmare Event:* At the beginning of each turn except the first roll the d6. If the result is larger than the Courage marker’s position skip your Player Action. When you skip your Player Action, you must still roll the d6 and perform phases 4 and 5.

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☐-☐, ☐ **The Test** (6) – *You’re running really late for the finals exam in school. You really need have a better sense of time.*

*D6 Replacement:* Get your stop watch. Start it and stop it again when you want to. If you stop the watch at less than 5.1 seconds it counts as if you rolled 1. If you stop it at 5.6 seconds or more it also counts as a roll of 1 and you lose 1 Sanity. If none of these two things happen use the tenth of a second decimal as if it was the result of your d6 roll this turn. Note that this means that you can only roll 1-5.

You can’t use Sanity to modify this D6 Replacement.

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## Designer's notes

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I started the design of *Endless Nightmare* with the push your luck die mechanic and the mantra system from another game that I never got to work. Other than that I've tried to let the theme guide the mechanics. The ever shifting Nightmares, their themes, and the feeling of being hunted all come from the thematic idea of nightmares.

*Endless Nightmare* isn't meant to be fair or balanced. It's meant to feel random, shifting, menacing and impossible to win - just like real nightmares.

In the beginning the *Active* version didn't exist. It was sparked by a (in my opinion) brilliant suggestion by Jamey Stegmaier from Stonemaier Games. From the moment I read his idea in the way too early morning I knew that I had to create the *Active Version* of the game.

I want to thank all the boardgamegeek.com users who took the time to play the game and give me feedback. This game became much better because of you: Aleksandar SaranaC, Barney Hawes and his wife, Bubba P, Chad Mestdagh, Chuck Hughes, Jack Bennett, Jamey Stegmaier, Joel Fry, Mo, and William Cennamo.

### License

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Furthermore I humbly request (but do not require) that you send me a mail ([mXrtenmdk@gmail.cXm](mailto:mXrtenmdk@gmail.cXm), replace "X" by "o") if you make a new version of the game or publish it, and if you use the game commercially I'll think kindly of you if you throw a copy of the game and perhaps some royalties my way ☺.

The symbols on the main board are taken from [www.game-icons.net](http://www.game-icons.net) and are Created by Lorc, <http://lorcblog.blogspot.com>, (I've modified a few of them slightly). They're also released under the "CC BY 3.0" license.

All versions of the two game boards released up until the deadline for the 2013 Solitaire PnP Contest (5<sup>th</sup> of October 2013) are also released under the same license terms as this document.