

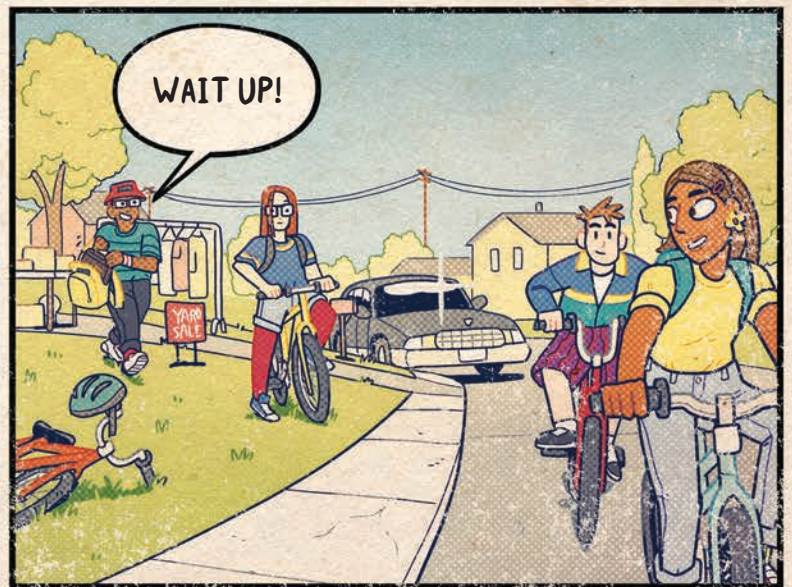
THE [REDACTED] INITIATIVE

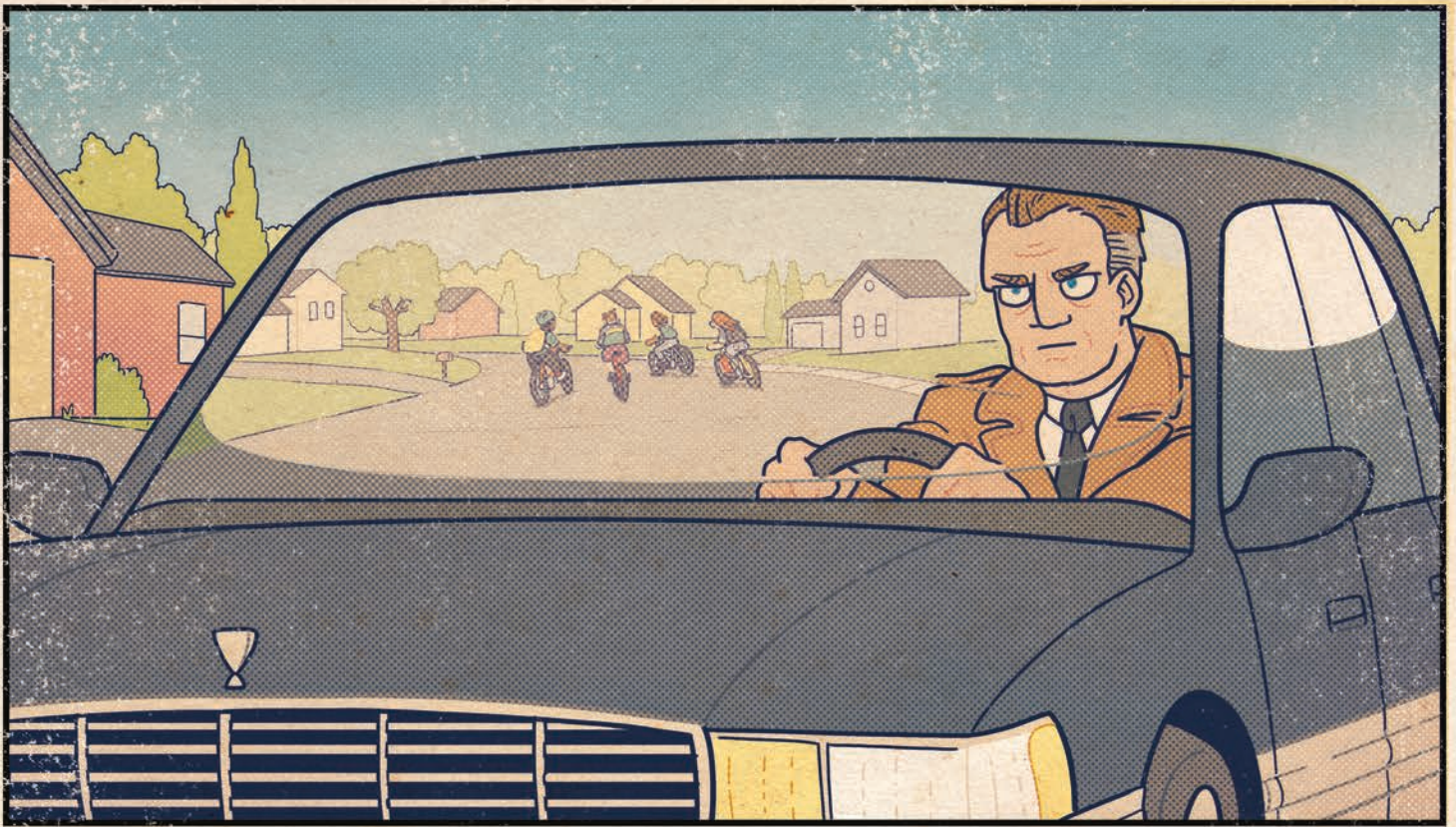
GUIDEBOOK



START HERE
READ PAGES II-V
ONLY







THE [REDACTED] INITIATIVE

INTRODUCTION

The Initiative is a cooperative game for 1 to 4 players. All players are on the same team, and win or lose the game together.

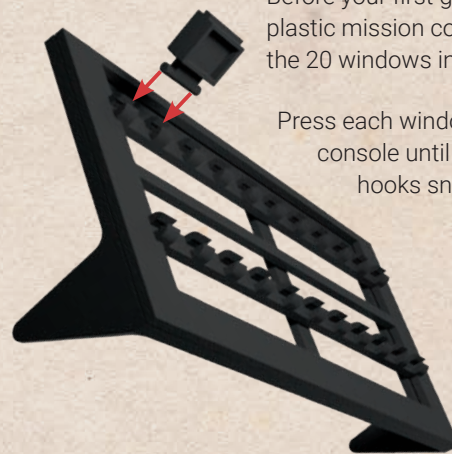
In this game, you and your friends take on the role of teenagers in 1994 who have found a mysterious board game called *The Key*. Not only will you be playing the game as them, but you will be helping them through a pivotal chapter of their lives.

To learn how to play the game, first read the instructions on the next two pages (pages IV and V). Then read *The Key* rule sheet to learn how to play a mission.

MISSION CONSOLE ASSEMBLY

Before your first game, assemble the plastic mission console by snapping the 20 windows into place.

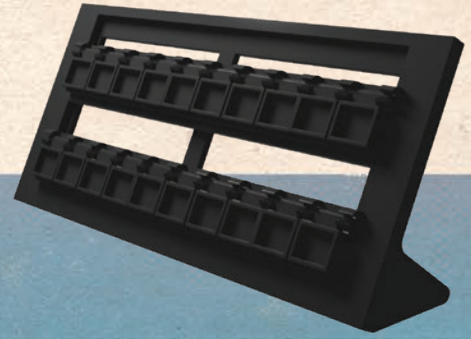
Press each window into the console until you feel the hooks snap into place.



COMPONENT LIST



41 MISSION CARDS



1 MISSION CONSOLE



4 CHARACTER CARDS



30 SECRET CARDS



1 DOUBLE-SIDED GAME BOARD



4 ACTION CARDS AND
1 DISCARD PILE CARD



40 RESOURCE CARDS



THE KEY RULE SHEET



8 STANDEES
Attach each token to a plastic stand as shown above.



14 FEATURE TOKENS



45 CLUE TOKENS

GAME OVERVIEW

This game consists of a series of missions linked together by a comic book. Together, they tell a complete story known as the campaign. The campaign is broken into a number of chapters, and each takes 30-60 minutes to complete. Each chapter begins by reading a page of the comic book (found in this guidebook).

When reading the comic, fold the book open so that only the specified page can be seen. Hold it up so all players can see the page while you read it aloud to everyone. Read the page in its entirety unless instructed to do otherwise.



Example of holding the comic to read one page aloud.

All gameplay instructions in the comic book are in a red box (like the "Stop" box at the bottom of this page). When you reach one of these boxes, resolve it immediately. These will often tell you to play a specific mission. To do so, find the mission card indicated, and play it following the rules from **The Key** rule sheet.

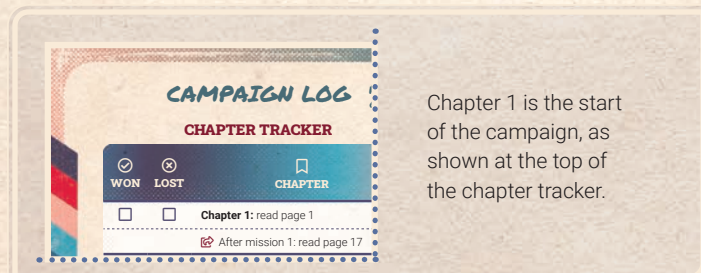
Each chapter builds on the knowledge and story from previous chapters. That said, it is ok to play subsequent chapters with fewer, more, or even different players. Each mission has only one solution, and therefore cannot be replayed by the same players.

CAMPAIGN LOG

The back page of this guidebook has a campaign log that you'll use to track your current chapter in the story.

Before each game, find the top unchecked row of the chapter tracker; this will tell you which page of the comic to read. Read the page and follow any instructions on the page, such as playing a mission. Do not read beyond that page unless instructed to do so.

After playing a mission, **always refer back to the chapter tracker** and mark whether you won or lost the mission. The story will advance even if you lost, but winning missions may provide a reward in the future. The chapter tracker may instruct you to read another page of the comic before starting the next chapter.



Chapter 1 is the start of the campaign, as shown at the top of the chapter tracker.

It may take eight or more hours to complete all chapters, but you are not expected to play them all in a single sitting (and there is more to play after finishing the campaign).

You can pause your game immediately before starting a new chapter. To do so, simply return all components to the game box. The information you've recorded on the campaign log will tell you which page of the comic to read when you resume your game.

Each character has an achievement space on the campaign log. Certain challenges will let you check these off, and they provide a reward later in the campaign.

SECRET CARDS

This game includes 30 secret cards. These represent notes left by the previous owner of **The Key** or other strange information that your characters may encounter during their journey. As the name might suggest, **you cannot look at** secret cards until instructed to do so (place this deck in one of the included bags to avoid accidentally seeing them).

When you encounter a component that has the word "Secret" followed by a number or letter, you gain the corresponding secret card. Search the secret deck for the card by looking at the card backs, retrieve the card, and look at its face.

If the **back** of a mission card provides a secret, retrieve it before playing the mission. If the face provides a secret, do not retrieve the card until after you've completed the mission (win or lose).

Example: You just played a mission with "9" as the answer. Above the number, it has the word "secret". You flip through the deck of secret cards (by only looking at their backs), take card 9, and read it.

Secret cards have a variety of effects, but many require you to crack a code. You should work as a group to solve it, and you may use a pen, paper, and any other tools except the Internet.

There is no penalty for not being able to crack a code on a secret, and in fact, you might not be able to use the card right away. When you gain a secret, write its number on the campaign log and keep it separate from the secret deck. You can reference any secrets you've collected, and any previously played mission cards, at any time.

Some components may instruct you to read a specific page of this guidebook. When you encounter a component that has the word "Page" followed by a number, flip to that page and read it.

STOP

This book contains hidden story elements. **DO NOT READ** pages until instructed to do so.

After you've read **The Key** rule sheet, you are ready to begin playing. Start by reading page 1 of the comic (the next page in this guidebook), as instructed by the top row of the chapter tracker.