



**Abstract:**

**Name of the game:** Codenames: Saboteur

**Creators:** Michael, Alice, Nick, Adam

**Overview:** This game is designed for 5-8 players based on the modification of *Codenames*. Players who are codemaster, bystander, and detective, form one group to compete with the saboteur by guessing out the right words the codemaster clues at, without the saboteur's disturbing.

## **List of Components:**

1. *Codenames* board game
  - a. Word field cards + plastic stand
  - b. Word cards
  - c. 3 kinds of Role cards for covering
  - d. A mini hourglass
2. Cards saying which role you are to play (Codemaster, Detective, Saboteur, Bystander)
3. paper/pen for writing down assassin word for saboteur

## **Instructions:**

1. Game begins by shuffling and handing out of the role cards.
2. The players are allowed to look at their cards but only the Mastermind should reveal themselves at this time.
3. The word cards are set up in a 5x5 grid and a field card is selected at random by the codemaster
4. Codemaster instructs all players to lower their heads/close their eyes
5. Codemaster instructs the saboteur to raise their head/open their eyes and reveals the field card to them
6. The saboteur chooses a word from the red spaces and writes it down as the assassin (this is not revealed to the codemaster)
7. Saboteur then lowers their head again followed by the codemaster asking everyone to lift their head
8. The detective reveals himself
9. Codemaster starts the timer and must say his word and the number of cards they think relate to his word before the timer runs out or the saboteur wins
10. Timer is restarted and then bystanders, detective, and saboteur all discuss which words to pick.

11. Detective stops timer and picks words and codemaster marks each one (order is word -> place -> word -> place -> etc.)
12. Repeat 9-11 until all blue pieces are found, three red pieces are found, or the assassin is found.

## **Rules:**

- Four roles:
  - Codemaster: the one who knows the layout of the board and confirms which word is what (puts down signal cards)
  - Detective: discusses the words with bystander and saboteur, and has the final say in the decision of which words to choose.
  - Bystander: Helps the detective figure out which cards are the ones meant to be chosen.
  - Saboteur: Tries to get the other players to pick the assassin card they have chosen or any red cards. Wants to prevent correct words from being chosen in discussion
- Saboteur decides the assassin word, within the red spots, without the codemaster knowing and writes it down on hidden piece of paper.
- A codemaster has only one codeword to convey and the number of codenames it applies to
- The codemaster can connect a minimum of 2 words. If they do two one turn, the next turn they have to do 3. After they do 3, they can decide to do 2 or 3. If they choose 2 again, the following turn they must do 3 and so on.
- Only the detective has final say on which codenames to select
- The detective and bystanders have 3 red 'strikes' before they lose the game to the saboteur
- If the other players choose the assassin card which was chosen by the saboteur, the saboteur wins.

### **Further Revision Suggestions:**

- No reason for mastermind to know who the saboteur is. The mastermind knowing who the saboteur is could lead to facial cues informing the others playing who the saboteur is.
- It would be nice if the saboteur know the field card. It can be hard to memorize all of the useful information on a field card in the little time they get it. It would be best if the saboteur could somehow have a copy of the card so they could always have the information available without informing the others of his status as saboteur.
- The assassin could be laid on not only the red cards, but also the neutral ones expanding the saboteur's field of play.
- When the codemaster says 3 words, just pick 3 words. Exclude the freebie.

## Design Pictures:



Figure 1: The board game set overview



Figure 2: Codemaster's word field card



Figure 3: Covering cards for counting points



Figure 4: Word cards



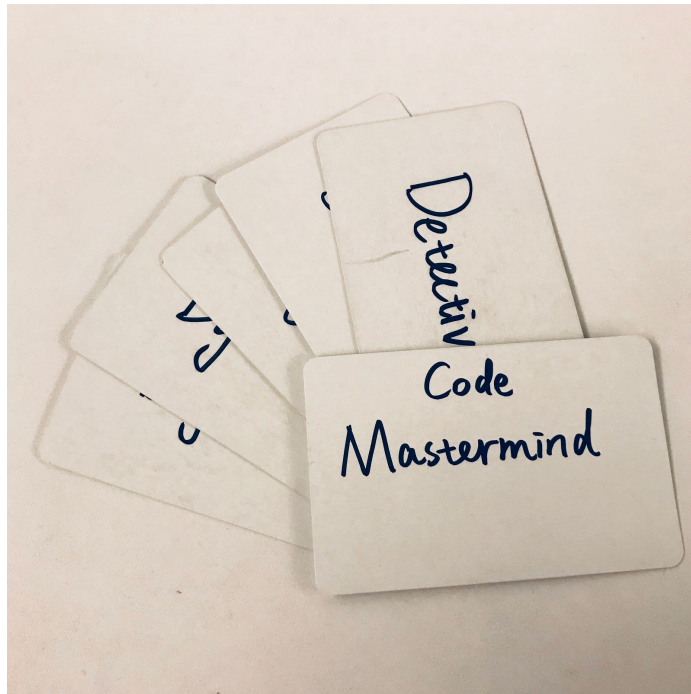


Figure 5: Role picking cards

## **Design Process Statement:**

Creating the social game required that an essential part of the game was the interaction of the players. With this in mind, the game brainstorming began. We took five minutes to think about games that could possibly fit the descriptions listed on the board. Eventually, a game that had limited communication, betrayal, and shifting alliances came to our minds.

Our first idea started as a game where a person tells a story, trying to relate a word to another word that was drawn from a deck of common words (random generic English words). For example, the word drawn could have been “hot,” and the mastermind would then describe how they once burnt themselves taking something out of the oven. The bystanders would then try to guess the word the mastermind described before the mastermind’s henchman, whose identity is unknown to the bystanders, could. In this first iteration of the game, the identity of the henchman was unknown to both the bystanders and the mastermind. Additionally, after three seconds lacking discussion by the non-mastermind players, every player but the mastermind and the henchman have to close their eyes, allowing for the henchman and the mastermind to further collude.

After this first iteration, our group decided to change our game quite a bit. In the next iteration, we added the roll of detective, originally called the anti-henchman during creation, that is aligned with the bystanders. In the second version of the game, every player gets assigned a role from a deck of ‘role cards.’ The mastermind draws a card from the deck that has a word on it, and has to describe that word in a sentence. The rest of the players as a group, including the detective and henchman, try to figure out that word by conversing. The henchman is trying to figure out the word before the bystanders, and the detective is trying to figure out both what the word is and who the henchman is. If the henchman figures out the word before the bystanders and detective, the mastermind and the henchman get a point. If the bystanders and detective figure out the word first, or if the detective figures out who the henchman is, they all get a point.



From there, our group decided that the game was too easy with just one word. So, we decided that in the next version we made that the mastermind would have to draw two cards, and relate the two cards in one sentence like before. We also decided to do away with the points system. After making those changes, we felt we had a rather solid prototype, so we developed a list of words. We tried to come up with roughly seventy words, each that was not too easy to think of ways to describe, yet not too obscure that it would be difficult to guess for the players. Striking that balance was rather difficult, and our list of seventy quickly dwindled down to forty words, being a bit smaller than our original goal of fifty yet striking the perfect balance for the game.

As we playtested the game further and further, we started to realize that if you had played the game before, it became significantly easier for you to narrow down the words that were on the card, thus giving more seasoned players an immense advantage over new players. Due to this, it was difficult for us to playtest as a group. After discovering other problems within the game while playtesting, our group decided to implement further changes to our game. Once those changes were implemented and we played it with the professor, we decided that we should go in a different direction for the game. Following his feedback, we decided to make our game into a modification for an already-existing and very similar game, Codenames, and add elements from the popular folk game Werewolf. After doing this, our group arrived at the current state of the game we created.