

# 01 The Basics

*Because... there are monsters in the world, Justine. They can walk the Earth without seeming any more real than fairy-stories. They make their plans while everyone else is asleep, and they can move the walls of the maze without anybody ever knowing it. And sometimes... one has to be those monsters.* – Godfather Morlock

## The Game

Powered by the Paradox is a game about a group of courageous or even foolhardy idealists attempting to survive and thrive in the fringes of the most significant war in the universe between powers terrible and unimaginable.

As a player you will be participating in missions given to you by higher ranks in the Faction - to travel to far places and distant times and do risky and objectively absurd and irrational tasks.

As the Grandfather, you will be enabling the multiverse of time and space, creating wonder and danger - and keeping player interactions with everything relatively consistent.

## Subsections

This area of the rules includes the following chapters:

- [characters](#)
- [coterie](#)
- [grandfather](#)
- [magic](#)
- [players](#)
- [setting](#)
- [who](#)

## Doctor Who

How this game relates to the almost 70 year history of the BBC franchise of Doctor Who

## It's Magic

Magic in this game is more blatant (but still not fantasy RPG level) than in Doctor Who, which frequently infers the Arthur C Clarke law on any sufficiently advanced science.

## The Characters

How a player in the game can create their character.

## The Coterie

How the characters may be grouped together to form a team.

## The Grandfather

What to do if you are the player in charge or running the plots for the game.

## The Players

A brief description of who plays this game.

## The Setting

A brief description of the setting.

[rules](#), [basics](#)

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## 04 The Characters

The players other than the Grandfather play the protagonists of the game. They are all members of Faction Paradox.

1. Have a look at the [characters](#)
  - **The Chosen One** (an Idealist)  
You are the last scion of Faction Paradox. A character for the headstrong and driven.
  - **The Citizen** (a Postmortem Investigator)  
This is not your first life. You've been to heaven and back for a reason.
  - **The Diplomat** (Diplomat)  
Not every solution has to be a violent solution and some of the convoluted complex solutions do actually work occasionally. Plus there's always fear and intimidation.
  - **The Fighter** (Generalist)  
You are the timeline frontline. More than one player may be a Fighter.
  - **The Homeworlder** (Noble)  
Despite being a Great House approved member, there's a lot of stigma attached to being Gallifreyan.
  - **The Killer** (Brute)  
You were the terror of the galaxy and now you're a time terrorist. You were a Dalek, Cyberman, Sontaran or some other warmongering symbolic representation of fascism.
  - **The Leader** (Mastermind)  
This group is your group, you are the leader. You have responsibility for the coterie and the only vote.
  - **The Potential Recruit** (not yet a member)  
You don't know where you fit into the Faction yet. This playbook is mostly blank and used as a placeholder for when you eventually are recruited.
2. Each Playbook has a number of [backgrounds](#) listed you can choose from. Each has a move attached.
  - The Citizen has specific backgrounds that also determine which [Signature Move](#) you have

[rules](#), [basics](#), [characters](#)

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## 05 The Coterie

The coterie is the collection of protagonists that includes the player characters. They all share a common [Coterie Playbook](#) which tracks collective [moves](#) and states the coterie shares. It also provides a relatively safe base of operations and method of transport as well as preferred mission or adventure types for the game.

[rules](#), [basics](#), [coterie](#)

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## 06 The Grandfather

The premise of the Faction and its founding is the [Grandfather Paradox](#) - so named for the time travel paradox of killing your own Grandfather before you were born. Many of the rituals of the Faction involve praying to, or invoking the idea/concept of the Grandfather. These rules will refer to the person running the game as [Grandfather](#) rather than GM/MC or DM.

That said though, feel free to also use "The Spirits" or if you prefer a gender "God Mother" or "God Father"

[rules](#), [basics](#), [grandfather](#)

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## 02 It's Magic

Yes and no. It's all a matter of sophistry. Is [technobabble](#) in Star Trek magic? Are they performing rituals to have things work? People are doing nonsensical things with physical objects and spouting nonsense words - moving perspex cards round inside lit boxes, or moving fingers symbolically on glass plates full of esoteric glyphs.

### Magic in Doctor Who

Technically Doctor Who has had [magic](#) ever since they decided the main character was slightly psychic and there were species with far greater psychic powers - such as Sutekh in [Pyramids of Mars](#) or Azal in [the Daemons](#). There are even psychic gadgets like the recent [Psychic Paper](#). And then you have the non-technology technologies such as the Lamasteen scanner in [The Lodger](#) or quantum mnemonics: Block Transfer calculations in [Logopolis](#) and the word-science of the Carrionites in the [Shakespeare Code](#).

[Clarke's Law](#) helps alleviate the two camps on whether there is magic in the Doctor Who universe or not by explaining it's just very advanced science we don't understand. This has been further expanded in novels and other media which go into the creation of the web of time and the first moments of the galaxy - the Time Lords set in their rules into the fabric of the universe - and the Grandfather created various backdoor bits of code that could be exploited later.

### Magic in this game

It's there - but it's mostly science. Many of the magics of the Faction are actually invocations of the Spirits - which in this case are semi-sentient eddies and currents in the Vortex that behave like the voodoo loa because the Grandfather and the Faction have spent a long time programming them to do so. Younger and newer members of the Faction often have faith and believe in the Spirits and the Grandfather as supernatural beings, whereas the older and more cynical members have faith they aren't and are sure they're just supranormal entities. What the belief is based on is not important to the Spirits as long as it is belief - a prime example of this is the 8th Doctor using a Faction Shrine with a nonsense rhyme<sup>1)</sup> but believing it enough to activate the correct ritual in [Alien Bodies](#)

But the short answer is - best not to explain it. The mystery is the thing that pretty much defines what magic is for. Magic thinking has been weaponised by the Faction and mostly it gets pointed at the correct target.

[rules, basics, magic](#)

<sup>1)</sup>

"I'd like to say a few words on this solemn occasion," he intoned. "Rabbits rabbits rabbits. Let sleeping dogs lie. There's many a slip 'twixt a cup and a lap. Boiled beef and carrots."

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## 03 The Players

As a player in the game you are creating a fiction with other players in the game. The fiction is the imaginary story that you collaborate on which informs later choices you make. It has intuitive rules that often follow real life or if they diverge, they do so in ways that you and your fellow players have decided on together.

There are two kinds of player in the game - those that have authority over one character and everything pertaining to that character and actively roleplay what that character does, and one player who has authority over everything else and is the main prompt to the other players to have them react to the universe in general. This player is often referred to in other roleplaying games as the Game Master or Dungeon Master. The player in charge of everything other than the protagonists in this game is called the Grandfather (after the Grandfather Paradox).

[rules](#), [basics](#), [players](#)

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# 01 The Setting

Imagine all of time and space, the entire universe and everything in it. Imagine multiple dimensions, alternate realities, alternate Earths where the Roman Empire conquered the world or where Germany won the second world war. Imagine different timelines where the choices you made in your life went the other way. Now people all of those things with aliens of all shapes and sizes, with technologies so close to magic they're indistinguishable. This is our stage.

In the beginning the Great Houses realised that the universe was fairly structureless and needed to be more organised, tying their biology in with time and in the process of making it linear, creating the web of time, also known as the Spiral Politic. This is the orderly structure of history that is continually maintained and enforced by the Great Houses.

Along comes other sentient life in the universe and their advances in science soon bring them in to meddling in time technologies as well, which the Great Houses now have to police to maintain. One too many retro-active genocides later and you get rebellion in the form of the Enemy, which is set on de-regulating time and specifically destroying everything to do with the Great Houses.

Then there's the Faction (or House Paradox as it was first called) - punks to Thatcher's Britain, rebels to the Empire. The disaffected time active youth who got out of the Great Houses when rebellion was cool and before it went mainstream with the Enemy. The Faction doesn't want to destroy or overthrow anything, they just want some freedom, a say in events, and the ability to snub their noses at both the Great Houses and the Enemy.

[rules](#), [basics](#), [setting](#)

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# 07 Doctor Who

Ever since there were creative differences after the first 4-5 books that had Faction Paradox in them, official media for the Faction has not had a Doctor Who license from the BBC. So apart from the Sontarans (because the creator of that race also writes for the Faction) - all trademarked phrases have been dropped from FP material. I lapse between FP terms and DW terms throughout these rules, so a short translation table will help. If this ever becomes an "official" Faction Paradox RPG, the rules will all be edited to remove Doctor Who references.

## Translation

Faction Paradox	Doctor Who
Breeding Engines	Looms
Caldera	Eye of Harmony
Casts	N-Forms and/or Shaydes
Celestis	CIA <sup>2)</sup>
Eremites	Followers of the Pythia??
Evil Renegade	The Doctor
Great Houses	Time Lords
Hall of Addresses	Panoptican??
HEM	Skin of <a href="#">the Cold</a>
Homeworld	Gallifrey (or Gallifrey VIII)
Interventionists	CIA
Imperator Presidency	Morbius
Mal'akh	Vampires
Matter Altering Equations	Block Transfer Equations
Archemathics	Block Transfer Mathematics
Prison Planet	Shada
Protocols of the Great Houses	Laws of Time
Ruling Houses	High Council
Timeship	TARDIS
War King	The Master
War Queen	<del>President Romana</del> Lolita
Yssgaroth War	Vampire War / Eternal War
#-Form Timeship	Type # TARDIS

# The Doctor

For more information on the relationship between the Doctor themselves and the Faction, please see [factiondoctor](#)

[rules](#), [basics](#), [doctor who](#)

<sup>2)</sup>

The Celestial Intervention Agency, not the sinister organisation

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