

## Props Needed

Check	Prop	Starts with
v	Circus Cashbox – Contains \$200	Buried by Bobo
	A Diamond Ring	Buried by Bobo
	Box of Chocolates	Jack Bungling
	Bouquet of Flowers	Jack Bungling
	Packet of Drugs	Douglas Credenza
	Medical Scanner	Bartholomew Credenza
	Greasepaint Kit	Binky the Clown
V	Bag of Kidney Stones (7)	Binky the Clown
	An Old Book	Strong Woman
v	Heavy Weights	Strong Woman
	Ring of Fire	On Stage for Lion Tamer
loan	Fiddle	Rupert Townshed
	Fake Beard	Bearded Lady
	Certificate of Authenticity	Bearded Lady
	Birthmark Tattoo	Bearded Lady
	Unicycle	Sword Swallower
	Swords and Torches	Sword Swallower
	Red Crepe Paper	Fire
	Greasepaint Kit	Zelda the Clown
v	Snake	Señora Mysterioso
v	Crystal Ball	Señora Mysterioso
loan	Freedonian Royal Jewels Scepter, Signet Ring, Large Gemstone	Señora Mysterioso
	Diamond Engagement Ring	Señora Mysterioso
v	Masks	The Masked Rider
	Badge of Office	Buried by Bobo
	Throwing Knives	Knife Thrower
	Temporary Tattoos	Lydia the Tattooed Lady
	Tattoo of Royal Seal of Fandonia	Lydia the Tattooed Lady
	Greasepaint Kit	Zimmie the Clown
	Balloon Animal Balloons	Zimmie the Clown
	Balloon Animal Balloons	Binky the Clown

## The Crowd (for Rulebook)

The circus lives and dies by the crowd. Happy crowds bring in money. Unhappy crowds can kill a circus.

At our game we will have a sign to show the mood of the crowd. The sign can be one of three colors:

- Green – The crowd is happy.
- Yellow – The crowd is unhappy or neutral.
- Red – The crowd is panicked may actively be fleeing the circus.

Additionally, the sign may have a one word verbal descriptor of the crowd. (“Happy,” “Enthusiastic,” “Bored,” “Horried,” “Dead” and so forth). Obviously, it is much easier to lower the mood of the crowd than to raise it, and once it gets to a certain level in Red, it may be impossible to raise it again.

Every fifteen minutes during the sideshow (one half hour into the game until one and a half hours into the game), Colonel Rawhide will collect money based on the mood of the crowd. Green is \$40, Yellow is \$20, and Red is nothing. This will happen four times.

During the sideshow, each side show performer may perform to attempt to raise the spirits of the crowd. The mood of the crowd will automatically lower if nobody tries to keep the mood up.

Colonel Rawhide will also collect money after each main tent performance. Green is \$40, Yellow is \$20 and Red is nothing. Before the main tent performance starts (two hours into the game), Colonel Rawhide will have to schedule the performers in order and present that order to the Performance Roustabout.

One of the Roustabouts will be tagged as the performance Roustabout. To perform in the side show and before performing in the main tent, see the performance Roustabout. You may have to do a small game mechanic before your performance to determine how you did. After your performance, the Roustabout will update the crowd status and – if appropriate – pay Colonel Rawhide.

The crowd starts at Green, but just at the very bottom of Green.

## Performance (GM guide)

To perform, the performer must play a game of MENKS against the Roustabout. The Roustabout has a number of cards to determine the difficulty (both for performer and the Roustabout). The performer goes first. If the performer wins, then up the crowd's attitude. If the performer loses, then lower the crowd's attitude.

Have the Performers do the MENKS before their act, if they perform. Then they can incorporate the success or failure into their act.

Note that attitude is a bit more complex than presented to the players. Each color is split into three sub sections. Keep track of what section the crowd is in and raise and lower it by one each act. If a new level doesn't make sense, then feel free to leave it at the level that makes sense. In the case of spectacular successes or disasters, change the level appropriately.

When each performer comes in to do their act, the explain that they'll have to play MENKS in order to gauge success, then deal out cards to both sides, **then** offer "now- this is for your standard act. You can try to be extra showy, to perform that trick you've never quite managed in public before- in which case, I will double the number of cards I have." Finally, once **that** has been determined, if the act has been sabotaged, the deal yourself extra cards and inform the player "something here seems terribly wrong."

Color	Level	Meaning
Green	9	Crowd is ecstatic. This is the best the crowd can be.
Green	8	Crowd is very happy.
Green	7	Crowd is happy. <b>This is where the crowd starts.</b>
Yellow	6	Crowd is neutral.
Yellow	5	Crowd is bored.
Yellow	4	Crowd is unhappy with the show.
Red	3	Crowd hates the show. Booooooooo! They're leaving
Red	2	Crowd has just witnessed something horrifying, like a death, or they are in fear for their lives.
Red	1	Crowd has dispersed. There is no crowd left. The crowd cannot be affected for half an hour. After a half an hour, curious onlookers arrive. Raise the level back to 5 (Yellow).

If the act is sabotaged, up the number of cards the Roustabout has. Players can also choose to do poorly to simulate bad acts.

If the player actually puts on an impressive act, feel free to raise the enthusiasm even in the MENKS fails, or raise it by 2 if MENKS succeeds.

If the player wants, they can try a more difficult or impressive act. If so, double the number of Roustabout cards, but it is double success or failure.

#### Sideshow Performers

Performer	Performer Cards	Roustabout Cards	Notes
Strong Woman	7	3	If successful, raise crowd by 2
Bearded Lady	5	4	
Lydia	5	4	
Señora Misterioso	7	5	
Bobo	5	4	
Townsheds	5/5	10	Each brother gets 5 cards. They may work together to choose which cards to play.

#### Main Tent Performers

Performer	Performer Cards	Roustabout Cards	Notes
Credenza Brothers	→	→	This is really complex. If they have not synced, then they fail, period. If it is just Alexander and Bartholomew, then lower the crowd by one, but if they haven't synced and they include Clifford or Douglas, then someone (choose randomly) falls, is hurt, and the crowd gets lowered to 3. If they have synced and they aren't temporarily insane (only if Douglas is not part of it), then they have a chance. Give each performer 5 cards and the Roustabout 10 cards. Any performer can play on a card. If they have synced and are temporarily insane, they do a SPECTACULAR act. Raise the enthusiasm by two, but tell them that they cannot remember the details of their act at all.
The Lion Tamer	→	→	Must Fight, using full MENKs, against 3 animals at once. Each animal has 4 MENKs cards, but if they are drugged, the animal have 8 MENKSs cards each. If the animals are not drugged, then success and failure as normal. If succeeds against drugged, then raise the enthusiasm by two. If failed against drugged, then the Tamer is ripped open and "killed," (recovers in five minutes). Lower enthusiasm to 2. The animals now must be calmed by other performers, and have 8 MENKs cards each. Remember, wild animals can escape from open cages, lower enthusiasm to 1 if this happens. You may wish to get an additional Roustabout to help you with this act.
Fire Eater	→	→	Normally Performer: 7, Roustabout 3, but if sabotage, raise Roustabout to 9. If sabotaged, the torches burn out of control. If the fire eater fails, then he is alight in fire and it must be put out, and then it is shown that he isn't harmed. The audience will think it was some sort of trick and you should raise their enthusiasm by 1.
Masked Rider	7	3	
Knife Thrower	7	3	
The Great Zamboni	7	4	

Binky the Clown	→	→	Binky automatically succeeds, raising the crowd's enthusiasm by 2.
Zelda the Clown	6	4	
Zimmie the Clown	4	5	

## MENKS

Our combat system is Mike's Extremely Noisy Combat System (MENKS). We will also be using MENKS for other things, such as performing. You should have a number of MENKS cards in your character packet. How many? Well, you'll also have a booklet of Special Abilities, and the number of MENKS cards should be on the cover. Keep your MENKS cards with you. We will also have a clearly labeled MENKS box, which is a repository for used MENKS cards.

If you want to attack someone, point at that person and say "Combat," or "Hey Rube!" or some other phrase that makes it clear you're attacking. Each of you should then pull out your MENKS cards. If you don't have yours, then you can get some from the MENKS box.

This is how it works. The person who started the fight plays one of the four basic cards: CRASH, BAM, BIFF or POW. If the player doesn't have any of the basic cards then he cannot start the fight; he's too weak or something. After that, players alternate playing cards. The cards state clearly on them what cards they can be played on.

For example, if you have CRASH, BAM, and ZOWIE, and your opponent plays a POW, then you could play your CRASH or your ZOWIE, but not your BAM. When playing the card, make sure to say the sound effect out loud, otherwise it isn't noisy.

If you can not – or choose not to – play a card, then you lose the fight. So the object is to play cards in such a way that your opponent cannot play a card. Of course, since hands are kept private, this can be difficult.

There are five special cards:

- BOOM – After playing this, you can take any card, other than a BOOM, that has already been played in the combat and put it in your hand.
- ZOWIE – Your opponent must play two cards in a row. The first card must be played on the ZOWIE. The second card is played on the first card, as if you played the first card.
- OOF – Your opponent must discard a card of his or her choice. Place the card at the bottom of the already played cards pile. That card can be taken with a BOOM (unless it is a BOOM itself).
- THUMP – When you play THUMP, choose a card name (CRASH, BAM, BIFF, POW, BOOM, ZOWIE, OOF, THUMP, or WAHOO). Your opponent may not play any cards with that name for the rest of the combat. You can still play them, though.
- WAHOO – This card can be played on any card, except WAHOO. Any basic card can be played on it. It is, in essence, a wild card. Strategy tip: Save your WAHOOs until you cannot play another card.

## Multiplayer Combats

These should be avoided. Try to break multiplayer fights into as many one-on-ones as possible.

However, if two (or more) people want to attack someone, then that person should play multiple games of MENKS against the attackers at once.

So if Gordon and Adrienne are attacking Denis, Denis must use his cards to defend against Gordon and Adrienne simultaneously. These are considered two separate combats for the purposes of special cards. He might get lucky and beat one or the other. Or, if Denis knows that Gordon is weak, Denis might choose to lose automatically to Gordon so he can use all his cards in the fight against Adrienne. Remember, you lose if you cannot play a card or choose not to play a card, even if you can. You never *have* to play a card.

## After the Combat

Put all cards played in the MENKS box with the extra cards. Give the box a hefty shake and draw out as many MENKs cards as you started with.

The lose of the fight is at the winner's mercy. The winner can do one of the following:

- Force the loser to answer one question truthfully.
- Force the loser to perform one task, even ones that are against the loser's best interests or core beliefs.
- Tie the loser up, or knock the loser out.
- Damage the loser. See a Roustabout if you want to harm someone else.