



The Party Game of Subtle Conversation

CrossTalk

Brett Sobol • Seth Van Orden



4-8+



10+



30 mins

Game Overview

CrossTalk is the Party Game of Subtle Conversation, where two teams race to guess secret Keywords.

Each round, teams select a clue-giver, and those clue-givers are given knowledge of the same secret Keyword. The goal of the clue-givers is to help their teammates guess this Keyword before the other team.

The round begins with both clue-givers writing a one-word clue to give their team in private.

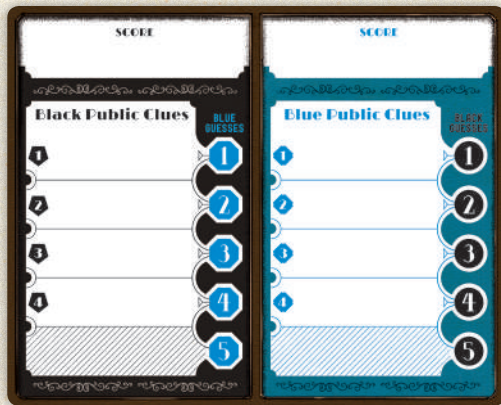
Then, clue-givers will alternate providing one-word

public clues to everyone. But, there is a catch! After your team gives a public clue, the other team, and only the other team, may guess the Keyword.

Clue-givers will need to use their private clue to provide context for the future. This will allow them to slip public clues by the other team.

The round ends when one team correctly guesses the Keyword or both teams run out of guesses. Each correct guess, is worth 1 point, and the first team to earn 5 points wins.

Game Components



1 PUBLIC CLUE BOARD



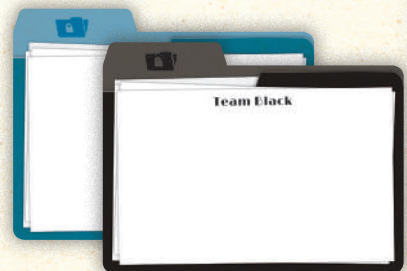
1 SIX-SIDED DIE



162 KEYWORD CARDS



8 DRY ERASE MARKERS



2 PRIVATE CLUE BOARDS



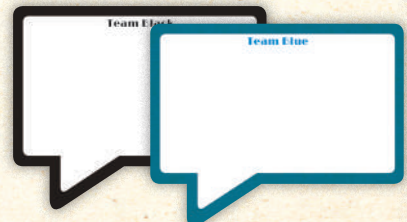
1 KEYWORD CARD BOX



1 SAND TIMER



2 HINT BOARDS



6 CHAT BOARDS

Game Setup

1. Divide into two teams of similar size and skill. You need at least two players on each team to play. One team will be Team Black, and the other will be Team Blue.
2. Give each team their Hint Board **1**, Private Clue Board **2**, Chat Boards **3**, and dry erase markers **4** matching their team's color.
3. Shuffle the Keyword Cards **5** and set them in the Card Box **6**, so that the dice on the top of the Keyword Cards are showing.

Note: The Keyword Cards are double-sided for replayability. You may play with either side of the cards, but we recommend playing with the same side over the course of the game.

4. Place the die **7** and the Public Clue Board **8** within easy reach.

Round Setup

1. Each team chooses one player to be their clue-giver for the round. Both clue-givers sit on the same side of the table. The other teammates sit across from their clue-giver.
2. Give each clue-giver their team's Private Clue Board **2** and Hint Board **1**.
3. Give each remaining player one of their team's Chat Boards **3** and dry erase markers **4**. When playing with more than 8 players, teammates will share Chat Boards and markers. Chat Boards are used to communicate between teammates so the opposing team does not overhear. Thus in a 4 player game, Chat Boards are not needed and can be returned to the box.
4. The clue-givers draw a card from the Keyword deck **5** and look at it together. Don't let the other players see it.
5. Clue-givers select and agree upon which Keyword to use for the round. If no agreement can be reached, roll the die to determine the Keyword. Regardless of how it is determined, the same Keyword must be used by both clue-givers.

Note: Clue-givers are not allowed to share any information about their Keyword outside of legal clues.

**TEAM
BLACK**

**CLUE-GIVER
TEAM BLACK**



**GUESSER
TEAM BLACK**

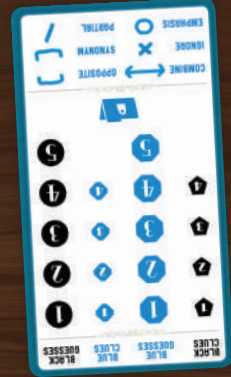
TEAM BLUE

CLUE-GIVER
TEAM BLUE

5

- Goalkeeper
- Puddle
- Pour money down the drain
- E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial
- Raiders of the Lost Ark
- Daddy long legs

7

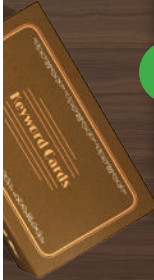


8

SECRET

Black Public Clues

Blue Public Clues



GUESSER
TEAM BLACK

GUESSER
TEAM BLUE

GUESSER
TEAM BLUE

Game Play

Once the Keyword is decided, the rest of the round consists of private clues, public clues, and guesses. Each team gets 1 private clue and a maximum of 4 public clues and 5 guesses during a round.

Private Clues

Both clue-givers start by secretly writing down a one-word private clue on the Private Clue Board and passing it face-down to their teammates.

All teammates should see the private clue from their team's clue-giver. This private clue should not be shared with the other team.

Public Clues

The clue-givers will then alternate giving public clues. The clue-giver from the team that did not score last round will decide which clue-giver will give the first public clue. For the first round and any round following a scoreless round, randomly decide the clue-giving order by rolling the die.

After a clue-giver has decided on a public clue to give, the clue-giver should write it down on the Public Clue Board and read it aloud.

Making a Guess

After a clue-giver gives a public clue, the **opposing** team (except their clue-giver) tries to figure out the Keyword. They may discuss their ideas among themselves or write notes on their Chat Boards to avoid verbalizing their thoughts and sharing secret information with the other team.

While they are trying to come up with their guess, both clue-givers must not react to the discussion in any way as to influence their decision.

Only one guess per public clue can be made by the entire team. Keep in mind the Keyword might not be a single word.

When a team correctly guesses the Keyword, the round ends immediately and that team earns 1 point. Add the point as a hash mark to the team's total score on the Public Clue Board and erase all clues for that round.

There is no penalty for incorrect guesses. When an incorrect guess is made, simply proceed to next public clue or guess. Each team gets a maximum of 5 guesses. That is 1 more guess than public clues, so the last guess is made without a new public clue being given. If neither team guesses the correct answer, then no points are awarded for the round.



The Keyword is **"FLAG FOOTBALL"**



Team Blue's private clue is **"SPORT"**



Team Black writes **"FOUL"** as their first public clue

Penalty?

Combining the clues of **"SPORT"** and **"FOUL,"** Team Blue guesses **"PENALTY,"** which is incorrect.

Play continues with Team Blue's clue-giver writing a new public clue, and Team Black getting the next opportunity to guess.

Important: A team may choose to pass and forfeit their guess. It may be in your team's best interest to pass until you have more information because you risk giving a hint to the opposing team. However, if you pass, you risk the other team guessing the Keyword correctly first.

Clue Rules

- Clues must be a single word. They can be compound words (toothbrush), but hyphens, spaces, and phrases are not allowed (high-tech, vice president, kick the bucket).
- Clues must be real words (grrr, mmmm, !, ?, >).
- Clues may NOT be in a different language unless that word is also standard English ("hola" is not OK, while "foyer" is acceptable).
- Clues may NOT be words that are ALWAYS capitalized (America, Homer, June).
- Clues may NOT be contained within the Keyword ("trap" if the Keyword is "Mousetrap").
- Clues may NOT be homophones of the Keyword (karat/carrot, read/red, gym/Jim).
- Clues may NOT be acronyms (NASA, ET, CIA).
- Extra communication about the clue is forbidden, including facial expressions and intonation ("This clue may be a bit of a stretch." or "Take this literally!").

Note: These Clue Rules are not exhaustive. If a private or public clue violates the spirit of the game, then it is invalid ("depend" when the Keyword is "Deep End").

Clue Advice

Be mindful of the public clues you give. The opposing team will have an opportunity to guess before your team, so may want to be subtle and lead your teammates to the Keyword from an unexpected direction.

TIP: When deciding on your private clue, you might consider a clue that will give your teammates context for future public clues you give them.

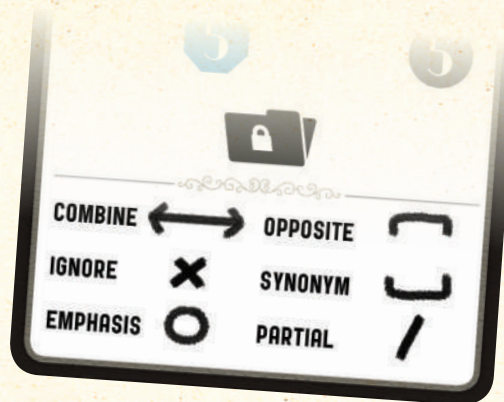
End of Round

Team members should take turns being the clue-giver throughout the game. We recommend both teams rotate their clue-giver after each round. Draw a new card and **continue playing until one team has earned 5 points and therefore wins the game.**

The Hint Board

Note: We recommend playing the first couple of rounds without the Hint Board if you are new to CrossTalk. Feel free to add it in once you feel comfortable with the flow of the game.

The Hint Board can be a powerful tool in the hands of a skillful and clever clue-giver. It gives the clue-giver the ability to secretly convey ideas - such as opposite, ignore, emphasis, or combine - with relation to public and private clues and guesses.



The clue-giver may only draw the symbols above on the Hint Board to communicate with their team (see Gameplay Example on Page 6).

Note: A combination of symbols may be drawn on the Hint Board.

The clue-giver may only give their teammates the Hint Board immediately **AFTER** their team has made a guess or passed. The Hint Board can only be used **ONCE** during the round and cannot be changed once given.

Hint Boards are passed face-down and are for your team's eyes only.

Credits

Game Design: Brett Sobol and Seth Van Orden

Illustration: Jacqui Davis

Graphic Design: Ian O'Toole

Playtesters and Honorable Mentions: Tania Van Orden, Tessa Sobol, Jeff and Katie Butler, Alvin and Tammy Van Orden, Robert and Carey Daniels, Quince and Silvia Van Orden, Kevin Brobst, Tracy Brobst, Austin and Stephanie Secrist, Kane Klenko, Ed Marriott, Brett Meyers, Gary and Vicki Dickson, Epic, Ken Franklin, Oliver Yang, Adam Gross, and Unpub.

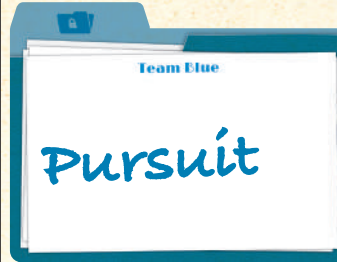
Cameplay Example

1.



The clue-givers roll the die and determine that the Keyword for this round is **"WILD GOOSE CHASE."**

2.



Both clue-givers write a private clue on their Private Clue Boards and pass them to their teammates, who examine them while keeping them hidden from their opponents.

Note: Although Maverick in this context relates to a name in the movie Top Gun, it is not a word that is always capitalized. Therefore, it is a valid clue.

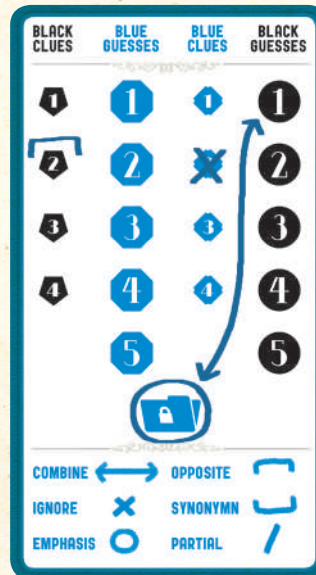
5.



Team Black's clue-giver chooses **"TAME"** as his second Public Clue.

Team Blue guesses **"SWAN,"** which is incorrect, so play continues.

6.



Team Blue's clue-giver decides to use her Hint Board. They indicate the following:

EMPHASIS: Pursuit
Team Blue's private clue

COMBINE: Goose and Pursuit
Team Black's first guess and their private clue

OPPOSITE: Tame
Team Black's second public clue

IGNORE: Book
Team Blue's second public clue, which has not been given yet.

The clue-giver decides to pass the Hint Board to her teammates, who examine it while keeping it hidden from their opponents.

3.



Team Black plays first. Their clue-giver must write one word on the Public Clue board. He chooses **"WINGMAN,"** hoping to relate it to his private clue of **"MAVERICK."**

Team Blue now has an opportunity to guess, but they choose to **pass.**

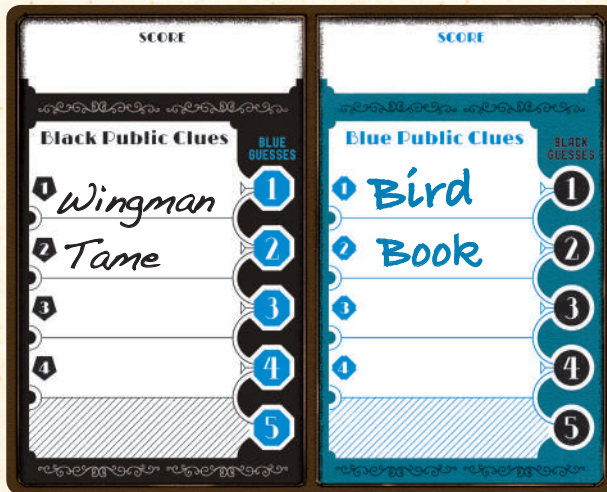
4.



Team Blue's clue-giver now writes her first public clue. She chooses **"BIRD."**

Team Black guesses **"GOOSE,"** which is incorrect, so play continues.

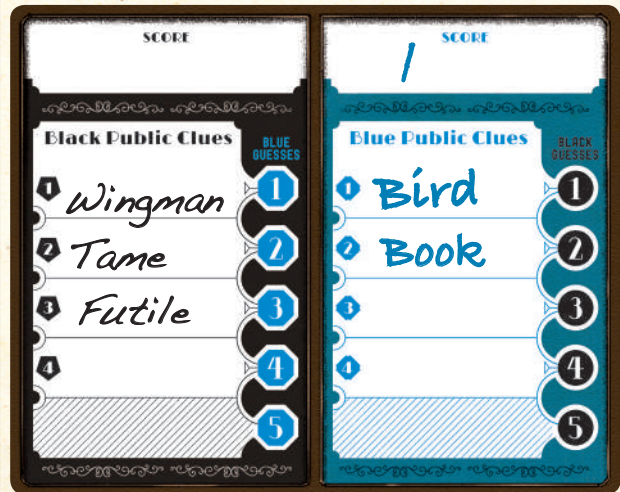
7.



Team Blue's clue-giver chooses **"BOOK"** as her next public clue, attempting to throw Team Black off track. She already told her teammates to ignore this clue through the Hint Board.

Team Black guesses **"GOOSEBUMPS,"** which is incorrect, so play continues.

8.



Team Black's clue-giver chooses **"FUTILE"** as his next public clue.

Team Blue guesses **"WILD GOOSE CHASE,"** which is correct, so the round is over. Team Blue scored one point of the five needed to win. Team Blue adds a hash mark to their score, and the Public Clue Board is erased before the start of the next round.

Rules Summary

START OF ROUND

Select clue-givers

Each team chooses a clue-giver

Clue-givers sit next to one another with their respective teammates across the table from them.

Select Keyword

Clue-givers draw a Keyword Card and select the same Keyword, either by agreeing or by selecting randomly using the die.

Give Private Clues

Clue-givers each secretly write a one-word clue on their Private Clue Board and pass it to their team face-down.

Give Public Clues

A clue-giver writes a one-word clue on the Public Clue Board.

Which clue-giver provides the first Public Clue is decided by the clue-giver of the team that did not score in the previous round. Randomly decide who goes first at the start of the game.

The Timer

If a player/team is taking too long, then any player can flip the sand timer and ask them to make a decision before time runs out.

The timer is meant to be a tool to speed along the game, and not as a timer for decisions on every turn.

Clue Rules

- Clues must be a single word. They can be compound words (toothbrush), but hyphens, spaces, and phrases are not allowed (high-tech, vice president, kick the bucket).
- Clues must be real words (grrr, mmmm, !, ?, >).
- Clues may NOT be in a different language unless that word is also standard English ("hola" is not OK, while "foyer" is acceptable).
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- Extra communication about the clue is forbidden, including facial expressions and intonation ("This clue may be a bit of a stretch." or "Take this literally!").

ALTERNATE
CLUE-GIVER

INCORRECT
GUESS

Opposing Team Guesses

The opposing teammates of the clue-giver who just provided the Public Clue may make a single guess.

You may opt to pass in order to not reveal information about your Private Clue.

CORRECT GUESS

END OF ROUND

The team that guessed the Keyword correctly earns one point. Restart another round and rotate clue-givers for each team.

First team to reach five points wins!