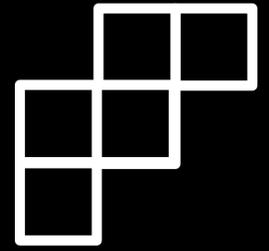




# Mistrial!



by Donnie Coleman

2-Players

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20 Minutes

## Introduction

In *Mistrial!* you are lawyers arguing either side of a murder trial. Your best hope for winning is to trick your opponent into including evidence in their case that doesn't fit, at which point a *Mistrial!* is declared and you win! Otherwise, whoever has built the stronger case of connected pieces of evidence is declared the winner!

## Components

- 2 Boards Halves
- 13 Evidence Tiles
- 32 Evidence Cards
- 12 Argument Cards
- 6 Jury Selection Cards
- 1 First Player Marker
- 10 Gray Influence Cubes
- 2 Red Bias Cubes
- 2 Blue Bias Cubes
- 1 Rule Book

## Overview

Each round, the First Player submits an Evidence card for consideration, and both players choose an Argument card to reveal from their hand. The player with the strongest Argument wins the round.

Winning the round gives you control of the Evidence. Place the Evidence carefully to build your case or to block your opponent's efforts in building theirs.

The player who won the round is now the First Player. The player who lost the round gains an Influence cube from the supply to strengthen future Arguments. If there's a tie, no one gains control of the Evidence or gains an Influence cube, and First Player changes hands.

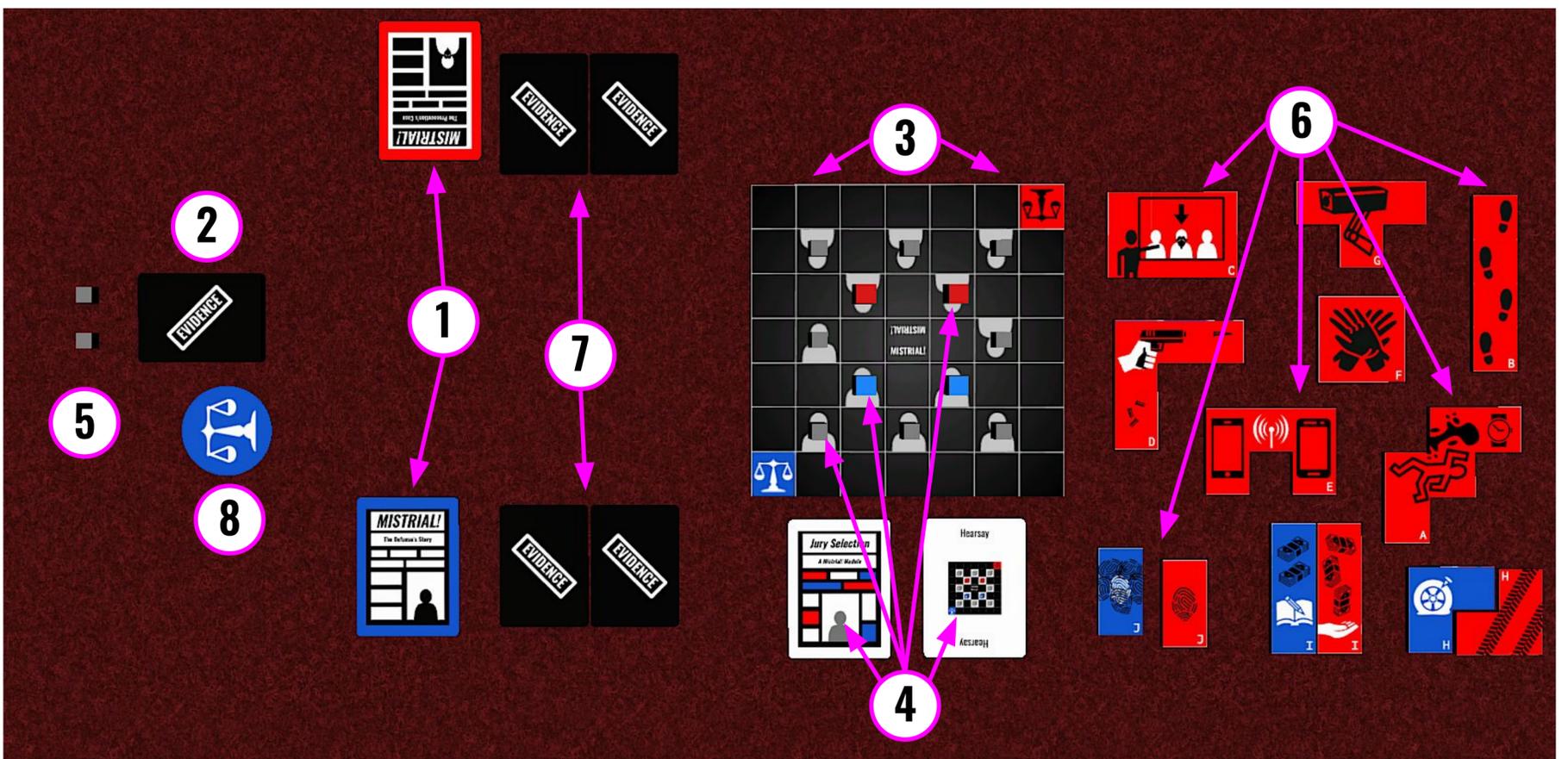
Used Arguments are discarded after the round. When a player has one Argument left, they regain all discarded Arguments. Play continues until someone can't place a tile or until nine unique tiles have been placed.

## Objective

- Force your opponent to gain an Evidence tile that they cannot place.
- Control more connected Evidence tiles than your opponent after nine unique tiles have been placed or the Evidence deck runs out.

## Setup

1. One player takes the blue Defense deck and the other player takes the red Prosecution deck.
2. Shuffle the 32-card Evidence deck and place it so everyone can reach it, leaving room for discarded Evidence cards.
3. Construct the Trial board from its two halves, juror-side up and with each marked corner closest to the player of the matching color.
4. Randomly draw a Jury Selection card and place Influence and Bias cubes on the board according to the layout depicted on the card.
5. Place the remaining two Influence cubes behind the Evidence deck.
6. Place the Evidence tiles on the other side of the board.
7. Each player draws two Evidence cards, which are kept secret.
8. Place the First Player marker near the Evidence deck.



## Beginning the Game / Determining First Player

Court is in session! Let's hear opening arguments!

- Shuffle your deck and discard a random card to start.
- Take your remaining cards into your hand.
- Flip an Evidence card from the deck between players.
- Players choose and simultaneously play an Argument card from their hand.
- The player with the highest-value Argument wins.
  - The winner places the first Evidence tile (see **Evidence Tile Placement Rules**) and becomes First Player
  - The loser gains an Influence cube from the supply
- In case of a tie, discard the Evidence card and discard the Arguments that were used. Flip a new Evidence card from the deck and play until a First Player is determined.
  - If you tie so many times that you run out of cards, start over.
- Otherwise, discard the used Arguments and continue to **Gameplay**.

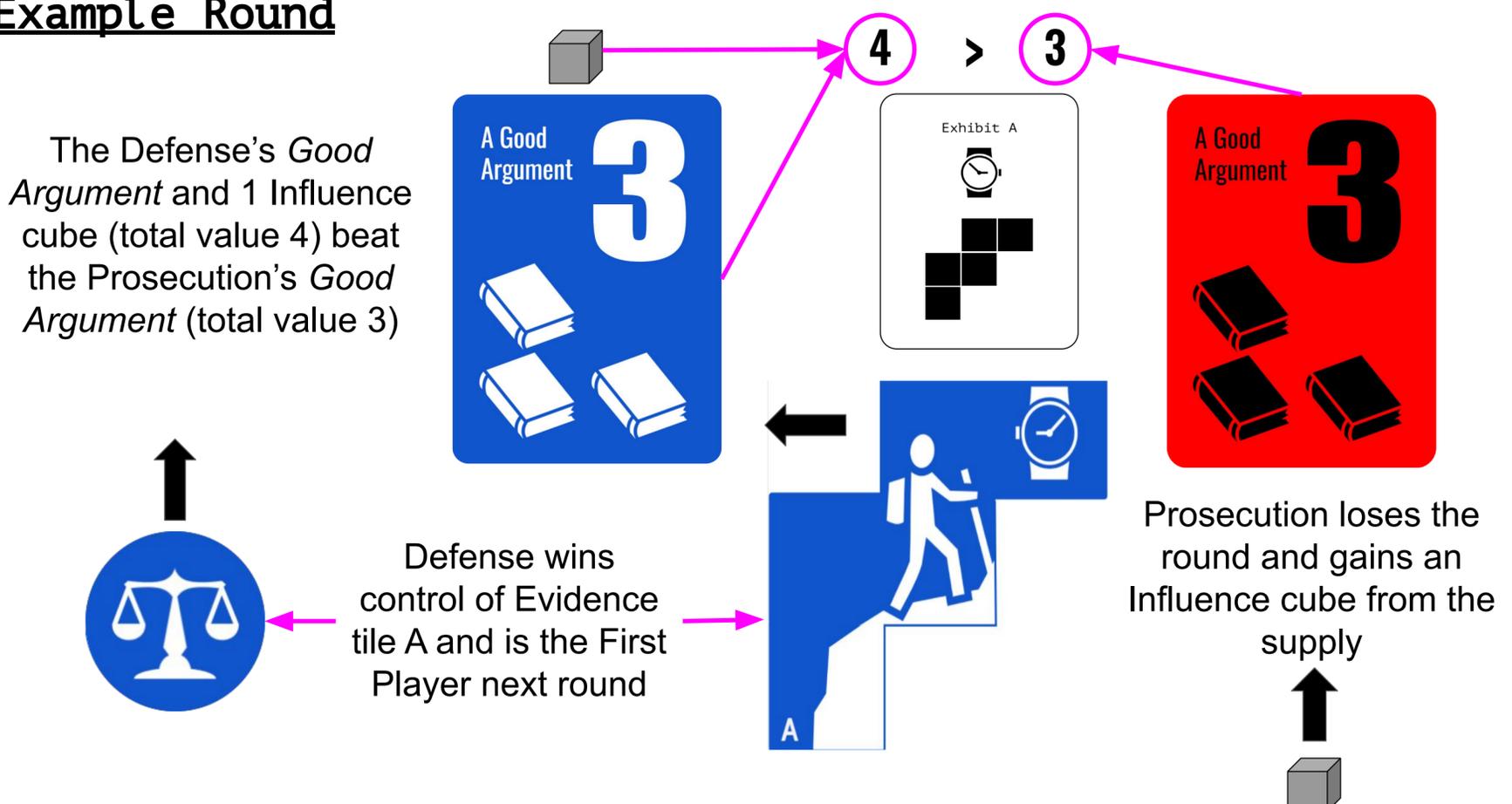
## Gameplay

Now's your chance to add more Evidence to your growing case or to flip existing Evidence in your favor!

In each round after the first, an Evidence card is played from the hand of the First Player.

- The First Player then plays their Argument, followed by the other player.
  - Before playing an Argument, a player may place any number of Influence or Bias cubes they control in front of them
  - Cubes strengthen an Argument by +1 per cube
  - **Cubes have no effect on the 0-value Losing Argument (see *The Losing Argument Card*)**
- Both players reveal their Argument at the same time.
- Whoever has the strongest Argument (Argument Number + Influence/Bias cubes) wins control of the Evidence tile.
  - Place the Evidence card near the trial board, stacking Evidence cards that are the same to keep track of unique tiles placed
  - The winner then places or flips the corresponding Evidence tile on the board, with their color showing (see **Evidence Tile Placement Rules**)
  - Used Influence cubes go back to the supply
  - Used Bias cubes are removed from the game
  - Your used Argument card is discarded to your discard pile, facedown
- The loser of the Argument gains an Influence cube from the supply.
- In the case of a tie, the Evidence card goes face up to the Evidence discard for the rest of the game.
  - Neither player gains an Influence cube
  - The First Player marker passes to the next player
- Draw back to two Evidence cards before the next round starts.
- If you have only one Argument card left in your hand, pick up all your discarded cards, including your Losing Argument card.

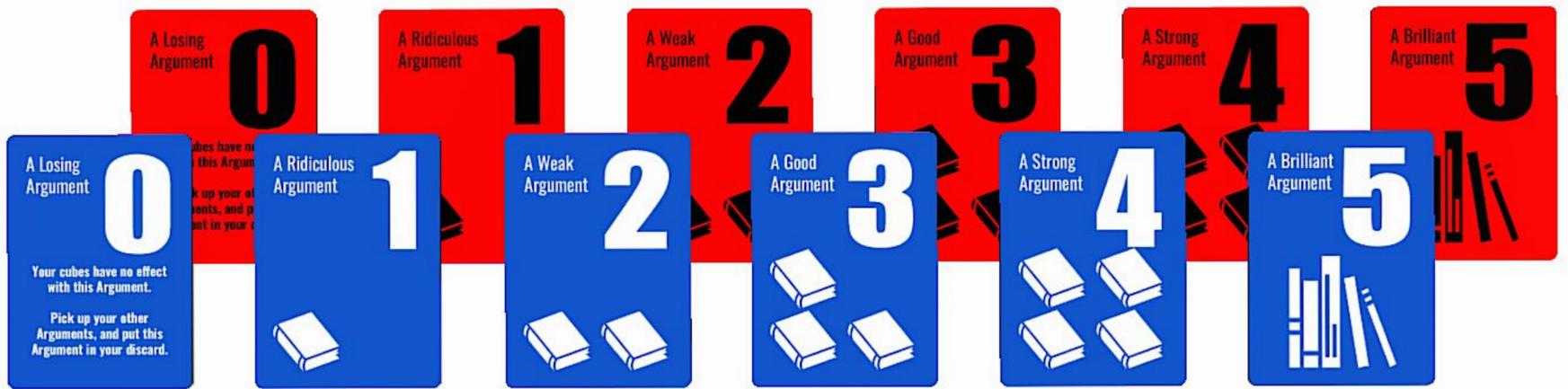
## Example Round



## Argument Cards

Your arguments are your primary tool. Use them wisely!

Aside from color, each Argument deck is the same and consists of six cards valued from 0, the weakest, through 5, the strongest. The values are used for arguing to win control of Evidence.



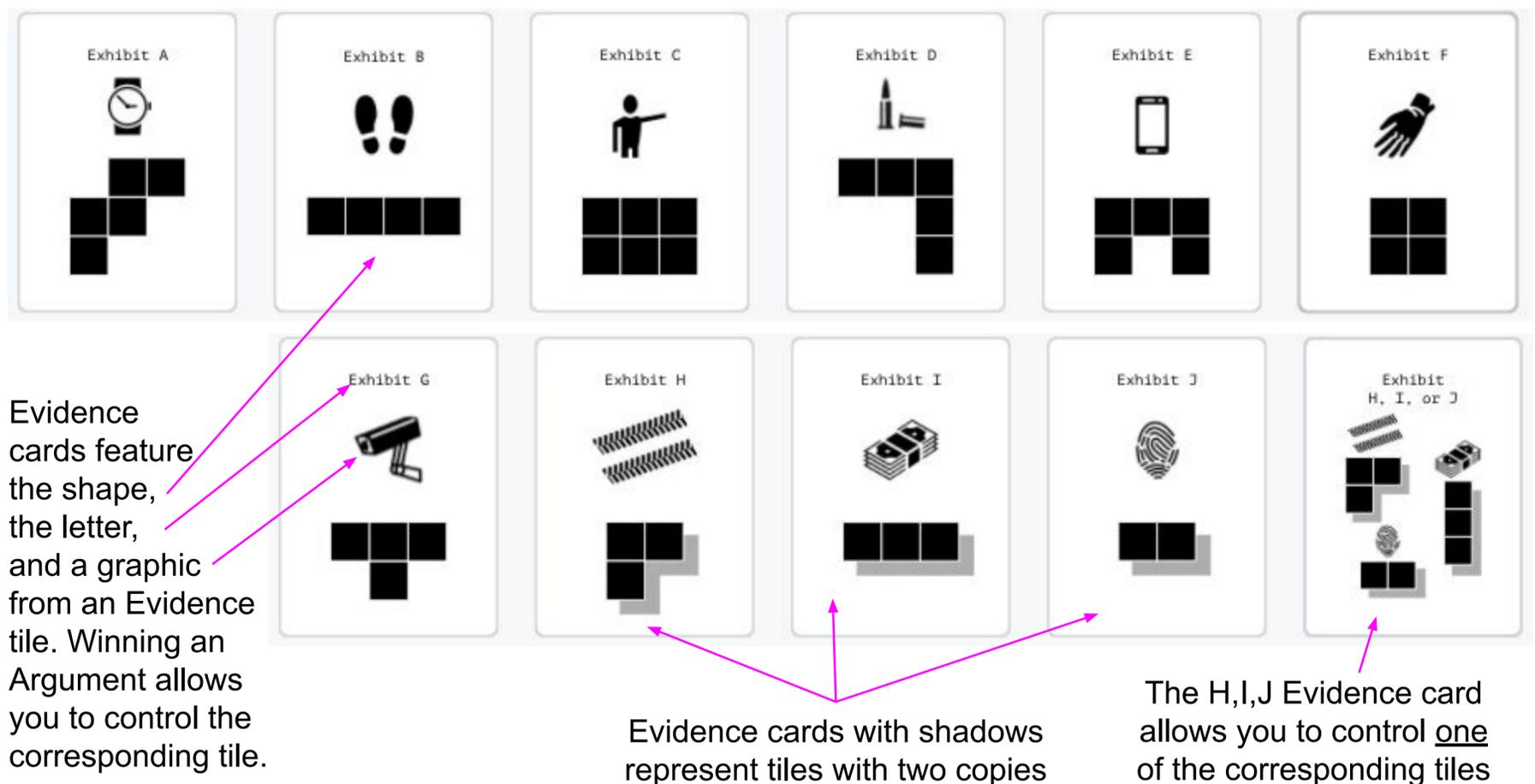
### **The *Losing Argument* Card**

Playing your 0-value Losing Argument card means you cannot win the round. Your Argument has a value of 0 no matter how many cubes are played with it. If the other player also played their Losing Argument card, the round ends in a tie: no one gains an Influence cube and First Player changes hands. After *Losing Argument* is played, you pick up your other Argument cards from the discard. The Losing Argument card goes to your discard and can only be picked up once you have one Argument left in your hand.

## Evidence Cards

You get to decide what Evidence is up for debate. Be selective!

The 32 Evidence cards correspond to the 13 Evidence tiles. Winning an Argument for an Evidence card gives you control over the corresponding tile. To determine the First Player, Evidence cards are played from the deck. After determining First Player, Evidence cards are played by them from their hand. You should always have two Evidence cards in your hand at the beginning of a round.





## Evidence Tile Placement Rules

Build up your case using the Evidence!

- Whenever an Argument is won, the winner gets to place the corresponding Evidence on the board (or to flip it to their color, if it has already been placed).
- The first tile you place **must** cover your own starting area, unless your starting area has been covered by your opponent.
- Subsequent tiles must be placed adjacent to **any** other tile on the board.
- You **cannot** place a tile that would cover the other player's Bias cubes.
- Only the **largest number of connected tiles of your color** count toward your victory at the end of game that does not end in a Mistrial.
  - Those tiles do not have to cover your starting area
- Once a tile is placed, it **cannot** be moved or rotated, only flipped.
- When you **place** a tile on a space with Influence cubes or Bias cubes of your color, you immediately gain the cube.
- There are two Evidence cards labeled "Exhibit H, I, or J". Whoever wins the Argument for that Evidence gets to decide which one of those three tiles to control after winning the Argument.
- If there are multiple copies of a tile available, the winner gets the choice whether to place the copy, to flip an already-placed tile, or to do nothing if an already-placed tile is controlled by the winner.

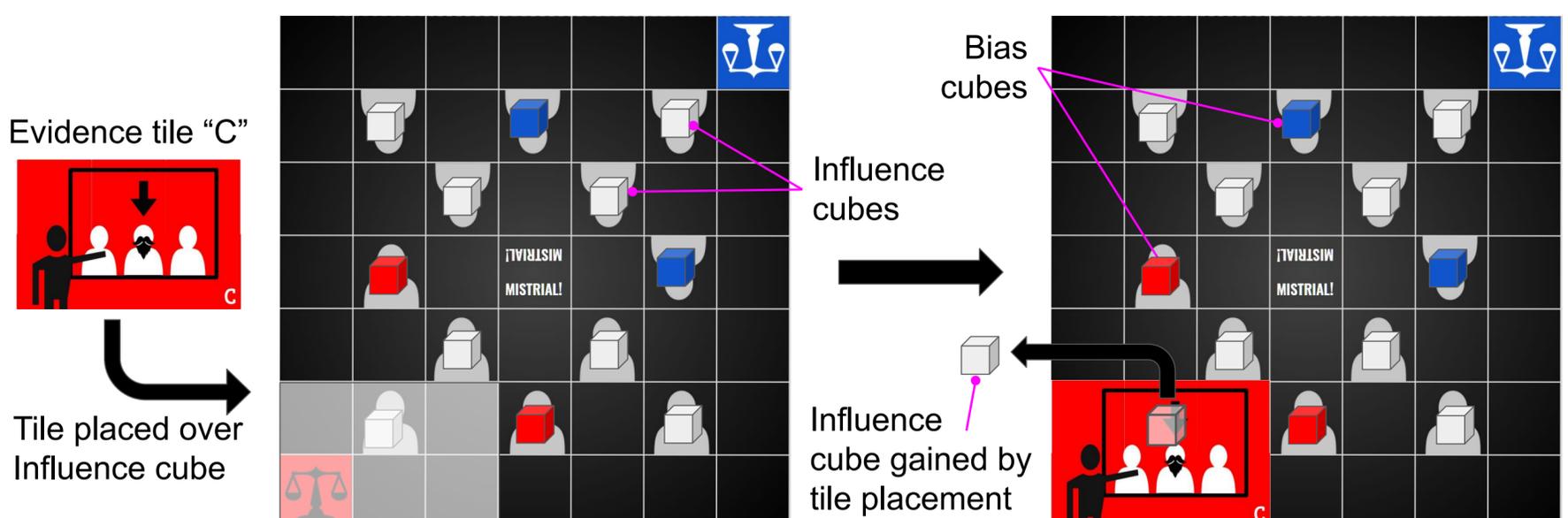
If you **cannot** place a tile you've won for any reason, a ***Mistrial!*** is declared and your opponent **IMMEDIATELY** wins!

## Gaining Influence/Bias Cubes

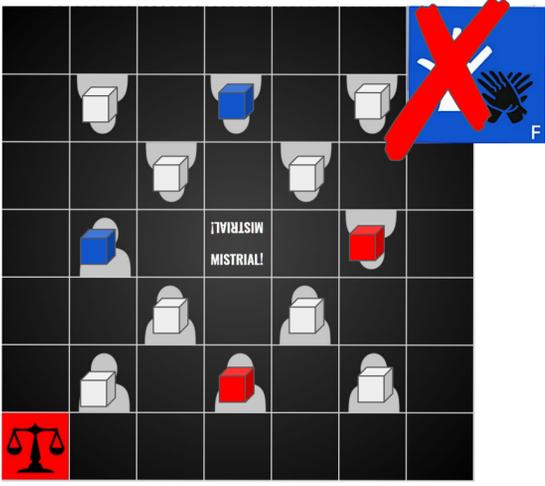
Use your charm to persuade the Jury to interpret the Evidence your way!

- There is no limit to the amount of cubes you may control, but supply is limited.
- If no cubes are in the supply when you would gain them, you gain no cubes.
- You may never control the other player's Bias cubes.
- Once a Bias cube is used, it is removed for the remainder of the game.

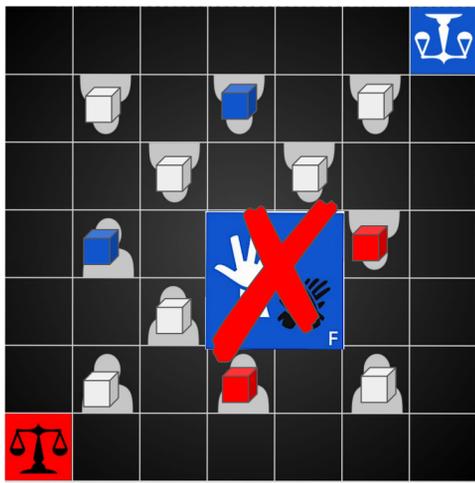
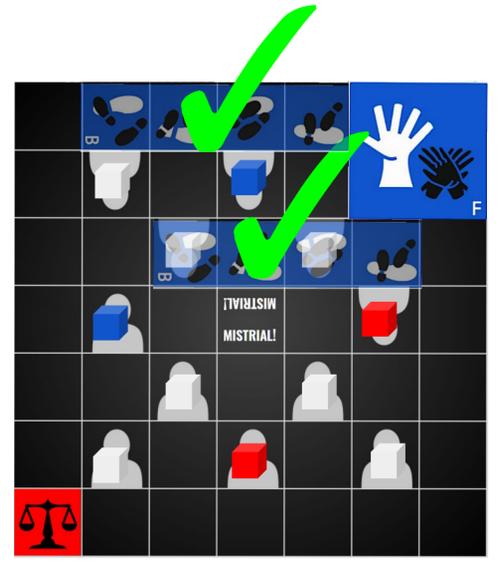
## Tile Placement Example



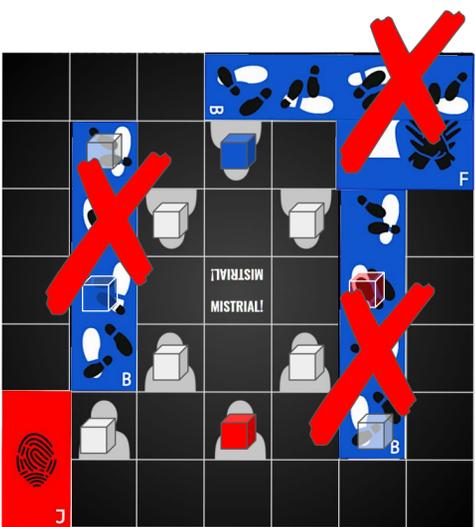
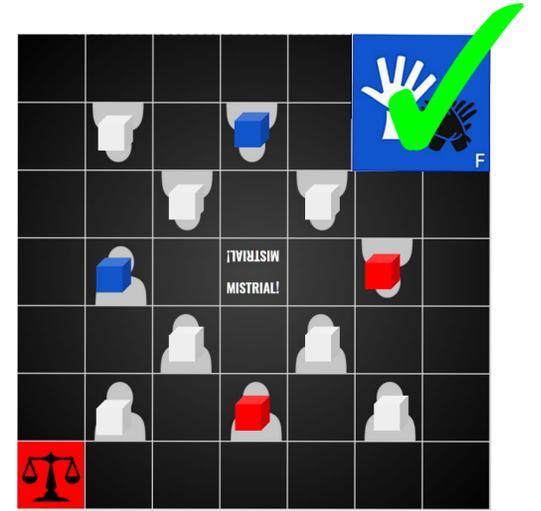
## More Tile Placement Examples



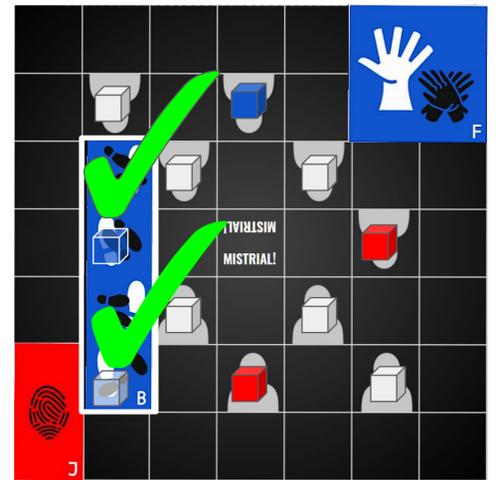
The tile must fit entirely on the board.



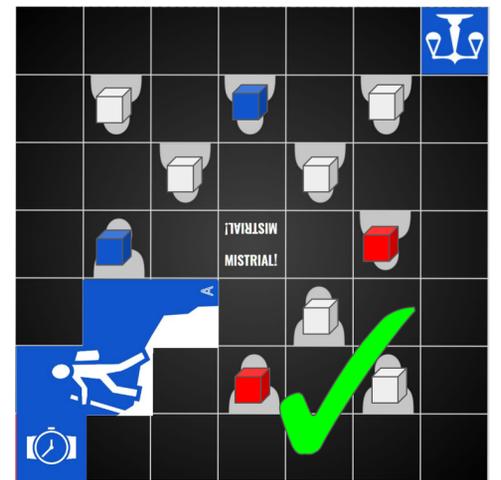
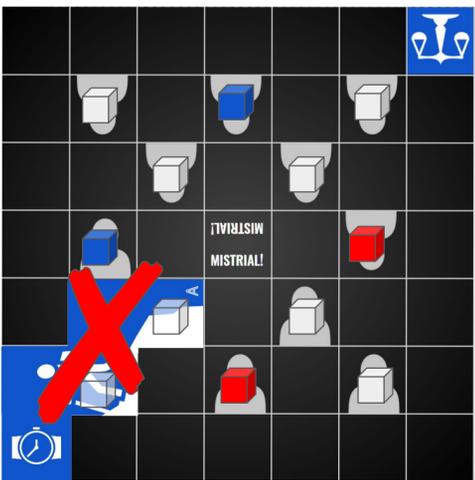
The first tile you place must cover your starting square (unless your starting square was legally covered by your opponent).



You cannot place a tile over your opponent's Bias cubes, but you may cover your own. All non-starting tiles must touch, but not cover, another tile. Diagonals don't count as touching/adjacent.



After your starting square is legally covered, your next tile may be placed adjacent to any other tile.



The first tile you place must cover your starting square (unless your starting square was legally covered by your opponent), however, you may flip a tile covering your opponent's starting square during the course of the game.

## Game Over

If you **cannot** place a tile you've won for any reason, a ***Mistrial!*** is declared and your opponent **IMMEDIATELY** wins!

Otherwise, once nine unique Evidence tiles have been placed, or once the Evidence deck runs out of cards, gameplay stops and a winner is found.

- The player with the **largest number of connected tiles** under their control wins the game.
- The tiebreaker is whoever controls Exhibit A, then Exhibit B, then Exhibit C, and so on until a winner is determined
  - The First Player wins if players are still tied after checking all of the Evidence

## FAQ

- There are three single-tile Evidence cards per tile and two three-tile Evidence cards for a total of 32.
- Your first tile placement must cover your starting square, unless your opponent has already covered your square, in which case you can place adjacent to any tile.
- If a player has no space to place a tile without overlapping another tile or hanging off the board, they immediately lose!
- You may play cubes before playing your 0-value Losing Argument card as a bluff, but you cannot win a bid playing that card, no matter how many cubes you play with it.
- Influence cubes played with Arguments are considered to be in the supply for the sake of gaining cubes at the end of the round.
- Only the number of your connected tiles count toward victory, not the number of individual squares your tiles cover.
- In the case of Evidence tiles with multiple copies (H, I, J), you get to choose whether to place a new tile, to flip an already-placed tile, or, if you already control a copy of the tile, to do nothing!
- The game ends when nine *unique* (not total) tiles are placed; because of duplicate Evidence tiles, it is possible for the game to end with 12 out of 13 tiles placed.
- You do not have to show the Arguments in your discard.
- Discarded and played Evidence cards are public knowledge.

## Bench Trial Mode

Play without Jury Selection cards for a simpler game.

- Use the back side of the board without the Juror icons
- Remove the Bias cubes from the game
- Start the game with all 10 Influence cubes in the supply



# Mistrial!

