

# Sherlock Holmes and Moriarty's Web

## Gameplay Variants

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Sherlock Holmes and Moriarty's Web very close to great, but the randomness and lack of real control really keeps it from being a truly great game. I really love the puzzle-y aspect of trying to fit clues and witnesses together to make a path of evidence from a crime to Moriarty, but really don't like the randomness and lack of control that results from just drawing blindly off the top of a pile. Below is a very simple variant that solves this and makes the game a true puzzle, with choices on every turn, right from the start of the turn. There are also a few additional variant rules that can also be thrown in to tweak the game even more if you desire. These variants can be used independently or all together.

### The Game is On

In the base game players mainly react to the clues, witnesses, or locations that are randomly drawn. In this variant, players have a bit more control over how they grow a case. The adjustments to the base rules are minor, but hugely effective in increasing both the control and theme of the game.

#### Setup Change

1. Adjust the number of Crimes that a game starts with based on the difficulty and the number of characters in the game. Start with 1 less than the number of characters for easy, same number for medium, and one more for difficult.
2. Start with several Crime cards already in the discard pile. For a standard difficulty game, start so that the number of Crimes started with + the number of Crime Cards in the Moriarty deck = 12. So if you start with 4 or less Crimes, use all 8 Crime Cards. If you start with 6 Crimes, start with 6 Crime Cards, and 2 in the discard pile. The more Crime Cards in the discard pile the easier the game.

#### Gameplay Change

1. When choosing a type of tile to draw, draw the top two from the stack. Choose one to play. The other should be added back to the stack, either on the top or the bottom.
2. For Irene Adler, still reveal the top tiles from each stack, but after choosing a stack, take the top two tiles and proceed as above.

### Balanced Characters

In my plays I found that two characters are overpowered. Sherlock nearly always ended the game by solving a bunch of crimes all at once. Those that Sherlock didn't win, Mrs. Hudson was able to win by copying Sherlock's ability, which seemed very overpowered and unthematic. In this variant Sherlock is given a minor handicap and Mrs. Hudson is given a new ability that is thematic and more situational.

- **Sherlock Holmes** – Sherlock keeps his ability of unlimited moves; however, he cannot move onto Moriarty to rescue any kidnapped characters. This works great with the *Kidnapping is a Crime* variant below.
- **Mrs. Hudson** – If Mrs. Hudson ends her turn on 221b Baker Street she will protect any tile adjacent to 221b Baker Street, including 221b Baker Street. Mrs. Hudson may also move any one character from any connected tile, except Moriarty, to her tile at the end of her turn. Mrs. Hudson cannot copy other characters' abilities.

## Kidnapping is a Crime

Moriarty commits a bunch of crimes. Most of them are big ones, but occasionally he'll kidnap one of the main characters. In this variant, kidnapped characters are unsolved crimes.

- **Kidnapped characters count as an unsolved crime.**
- Draw an additional Moriarty card if there are any kidnapped characters. Only draw one extra card, regardless of the number of kidnapped characters. Do not draw extra Moriarty cards if one already drawn on a turn causes a character to become kidnapped.
- Players cannot win if there are any kidnapped characters.
- This will add to the difficulty, though, so if you'd like to make the game a tiny bit easier, only draw a Moriarty Card for Kidnapped characters if there are 2 or fewer unsolved Crimes.

## Going to Trial

The idea for this variant comes from Magnus Carlsson (grimmymail on BGG). This allows you to remove crimes from the web once they've been solved.

- After drawing a tile, instead of moving or rearranging any tiles on the board, you may choose to instead **Go to Trial**.
- Choose one solved Crime that you'll attempt to put on Trial.
- Draw and resolve Moriarty cards as usual.
- If the Crime is still connected to Moriarty it has been successfully Tried and can be removed from the game. All Clues, Witnesses, Informants, and Locations that are part of just that Crime's path back to Moriarty are removed from the web, shuffled, and added to the bottom of their respective stacks.
- Any Witnesses, Clues, Informants, or Locations that also connect Moriarty to other solved Crimes remain on the table.
- The players win once all Crimes have successfully gone to Trial.
- For a more difficult variant, all Clues, Witnesses, Informants, and Locations that were part of the path can be removed from the web and shuffled back into their respective stacks, even if they connect to another Crime.
- For a MUCH more difficult variant, Clues, Witnesses, Informants, and Locations that were part of the path can be removed from the game. This may make some crimes unsolvable, so proceed carefully!

## Misdirection

This is a question that came up in the forums and the designer answered one way in her FAQ and a slightly different way in her forum discussions. If Moriarty steals a Clue or kidnaps a Witness and there are more than one of the named tiles in play, one of which is protected by the characters, what does Moriarty take?

According to the official FAQ, Moriarty will take an unprotected tile if available.

However, in the forum discussions, the designer stated that many people, including some in her own game group, play where the players choose what item Moriarty will attempt to take. If one is protected, he can attempt to take that one and be rebuffed by the character(s) protecting the tile.

## Credits

**Sherlock Holmes and Moriarty's Web** was designed by Lucy Keifer and published by Keifer Art, Inc.

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