

Instructions

Thank you for purchasing the murder mystery game **Mobsters, molls and murder**.

Mobsters, molls and murder is a large group mystery requiring eight cast (who are fully in the know, one of whom is an inspector character who will read the solution at the end), use of six rooms, and several prop clues. The murder occurs before the guests arrive and one of the rooms they will visit will be the crime scene.

Your guests play the role of detectives. You can have any number of detectives for this mystery, your only limit is the size of your rooms, and the time you have available.

The mystery requires a lot of advance preparation, the more notice you have, and the more preparation and effort you put into running the mystery, the better it will run for you and your guests.

These instructions consist of the following:

- Introduction to the game.
- Preparations required to run the mystery.
- List of clues/props required for the mystery.
- Cast guidelines (this is also located in a separate file for easy printing to accompany the individual cast backgrounds and scripts).
- Final checklist before running the event.

Introduction to the game.

This mystery is written so that it can be conducted using several smaller rooms, rather than simply one big room with a stage. These rooms require decorating according to the mystery, and there is a list of clues and props which will be required in each room.

The cast are spread between the rooms available. If you are short on rooms some of the cast can double up in a room, one remaining quiet while the other recites their lines, and vice versa. If you are doing this, then make sure the relevant clues are placed in the shared space.

The cast are all required to learn their parts before the event, or at the very least have read through their background material more than once to familiarise themselves with their background, and be able to read their monologues to the guests (hiding their scripts within a prop of some kind). Five of them have one monologue to recite, and two of them share a dialogue between them.

It is the role of the invited guests to act as detectives and try to solve the mystery and determine the killer. On arrival guests should be greeted and given a copy of the

guest handout and an answer sheet. The guest handout contains instructions for them on how to solve the crime.

The person greeting them may want to add additional instructions, depending on the venue, with information on the location of specific rooms or amenities (such as toilets or refreshments). The greeter should also answer any questions the guests might have.

After that, the guests simply visit all the rooms listed (sometimes more than once), listen to the cast's speeches, review the clues and then ask the cast questions. A question for each cast member has been included in the guest handout. The guests need to find the answer to each question to solve the crime. These questions are specific to a cast member, but which cast member they are for is not specified in the handout, which means the guests may need to ask several different questions to get the response they need. Guests can also ask any other questions they like to help them solve the case. The cast will either answer these additional questions using the information they were given in their background information, or make something up if the answers are not important to the case, e.g. "what is your favourite colour?"

Once a guest thinks they have the solution they fill in the answer sheet and hand this back in, either to a drop box, or to some nominated person. It is up to the host to decide if these answer sheets will be used to give out prizes, and how this will be decided, e.g. first correct solution handed in, or quickest time etc.

The mystery closes when the solution is provided by the inspector.

Preparations

As mentioned before, this mystery requires a lot of advance preparation. However, all the extra effort you put into running this event will be more than worth it.

Time, Location and Event Format

Before you do anything else try and fix a date for the event. Everyone involved in the preparation needs a date to work towards, and given what is involved, please set a date well in advance to give yourself ample time.

With regards to location, basically your only deciding factor is that you need several rooms. Depending on the number of guests you plan on inviting, these can be small or large. You could even rope off sections of a large room to create small sets if need be, however do make sure there is enough space between the cast that guests can hear individual monologues, i.e. they are not trying to talk over one another, competing in volume! In other words, depending on what you are doing, this mystery will suit anything from a small guest house to a major venue for a fundraising event.

For some suggestions on where to hold your event consider the following:

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- Hiring a small hotel / guest house for the evening – they may be happy to let you take over the venue when they realise they are guaranteed bar sales and catering.
- Hiring a venue with multiple rooms but no catering facilities such as a church hall / conference centre / town hall / community centre and using outside catering.
- Hiring a manor house / mansion / castle and using outside catering.
- Hiring several rooms in a large hotel.

Finally, decide how you want your event to go. Is the mystery the main event, or just simply a side show to keep guests amused while they have food and drink? Do you want them to have food and drink during the event, if so, how are you doing it? Do you have one main room in which all guests can mingle to eat and drink, or are you spreading the menu around the different rooms?

Consider how you are inviting your guests. Will it be invitation only, or open house? Do you have enough space for them all to arrive at once, or will you stagger arrival times? Will it be ticket only basis, e.g. for a fundraiser?

Cast.

Firstly select your cast members. If you plan on running this on a grand scale, it may also be worth selecting understudies, in case of accident or illness.

Give each cast member their character information and scripts, and also a copy of the cast guidelines. Make sure they have ample time to rehearse their parts. If any struggle with memorising their scripts, then think of ways in which this can be hidden on their “stage” area, e.g. taped inside props, like a handbag.

The cast required for **Mobsters, molls and murder**:

- **Tony Tortellini (Mickey Scapone’s Lieutenant)**
With sleek hair and pencil moustache, Tony may look respectable in his tux, but he is never without his side-arm, leg-arm, rear-waistband-arm, up-the-sleeve-arm...
- **Bonnie Encllyde (Singer, dancer and Mickey’s moll)**
A femme fatal with a fascinator in her hair and a very fancy frock, Bonnie is Mickey’s moll and everybody knows it.
- **Robin Folks (Mickey Scapone’s accountant)**
Well dressed and with a head for numbers, Robin has a pencil moustache, slicked hair and a cold calculating eye.
- **Harvey Wallbanger (Barman)**

With quick wrist action, witty patter and a natural flair for cocktails, Harvey Wallbanger is the barman at Swingers, and a natural confidante for many of the clientele.

- **Bunny Hugg (The newest singer at the club)**
With short bobbed hair and an equally short dress, Bunny just loves jazz, and her tassels are guaranteed to swing with her thing.
- **Sly Shyster (Senator)**
A democrat of ambition and drive, Sly is a man who knows how to press flesh and win votes.
- **Candy Stealer (Sly Shyster's fiancée)**
Smart, sophisticated and incredibly attractive, Candy Stealer knows just how to get what she wants.
- **Elliot Mess (Mafia stooge)**
Elliot Mess is required only to provide the solution speech. He does no other acting during the night and is not referred to in the scripts or guest handouts.

Costumes:

Find costumes for the cast appropriate to the event. You may also want to secure costumes for any extras you need on the night, e.g. waiters, waitresses, or other assistants who can mingle and point guests in the right direction when they get stuck. Any extras will add to the ambience, but make sure the guests know they aren't part of the mystery.

Mobsters, molls and murder is set in a hip and trendy Chicago speakeasy known as "Swingers". The costumes required for this mystery will probably have to be hired from a fancy dress shop. However, you may be able to rent them for free if you suggest that all your guests also dress appropriately and you provide free advertising for your chosen hire shop on the invitations.

Suggested costumes for the cast are as follows:

Tony Tortellini: Gangster style tux with side arms, Tommy gun and knives etc.

Bonnie Encllyde: Flapper dress and fascinator.

Robin Folks: Gangster style suit.

Bunny Hugg: Flapper dress and fascinator.

Harvey Wallbanger: White shirt, bow-tie and black trousers, with bar towel tucked into waist band.

Sly Shyster: Smart suit.

Candy Stealer: Sophisticated modest dress.

Elliot Mess: Gangster suit.

Dressing up the Venue.

Do your best to dress up all the rooms you plan on using for the event. This can be simple, or you can go all out, but the more effort you make, the more enjoyable the mystery will be for the guests. The mystery is set in a hip and trendy speakeasy in Chicago in the 1920s.

The rooms are simply a backdrop to the cast and mystery but the more authentic they look the more fun your guests will have. There is one key room for this mystery and that is the back room which is also the crime scene. Apart from this room you can change the type of room to suit your venue and budget and move the clues accordingly.

A list of rooms with the cast to be found in them is as follows:

Best table in the house – Robin Banks
Bar – Harvey Wallbanger
Restaurant – Sly Shyster and Candy Stealer
Back room – Tony Tortellini
Stage – Bonnie Enclyde
Dressing room – Bunny Hugg

Please remember these are only suggestions, you can change all the rooms except the back room which is the crime scene.

When decorating you will want the venue to resemble a hip and trendy speakeasy from the 1920s.

See the clue list for specific prop requirements that are essential for the mystery.

Guests are required to visit all the rooms at least once in order to solve the crime, though many will visit several rooms more than once. It is wise therefore to ensure when setting the mystery up, that you have ample space for guests to walk between rooms, and that there will be no bottlenecks during the night. If possible, set up a circular route around the rooms and begin all monologues at the same time so that guests can move between room to room with ease. You will need approximately 20 - 25 minutes between speeches. If arrival times are staggered over an hour this usually means that each cast member recites their speech approximately six to eight times during the evening to different audiences.

Music.

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Do think about music. Music can do a lot to add ambience. Obviously you can just use a CD, but if you are producing this mystery on a large scale and have sufficient funds and space for a large gathering room then do consider a band.

Guest handouts.

Your guests will each need a copy of the guest hand-out and answer sheet. Read **How to use this game** which details printing instructions.

Props/clues.

This mystery includes key props / clues which will need to be obtained and positioned within the rooms for the mystery. The clues which require printing are explained further in **How to use this game**. In addition you will need to print off clue labels (found in file called **Clue labels**) for every clue and attach these to the clues. It is important all clues are given a numbered label as guests will want to check they have found them all. The labels can be placed discreetly if you want them to hunt a little.

The use of fake blood is required for this mystery. Fake blood can be easily made by mixing tomato ketchup with a little red food colouring and a smaller drop of blue food colouring to darken it. However there are numerous methods for making blood substitutes, and you can even buy some if you really want to do it professionally!

The props/clues required are detailed below.

Back room (the crime scene)

Within this room you will need to place the following clues/props:

In a chair facing away from the door

- The outline of the deceased, or a mannequin covered with a sheet. There should be blood (tomato ketchup mixed with a little red food colouring) approximately around the chest area.
- A gunshot hole in the back of the chair if the chair is not already hollow. If the chair back is hollow, or would allow a well placed bullet through to the deceased then simply label the chair back, otherwise label the bullet hole. You can buy fake bullet holes from many online joke shops.

On a nearby table/dresser:

- A big box of fancy chocolates with one missing.

On the floor:

- A blood-stained flick knife bearing the initials T.T.
- A feather boa.

In a dustbin:

- A half eaten chocolate with a pill pushed inside it. You can use a vitamin tablet. The tablet should not have been eaten, but should be visible inside the chocolate centre. Out of preference use an orange cream.

With Tony:

- A gun.

At the best table in the house

- Three glasses. All should be drunk from. The base of the one belonging to Mickey should have a faint hint of some different kind of thicker fluid in it. You can use syrup. Only Mickey's glass (the one with the syrup in it) should be labelled.

With Robin Banks

- Two fountain pens. Both should be labelled. One should have no ink and be slightly sticky with syrup, the other should contain ink.

In the bar

- An unopened bottle of bourbon

With Harvey Wallbanger:

- A gun.

In a plant pot near the bar:

- A small vial of dubious looking white powder. This can be icing sugar or flour.

In the restaurant

With Candy Stealer:

- A note from Mickey Scapone which reads "Dear Mr Shyster. Many thanks for your generous gift of chocolates. I am glad you have come to see things my way. Mr M Scapone."

In a dustbin:

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- A note which reads: “Robin, I hope this will be the last time you ask for something like this. Take care. Nick”. The note should be screwed up.

On the stage

With Bonnie Enclyde:

- A gun

In the dressing room:

- A bunch of roses which has a card attached which simply says “Later X”.
- A framed picture of Bunny Hugg’s brother Tommy. (A black and white photo of a man in a gangster suit will do.)

With Bunny Hugg:

- A gun

Cast Guidelines.

These are also contained in a separate file for ease of printing for each character.

As a member of cast you should have been given three things:

The cast guidelines (what you are reading now!).

Your character’s background information.

Your character’s script, which also contains an answer to a specific question.

It is important you familiarise yourself with your character’s background information and your script, though word for word recital is not a requirement during the event. In fact, you are positively encouraged to ad lib on your scripts, using your own personality to jazz things up where you feel is appropriate. Your character background will give you the information you need to act in character throughout the night.

When the guests first visit you during the mystery, you should recite your script. Only when this is concluded should the guests begin to ask questions. There is no limit to the number or type of questions they may ask, but as a member of cast (and potential suspect) you may want to limit your responses, and DON’T under any circumstances give away who actually did it!

As a general rule: act suspicious. (All the characters have something to hide, so it shouldn’t be too difficult.) You should be trying to prove your innocence, rather than incriminating yourself (that goes for the murderer too) so, where possible use the

information contained in your character background to cast aspersions on the other characters.

There are two types of questions that guests may ask.

The first is the one from the guest handout.

The questions contained in the handout and to whom they apply are as follows:

Tony Tortellini	-	Did you do anything stupid today?
Bonnie Enclyde	-	Have you had a fight today?
Robin Folks	-	Were you playing with fire?
Bunny Hugg	-	Have you refused to eat anything today?
Harvey Wallbanger	-	Did you take a second look at anything today?
Sly Shyster	-	Have you had a surprise today?
Candy Stealer	-	Are you uncomfortable?

When asked the correct question you should answer it with the answer given in your script. But remember, the guests don't know which question is for which character so they may ask all of them at first until they hit the right one. When they ask the wrong question, either say "no" or some variant of that (to indicate they have the wrong person), and ad-lib a response additional to that if you want.

The second type of question is one of their own fabrication.

These come in all shapes and sizes, from favourite colour, to something detailed about personal history and motive. This is where the background information comes in useful. It provides the basis for sensible ad-libbing. For anything not covered in the background information – simply invent something appropriate, but don't go overboard and create a whole new plot line. The rule of thumb is: the simpler the better, don't we all know how much trouble we can get into when we lie, and you don't want to get caught out, even if it is only a bit of fun!

As a general rule, give out information about yourself only reluctantly, and gossip about what you know about the other suspects more readily. (You know a lot!)

In short you have several possibilities with regards to answers:

- 1) Reveal something from the background information
- 2) Simply say "I don't know" or some variant of that.
- 3) Divert the question to someone else. E.g. I don't know why you're asking me that when you should really be asking so and so, such and such.
- 4) And lastly, don't forget you could always ask the guests a question to throw them! E.g. I don't like where this is heading. I tell you I'm innocent – but where were *you* when so and so was murdered?

You may want to review the solution contained in Elliot Mess's speech to ensure you do not give away too much information, particularly the murderer, unwittingly.

And finally, whatever you do **don't** get harassed into giving a definite time for anything that you witnessed or did. When you start giving out times then guests start trying to trip up the cast and quite frankly different times are incredibly difficult to remember and you will quickly become confused (so will your guests). If they insist, keep it vague and simply give the time as sometime after you did / saw such and such, and before you did / saw such and such, and say that you don't recall the exact time as you were too busy to look at your watch this afternoon / or enjoying yourself too much.

Further information:

Most people who work in Swingers carry a gun, the only exception is Robin Folks.

Rehearsals:

Those cast with monologues can rehearse alone prior to the mystery event. The cast that share a dialogue may find they need one or two rehearsals prior to the event.

We would recommend however that everyone gets together and at least talks through their monologues and dialogues prior to the event as this helps the cast get a flavour of what is revealed by each character and what questions are likely to be thrown at them by the guests.

Final checklist

Your last minute checklist for the mystery is as follows:

Set up rooms with props/clues and any additional decorative touches. Label the rooms clearly.

Set up the crime scene with dead body outline and all props/clues

Make sure you have enough guest handouts and answer sheets available near the entrance.

Position drop box for answers.

Clearly advertise the time of the mystery's conclusion so that all guests are available to hear the solution.

If you are serving refreshments then get these all ready.

Make sure all the cast are in the right place.

Start the music and let the fun begin!