

**GAME DESIGN****DANIEL ROCCHI &  
JOSHUA CAPPEL**

Daniel thanks: Josh Cappel for an amazing partnership and for kicking this one through the goal posts, Tasty Minstrel Games for saying "Yes!", the Game Artisans of Canada for their guidance, support, and friendship, Siena and Caelum, who teach me everyday what "fun" and "play" mean, and my lovely wife Neesa, who puts up with a lot and makes me a better man in every way.

Josh thanks: Daniel for letting me horn in on his game idea, the Game Artisans of Canada for inspiration and improvement, Michael Mindes for being a crazy person, Helaina for supporting this ridiculous dream, and all the playtesters who toiled through the many iterations that eventually became this game.

This is just a game. All of the procedures and technology are entirely made up, to make the game fun. Bomb Squad Academy doesn't attempt to simulate the reality of actually disarming explosive devices, nor to adequately honor the courageous men and women who do so in real life at great physical risk.

**GRAPHIC DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION****JOSHUA CAPPEL**

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trim size 180mm x 140mm

# BOMB SQUAD ACADEMY



# HANDBOOK

fold

final booklet size 90mm x 140mm





10+



2-5

20-40  
minutes

*There are some minor setup and rules changes for 2-player games. See the 2-Player appendix for details.*

## CADETS, PREPARE FOR YOUR FIELD EXAM!

This is the final field exam of your training course to join the Retro City Bomb Squad. The instructor has rigged three training bombs for you and your team to defuse, but (unknown to you) there is no way to actually defuse them! The bombs will explode eventually, and if you want to graduate at the top of the class then you'll want to cut high-value wires without triggering the explosives! Grab your wire cutters and steady that shaky hand, because it's going to be an explosive night!

## GAMEPLAY OVERVIEW

There are four decks of cards representing the four "wires" of the bomb, and a trigger track next to each deck. Every round, each player secretly decides (*then simultaneously reveals*) the wire that they will cut this round (*or perhaps they'll chicken out, or even call "Wait!" preventing a wire from being cut*).

After actions are revealed, the chosen wires are "cut" by flipping cards from those decks. When a card is flipped, its value dictates how far the trigger moves down the trigger track and how many points are earned; cutting wires alone is worth a lot more than cutting the same wire as other players. Push the triggers too far and the bomb will explode! Whoever causes the bomb to explode loses points.

After a bomb explodes, players get access to useful Tools, the bomb is reset, and score-altering Pressure Plates come into play to heighten the intensity! Get through three grueling bombs to finish your final exam... the player with the most points wins!



# COMPONENTS

## 48 Wire Cards

(12 each of Green, Blue, Red, and Yellow. The back of each deck displays the values of the cards in that deck.)



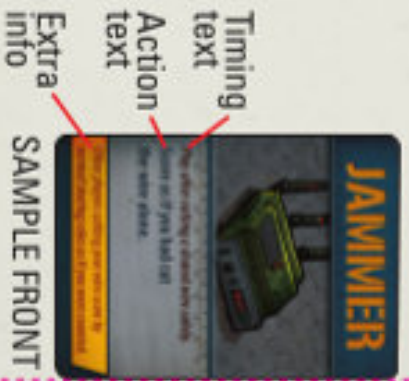
## 30 Action Cards

(1 deck of 6 cards per player color; Green/Blue/Red/Yellow Cutters, Wait, and Chicken)



## 20 Tool Cards

Tools provide cool unique abilities to their owners.



## 4 Trigger Tracks



## 12 Trigger Tiles

3 in each color; 2 of each color have "OK" on the back, 1 of each color has a BOOM symbol on the back.



## 46 point discs

Various denominations. The discs have different values on each side; make sure that you keep the correct side face up to show everyone your score. Scores must be visible at all times; no stacking. All players should "color up" frequently so that their scores are easily countable.



## 2 Pressure Plates

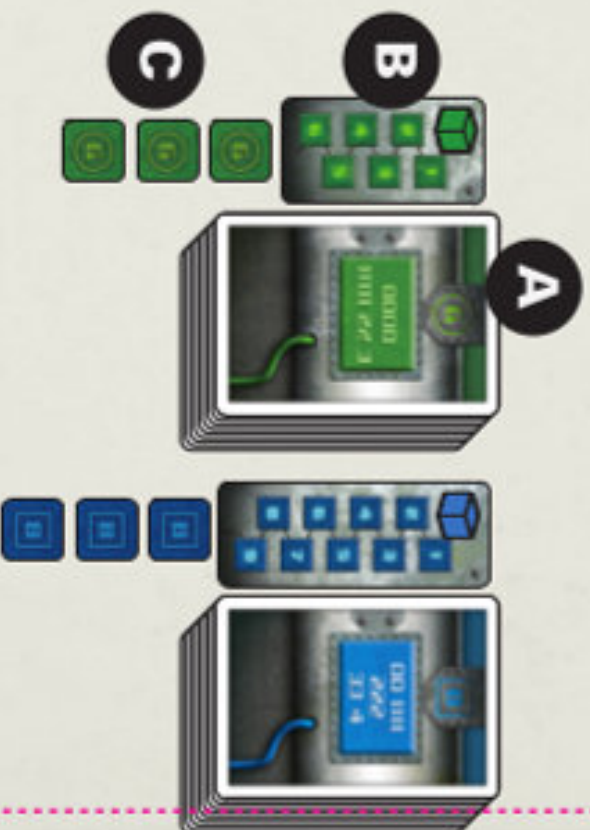


## 4 Triggers





# SETUP



- A** Shuffle each **Wire deck** separately by color, and place them face down in a row. Green, Blue, Red, Yellow from left to right. Leave space between them.
- B** Place the matching **trigger track** to the left of each deck as shown. Place the matching **trigger** on the 0 space of each track.

- C** Place the three matching **trigger tiles** facedown at the bottom of each track as shown. Shuffle them so that you don't know where the BOOM tile is.

trim size 180mm x 140mm



- D** Make a supply pile (or two) of **point discs** so that all players have easy access to them.
- E** Place the pressure plates and shuffled Tools deck nearby; they won't be needed till bombs II and III.
- F** Give each player all 6 **Action cards** of one color. Return unused colors to the box.

fold

final booklet size 90mm x 140mm



## GAMEPLAY

The game works in rounds. Each round, each player decides what they want to do using one card **from their hand**; play one of the four **cutters** to cut a wire, play their **Wait** card, or play their **Chicken** card.

Each player secretly selects their Action card, and places (or holds) it face-down, partially overlapping their own previously-played Action card as shown. (In the first round there won't be a previously-played card and cards are simply played to the table.)

When all players are ready, the played cards are revealed. (Keep them overlapping the older cards; this will make it easy for all players to see who just played what.) It is helpful if all players call out the name of the card they've just played.

Then we resolve the actions. **Players do not pick up their Action cards when they are resolved; played Action cards stay on the table for now.** Actions are resolved in this order:

**Wait > Green > Blue > Red > Yellow > Chicken**



Example: Here, Oren, Paul, and Grace have each chosen which card to play and have placed it overlapping their own previous cards on the table. When everyone is ready they flip their cards...



... and we can see now that Oren played the Red cutter and both Paul and Grace played the Green cutter. By keeping the cards overlapping, it is clear to all players which cards were played this round, but we can also all see which cards everyone played earlier.



## WAIT



Any player that played a Wait card immediately takes **3 points** from the supply. Then, each of those players declares one **wire** that is protected from being cut this round. Players who played cutters for now-protected wires will do nothing this round.

- **Any wire may be chosen, regardless of whether anyone played a cutter for that wire this round.**
- **If multiple players played their Wait card, they may discuss which wires will be protected.**

**Note:** Unlike the other cards, your Wait card can only be used once per bomb (*more on that in **End of the Round***). Use it wisely, because you only have a few chances to make it count!



**Example:** Here, Oren has played his Wait card, while Paul and Bree both played their Yellow cutters; Grace played her Blue cutters. Oren takes 3 points, weighs his options, and decides to protect the Yellow wire; this means that Paul and Bree won't score this round.



**CUTTERS:****GREEN / BLUE / RED / YELLOW**

Cutting wires is the main activity of the game, and most of the time you will be playing one of these four cards. The wires are resolved one at a time in order from left to right (*from Green to Yellow*). All wires are resolved in the same way. For each wire:

- **If no players cut it:** Nothing happens.
- **If a player protected it by playing Wait:** Nothing happens. Players who played the cutter for this wire do nothing; *too bad for those guys*.
- **If one player cut it:** The player flips **one** card from the wire deck, placing it below the wire deck and overlapping any previously-placed cards as shown. Each wire card has a *main value*; the trigger for that wire is moved **that many spaces** on its track. If this moves the trigger onto the trigger tiles, the bomb **might** explode (see *Triggering the Bomb*). If the bomb **doesn't** explode, the player scores the *full value* of the wire. (*The wire's full value is the main value plus the chain of 1s that runs up the side.*)

10  
trim size 180mm x 140mm

**Solo cut Example 1:** Oren cut the red wire alone; it's the first time someone has cut the red wire this game. He flips the top card from the Red deck and places it where shown... it's a 3. Oren moves the red trigger 3 spaces on its track. Since this doesn't cause the bomb to explode, Oren scores. He counts the main value of 3 plus the chain value up the right side for a total score of 4. He takes 4 points worth of discs from the supply!



**Solo cut Example 2:** Later in the game, a player cuts the Red wire alone, flipping a 4 to the spot shown. After moving the trigger (and causing no explosion), the player scores 4+1+1+1 for a total of 7 points!



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11  
final booklet size 90mm x 140mm



- **If more than one player cut it:** Someone flips the same number of cards as there were cutters.

*(It doesn't matter who does the flipping; the group of cards is considered to have been cut as a group by all of the players.)* All cards are laid out below the wire deck as shown, overlapping each other as they are placed. As each card is flipped, the trigger for that wire is moved that many spaces on its track. If this moves the trigger onto the trigger tiles, the bomb **might** explode (see **Triggering the Bomb**). If the bomb **doesn't** explode, take the full value of the wire and divide that score evenly among the cutting players, ignoring remainders. (The wire's full value is the main value **plus** the chain of 1s that runs up the side.)

*The cards are flipped and placed one at a time, and are kept in the order that they appeared; the last card flipped is therefore the one whose main value gets scored.*



**Shared cut Example:** Here three players have cut the Yellow wire. We flip three yellow cards (a 1, 5, and 4, adding to the 3 that was already there) and move the trigger 1+5+4 spaces. This doesn't explode the bomb, so we score. The wire's full value is now 4+1+1+1+1, for a total of 8. Splitting as evenly as we can, each of the three players thus earns 2 points, and the remainder of 2 is ignored.



As you can see, cutting the same wire as other players is far less profitable than cutting wires alone!

fold



## CHICKEN



Any player who played their Chicken did **not** cut a wire this round and will not score normally. However, if any other player caused the bomb to explode this round, all Chicken players **earn 5 points**.



If the bomb **doesn't** explode, any player who played Chicken may peek at **one** of the two following options:

- a) the upcoming card from **two** of the wire decks, **or**
  - b) **all three** trigger tiles at the bottom of **one** track. (*Don't move them from their original positions!*)
- If multiple players are Chickens in the same round, they peek in order of lowest score to highest. If there's a tie, the younger player goes first.

Once all Waits, Wire Cutters, and Chickens have been resolved, the round is over.



BREE  
PEEKS  
AT  
THESE...



...SO  
BREE  
KNOWS  
THIS:



*Example: Bree played her Chicken card. She doesn't cut any wire. No other player caused the bomb to explode this round, so she doesn't get the 5 points. She could peek at two upcoming wire cards **or** at the trigger tiles of one colour... she picks the trigger tiles of the Green track and carefully peeks at all three, leaving them in their positions. Now Bree knows exactly where Green's BOOM is!*



## END OF THE ROUND

At the end of the round, any player with **three** Action cards on the table in front of them takes the **bottom** card back into their hand.

*In other words, you pick up the card that was played two rounds ago; every player should have three cards on the table at the end of every round except for the first and second rounds of each Bomb. After the first two rounds, players will always have two of their Action cards "stuck on the table" unavailable for use. Use this info to help narrow down what your opponents might do!*

**Be aware! This means that you will not be getting your Action cards back into your hand for two rounds once you have played them!**



**Exception:** If your **Wait** card is the bottom card of your three, **pick it up and discard it into the point supply** instead of taking it back into your hand. (You will get it back when a bomb explodes, so at **most** you'll get to use your **Wait** card three times per game.)



**Example:** A few rounds into the game, the players have these cards on the table in front of them at the end of the round. Oren picks up his Yellow card, Paul picks up his Red card, and Yolanda picks up her Chicken card; all three of those players return their retrieved cards to their hands for future use. Bree picks up her Wait card but instead of returning it to her hand, she discards it into the point supply.

**Why are Waits discarded into the point supply?**  
This will keep used Waits clearly out of play so that players don't pick them up by accident.



## TRIGGERING THE BOMB

As the game goes on, those triggers are going to work their way down the trigger tracks. (You can *always confirm that a trigger is in the correct place by adding up the reminders on the left of the exposed wire cards*.) Eventually they are going to move off the trigger tracks and onto the trigger tiles. When a trigger moves onto (or past) a tile, the tile is flipped to reveal its face. If the tile says OK, you are all safe and the round continues. If the tile shows a BOOM, the bomb has exploded! When it explodes:

- **All players** who cut the wire which caused the explosion **lose 5 points**.

*Remember, when multiple players cut a wire, they are **all** responsible for **all** cards flipped.*

- As stated earlier, any player who played their **Chicken** this round **gains 5 points!** *Bok bok!*
- Since the wires are cut in color order from Green to Yellow, players who cut a wire this round **before** the wire that caused the explosion get to keep their points. Players who intended to cut a wire **after** the wire that caused the explosion score nothing; *the bomb has gone off and there is nothing left to cut!*



*Example: Paul has cut the green wire, and has flipped the 3 card, adding it to the several cards already in play. He moves the trigger down 3 spaces, which brings it past the first trigger tile and on to the second; he must reveal them both.*

*The first tile turns out to be an OK... phew! No explosion yet.*

*The second tile is the BOOM! The bomb has exploded and Paul loses 5 points for being the one that triggered it!*

## THREE BOMBS!

Had your first explosion? Calm down, these are only training bombs! Your final exam consists of **three bombs**. Prepare the next bomb by setting everything up as in the beginning of the game.

*(Players keep their point discs, and any player who used their Wait card may retrieve it for use in the next round; players also retrieve their Action cards from the table to start the next bomb with a full set.)* Announce each player's score. When everything is reset, start a new bomb, but add the **Pressure Plates** and **Tools** as described ahead.



## THE PRESSURE PLATES

For **Bomb II**, place the **pressure plates** (II-side up) at the top of two random wire decks. (You



could draw random cutter cards to help you decide where to put them.) During Bomb II, a plate adds its bonus point value to the wire's **full value**. At the end of a round, each plate moves to the next deck in the direction of its arrow, but **only if its current wire was cut and scored this round**. (Plates will wrap around to the other side if they move left from Green or right from Yellow.) It's possible that both plates will be on the same deck; in that case **both** bonus values are added to the wire's full value.



For **Bomb III**, flip the plates over to their III side. They work the same as before but are more valuable.

## THE TOOLS

For **Bomb II**, deal out a display of face-up Tools equal to one more than the number of players. (It's not a bad idea to have someone read out the Tools to all of the players, at least until you are familiar with them.) Then, from lowest score to highest (ties broken by younger player), each player picks one Tool for him or herself. Discard the unchosen Tool.



Here the pressure plates are above the Green and Blue wires. This means that the full value of the Green wire gets 1 added to it, and the full value of the Blue wire gets 2 added to it. At the end of a round if the Green wire was cut, its plate will move left (and wrap around) to the Yellow wire. If the Blue wire was cut, its plate will move right to the Red wire.



It is a three-player game, so we've laid out four Tools. The player with the lowest score will select either the X-Ray, the Jumper, the Wrench, or the Orders. Exciting! Then the next player will choose from whatever is left, and so on until each player has one Tool. The last Tool is discarded.



Each Tool provides its owner with a one-time-use ability that can be activated when the player chooses. Tools are kept face-up in front of their owners until they are used.

To use a Tool, simply declare clearly that you are doing so. (*For example "I'm using my Wrench!"*) Each Tool card tells you exactly when it is legal to use that Tool. Play immediately halts, then the Tool's full effect is resolved according to the text on the card. When you are done, **the used Tool is discarded from the game** and play resumes where it left off.

- Unless specifically forbidden by the card, it is permitted for multiple Tools to be declared and played back-to-back by any combination of players... just remember to resolve each Tool **fully** before proceeding to the next.

- If multiple players declare at the same time that they want to use a Tool, **the player who declared first gets to resolve first**. If it's too close to determine who declared first, the player with the lower score gets to resolve first (*ties broken by younger player*). In either case, once the first player has resolved their Tool fully, the other player(s) may choose to either follow through with or cancel their declaration.



*Example: Yolanda wants to use her X-Ray Tool. The X-Ray's timing states that you can play it prior to cutting a wire alone. Yolanda waits until she is about to do so, then announces that she's playing the X-Ray. Play stops, and Yolanda follows the instructions on the card; it tells her that when she cuts, she will draw three cards from the wire deck, pick one, and shuffle the rest back in. Not a bad little advantage!*

For **Bomb III** perform the same procedure to get Tools that you did before Bomb II. If any player still has their Tool from Bomb II, they may keep it; they'll have two Tools at their disposal for this Bomb.

## END OF THE GAME

After all three bombs have exploded, the training course is over. The player with the highest score graduates at the top of the class and wins the game! Ties are considered shared victories.

If you play a game of Tasty Minstrel Games' ***Bomb Squad*** after this, the winner of this game gets to be the starting player in that one!





## 2-PLAYER APPENDIX

When playing with two players, make the following simple changes:

### SETUP

- Do not use the Yellow wire deck or trigger track; the game will be played with only the Green, Blue, and Red wires.
- Each player should discard their Yellow wire cutter card from their Action deck, as it won't be needed.

### GAMEPLAY

- At the end of each round when they have **two** cards on the table, each player picks up the bottom card.

This is different from the regular game where the number is **three** cards; this means that each player will only ever have **one** card "stuck on the table" unavailable for use instead of two cards as in the regular game.

## TOOLS APPENDIX

Here find all twenty Tools included in the game.

### AIR HORN



#### AIR HORN

**Timing:** Play after actions are revealed.

**Effect:** Pick two other players who played cutters. Resolve the round as if both of those players had played their Chicken cards.

### AMPLIFIER



#### AMPLIFIER

**Timing:** Play after cutting a wire safely alone.

**Effect:** When scoring your cut, double the chain values of all the cards in the wire; the main value is unaffected.

### BOMB BLANKET



#### BOMB BLANKET

**Timing:** Play prior to someone else (whether alone or shared) cutting a wire.

**Effect:** If the cut (whether alone or shared) causes the bomb to explode, you gain 10 points. **No other Tools may be played between the Bomb Blanket and the cutting of the wire.**

### CRIMPER



#### CRIMPER

**Timing:** Play after someone else (whether alone or shared) cuts a wire safely.

**Effect:** Score the entire **chain value** (but not the **main value**) of the cut wire.



**DYNAMO****DYNAMO**

**Timing:** Play after a zero card is flipped (by any player—including yourself—during a cut).

**Effect:** Score 1 point for each exposed zero card in all wires combined. You may play Dynamo after a safe shared cut where any of the flipped cards was a zero.

**FREEZER****FREEZER**

**Timing:** Play prior to cutting a wire yourself (whether alone or shared).

**Effect:** Immediately choose and shuffle two of your wire's exposed cards back into the deck and adjust the trigger accordingly.

**HAMMER****HAMMER**

**Timing:** Play prior to cutting a wire alone.

**Effect:** Immediately flip a card from your wire and score its main value +2, then adjust the trigger to match. This does not count as your cut. If this triggers the bomb, score zero and resolve as if you'd triggered it with your cut.

**HELMET****HELMET**

**Timing:** Play when you trigger the bomb (whether alone or shared).

**Effect:** You will lose zero points from the bomb. Any other triggering players immediately lose 2 points. The 2-point loss is in addition to any point penalty from the explosion.

**JAMMER****JAMMER**

**Timing:** Play after cutting a shared wire safely.

**Effect:** Score as if you had cut the wire alone. Other players cutting your wire score by normal sharing rules as if you were counted.

**JUMPER****JUMPER**

**Timing:** Play after actions are revealed.

**Effect:** If you played a cutter, you may act this round as if you had instead played a cutter for an adjacent wire. Declare your chosen wire now. The Green wire is not considered adjacent to the Yellow wire.

**MIRROR****MIRROR**

**Timing:** Play when you are Chicken.

**Effect:** Instead of the normal peeking action (where you'd choose two wire decks or one set of trigger tiles), you may peek at all trigger tiles of all wires.

**ORDERS****ORDERS**

**Timing:** Play when someone else plays Wait and protects the wire matching your cutter.

**Effect:** Cut the wire anyway and score normally. Other players affected by the Wait do not score.



## SCHEMATICS

**Timing:** Play after actions are revealed\*.

**Effect:** You may retrieve your played action card (into your hand) and must play a different action card from your hand instead. **If any players played Wait, you may play this card after protected wires are declared.**

## SCRAMBLER

**Timing:** Play prior to cutting a wire yourself (whether alone or shared).

**Effect:** Immediately shuffle the three most-recently exposed cards from that wire back into the deck and adjust the trigger accordingly. **The wire must have at least three exposed cards for the Scrambler to work.**

## SHIELD

## SHIELD

**Timing:** Play when someone else triggers the bomb.

**Effect:** Immediately gain 7 points, then pick one of the players responsible for triggering; that player will lose no points due to triggering the bomb.

## SNIFFER

## SNIFFER

**Timing:** Play while you are choosing your action.

**Effect:** Immediately peek at the top card of all wire decks.

## SWITCH

## SWITCH

**Timing:** Play after actions are revealed.

**Effect:** If you played a cutter, pick a player who played a different cutter. Swap cutters with that player. **At the end of the round, swap cutters back, leaving them on the table as normal.**

## TOOLKIT

## TOOLKIT

**Timing:** Play while you are choosing your action.

**Effect:** Immediately take all of your action cards back into your hand, including your Wait (if previously played).

## WRENCH

## WRENCH

**Timing:** Play prior to someone else (whether alone or shared) cutting a wire.

**Effect:** Immediately flip a card from their wire and adjust the trigger accordingly. This does not count as the cut. **If this triggers the bomb, resolve as if the cutting player(s) triggered it with a cut.**

## X-RAY

## X-RAY

**Timing:** Play prior to cutting a wire alone.

**Effect:** When you cut, you will draw three cards from the deck and choose which one to use; shuffle the rest back into the deck.