

Horror Roleplaying in the Worlds of H.P. Lovecraft

# CALL of CTHULHU<sup>®</sup>

KEEPER RULEBOOK

## Conversion Guidelines

How to upgrade your scenarios and  
investigators to 7th edition

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## Appendix II: Converting to 7th Edition Rules

### Converting Material from Previous Editions of Call of Cthulhu

If you are accustomed to previous editions of these rules, you'll notice some changes have been made in 7th Edition. These rules are intended to allow materials from all previous editions of *Call of Cthulhu* to be made compatible with 7th Edition using minimal effort. Some of these changes are discussed here with the intention of providing the reader with an understanding of the thinking behind them.

### Converting Investigators

If players have existing investigators that they wish to convert for use with 7th Edition, follow these instructions. Given the limited life-expectancy of the average investigator, this is unlikely to be much of a concern for many players!

#### Characteristics

The decision was taken to unify characteristics and skills; both are now on a comparable percentage scale. The intention is to make it easier to compare and make opposed rolls using a mixture of skills and characteristics.

The aim is for all of the math to be done when creating an investigator rather than in the middle of a game. You do not have to write all of the half and fifth values on the investigator sheet, however we've found that doing so speeds up play, especially when players are asked to make a roll and announce the level of success.

The decision was made to divorce Luck from POW since the latter is of great significance elsewhere in the game. For that reason Luck is now rolled randomly (3D6 x 5).

EDU is no longer the only characteristic used to generate Occupational Skill Points. Some characters may have a low level of education but be extremely proficient in some of the less academic skills. This also lends more value to APP in the game.

We considered the option of associating a characteristic with each skill (as with Dodge and DEX) but decided against this approach. The idea is sound enough: it makes perfect sense for one's base skill in Charm to be one-fifth of Appearance, for example. We decided against this approach for three reasons:

- ⑨ Using characteristic values introduces additional work during investigator creation.
- ⑨ One-fifth of a characteristic will be between 3 and 18. If it is a skill in which you are likely to spend points,

the benefit of using one-fifth of the characteristic did not seem significant enough to justify the added complication.

- ⑨ The characteristics feed into skill points to a limited degree. A variety of characteristics are used to calculate skill points, depending on your investigator's chosen occupation.

We chose to keep the link between Dodge and DEX, since it has always been that way.

The STR, DEX, CON, SIZ, APP, INT, POW, and EDU characteristics (see note following) of previous editions now provide the one-fifth values. Multiply these by five for the full

### Characteristic Conversion

| 7 <sup>th</sup> Ed.<br>Characteristic | Divided by 5 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 15                                    | 3            |
| 20                                    | 4            |
| 25                                    | 5            |
| 30                                    | 6            |
| 35                                    | 7            |
| 40                                    | 8            |
| 45                                    | 9            |
| 50                                    | 10           |
| 55                                    | 11           |
| 60                                    | 12           |
| 65                                    | 13           |
| 70                                    | 14           |
| 75                                    | 15           |
| 80                                    | 16           |
| 85                                    | 17           |
| 90                                    | 18           |
| 95                                    | 19           |
| 100                                   | 20           |

values and divide this new value by two, rounding down, for the one-half value.

Luck points and hit points may be left unchanged. The SAN characteristic served only to set starting Sanity points and is no longer recorded as a characteristic.

Education (EDU) scores higher than 18 required additional modification, as per **Table XVI: EDU Conversion**.

### Age

Previous editions contained rules for aging and, while these vary a little from 7th Edition rules, there is no need to redo the effects of age. Damage bonus will remain unaltered, however the movement rate (see **Movement Rate**, page 33) should be checked and Build should be added (see **Damage Bonus and Build**, page 33).

### Damage Bonus

Lower damage bonuses have been changed in 7th Edition.

| 7 <sup>th</sup> edition Damage Bonus | 6 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> editions |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| -1                                   | -1D4                                       |
| -2                                   | -1D6                                       |

### Hit Points

In 7th Edition, hit points are derived by adding CON + SIZ and dividing by 10, rounding down. Thus, a cultist with CON 60 + SIZ 65 totals 125 divided by 10, yielding 12.5. He has 12 hit points.

In earlier editions, hit points were the average of CON + SIZ, rounded up. The same cultist would have CON 12 + SIZ 13, averaged to 12.5 and rounded up to 13 hit points.

Thus, some enemies and non-player characters may have 1 hit point fewer in 7th Edition than in previous editions. It is recommended that the Keeper ignore this difference for monsters and enemies.

### Build

7th Edition introduces Build, which is used when determining fighting maneuvers and also chases, and is derived from STR and SIZ (see **Damage Bonus and Build**, page 33).

### Movement Rate

In 6th Edition, all human movement rates are the same (8), whereas 7th Edition introduces scaled movement values (see **Movement Rate**, page 33). It is recommended (for simplicity) that the Keeper uses the movement values as given when using material written for previous editions.

### Skill Pool

Many of the skills remain unchanged and the values can simply be transferred to the 7th Edition investigator sheet. Where points were spent in a skill that no longer exists, these

**Table XVI:  
EDU Conversion**

| EDU (6 <sup>th</sup> Edition) | EDU (7 <sup>th</sup> Edition) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 18                            | 90                            |
| 19                            | 91                            |
| 20                            | 92                            |
| 21                            | 93                            |
| 22                            | 94                            |
| 23                            | 95                            |
| 24                            | 96                            |
| 25                            | 97                            |
| 26                            | 98                            |
| 27+                           | 99                            |

points should be recorded in a Skill Pool for later distribution. When adding points to the skill pool, take care not to include the Base Values (note that some base values have changed between editions).

This pool is redistributed among the 7th Edition skills with the aim of creating a similar character. When distributing the skill pool, consider spending points in the new 7th Edition skills, especially Charm and Intimidate.

Some skills from previous editions have been amalgamated. This was done where a skill in one area would clearly confer a higher level of skill in a related area, such as with rifle and shotgun. The two weapons are different in many respects, but someone who is proficient with a shotgun will have a great advantage over an untrained person when using a rifle.

Any skill points that have been pooled as a result of amalgamated or removed skills should now be distributed as the player sees fit. The Keeper may wish to enforce a cap of 75% on starting skills.

*Rifle and Shotgun were previously two separate skills, but have now been amalgamated. 6th Edition Archie has Rifle 40% and Shotgun 70%. The 6th Edition base values were Rifle 25% and Shotgun 30%. Archie's Rifle skill has been raised by 15%, his shotgun skill by 40%. The base value for Archie's 7th Edition skill Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) is 25%, to which is added the greater of the two values (40%) to give a Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) skill of 65%. The 15% that was left unused is added to Archie's Skill Pool.*

With the Keeper's permission, some points may be transferred between skills to adjust or balance an investigator if required.

A complete list of skills and their new titles appears nearby.

### Credit Rating

If your character already has a recorded value for their wealth, this may remain unchanged. Otherwise, figure your investigator's wealth according to their Credit Rating score—see **Cash and Assets**, page 45.

### Combat Skills (Kick, Punch, Head Butt, Grapple, Knife, and Club)

Each unarmed attack had its own individual skill in previous editions. These have now been amalgamated into one skill: Fighting (Brawl). If your investigator is up close with someone, a head-butt might be the most appropriate form of attack. If the target is on the ground, a kick might be more fitting. The player is encouraged to choose a form of attack that fits the situation rather than tactically using their highest skill.

Basic weapons, such as clubs and knives, are now included in the Fighting (Brawl) skill. If your investigator is attacked, he or she may grab a kitchen knife in preference to being unarmed, but would they do so if it meant using a lower skill value? A skilled fighter is likely to be able to put any knife or club to good use.

## Converting Non-Player Characters, Gods, Beasts and Monsters

Human NPCs that are fully detailed may be converted using the same rules as for investigators (above). Usually NPCs are less detailed than investigators and may be converted using the guidelines for monsters.

**Characteristics:** Characteristic scores from previous editions are simply multiplied by five to provide 7th Edition values. Since characteristics for NPCs and monsters are mostly used for setting the difficulty level for players' skill rolls, there is no need to record the half and fifth values.

**Skills:** Most NPCs and monsters have only a limited number of skills listed, which for the most part can remain for 7th Edition use. If the character has skills no longer used in 7th Edition then assign the value to a comparable skill.

**Fighting skill:** Many beings have multiple attack values listed and, for the most part, these should be amalgamated into one Fighting skill. Review the listed attacks and use the highest for the creature's Fighting skill. Punch is the only exception to this, since it previously began at 50% in the case of human NPCs, so reduce their punch skill by 25% to create balance.

| 7 <sup>th</sup> Edition  | 6 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Editions |
|--------------------------|--|
| Appraise                 | –  |
| Charm                    | –  |
| Intimidate               | –  |
| Survival                 | –  |
| Art/Craft (Photography)  | Photography                                |
| Fighting (Brawl)         | Fist/Punch                                 |
| Fighting (Brawl)         | Grapple                                    |
| Fighting (Brawl)         | Head Butt                                  |
| Fighting (Brawl)         | Kick                                       |
| Fighting (Brawl)         | Knife                                      |
| Fighting (Brawl)         | Martial Arts                               |
| Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) | Rifle                                      |
| Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) | Shotgun                                    |
| Idea roll (rare)         | Idea roll                                  |
| Intelligence roll        | Idea roll                                  |
| Natural World            | Natural History                            |
| Persuade                 | Debate                                     |
| Persuade                 | Bargain                                    |
| Persuade                 | Oratory                                    |
| Science (Astronomy)      | Astronomy                                  |
| Science (Biology)        | Biology                                    |
| Science (Chemistry)      | Chemistry                                  |
| Science (Geology)        | Geology                                    |
| Science (Pharmacy)       | Pharmacy                                   |
| Science (Physics)        | Physics                                    |
| Sleight of Hand          | Conceal                                    |
| Sleight of Hand          | Pick Pocket                                |
| Stealth                  | Hide                                       |
| Stealth                  | Sneak                                      |

**Number of attacks per round:** Review the monster's description and figure how many attacks it may make per round, and if any of its attacks are limited in the number of times they may be used in a single round.

**Other forms of attack:** Many monsters have unique forms of attack. Where possible try to encompass these attacks, such as claws or tentacles, under the umbrella skill of Fighting, adding

some notes on how to narrate the attacks. If the attack does something other than simply causing damage, create a Fighting Maneuver that replicates the effects of the attack. If the effect is simply to grab or knock an opponent to the floor, this can simply be performed with a maneuver (see **Fighting Maneuvers**, page 105) using the creature's basic Fighting skill. Take care to multiply any effects to characteristics by 5, and if need be, substituting a dice combination that approximates the new range of effect.

**Other characteristics:** The monster's damage bonus, hit points, armor, and MOV remain unchanged.

## Converting Scenarios

One of the great virtues for many players of *Call of Cthulhu* is the wealth of published scenarios and campaigns that have been published over the years. All of these can be used with the new 7th Edition *Call of Cthulhu* rules with only a few minor rules modifications.

### Idea Rolls

It is important to note the difference between Intelligence rolls and Idea rolls in *Call of Cthulhu* 7th Edition.

*Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath.* To begin with, its average characteristics in 6th Edition are multiplied by 5. Where two values are listed (shown in brackets below) the Keeper may choose to take either the average or the higher one at his or her discretion.

| 6th Ed. |                  | 7th Ed.   |
|---------|------------------|-----------|
| STR     | 44 x 5           | = STR 220 |
| CON     | (16-17) 16.5 x 5 | = CON 82  |
| SIZ     | 44 x 5           | = SIZ 220 |
| DEX     | (16-17) 16.5 x 5 | = DEX 82  |
| INT     | 14 x 5           | = INT 70  |
| POW     | (17-18) 18 x 5   | = POW 90  |

The dark young has the following attacks listed in 6th Edition.

**ATTACKS & SPECIAL EFFECTS:** In its masses of tentacles, a typical dark young has four thicker sinuous tentacles with which it attacks. Each of these thicker tentacles can strike out to injure or to grab and capture once per round, conceivably at four different targets. If a victim is grabbed, he or she is held to one of the horrible sucking mouths and drained of 1D3 STR per round. This STR loss cannot be restored. While being drained, a victim is capable only of ineffectual writhing and screaming. The dark young can also trample with its massive hooves, typically hooting and bellowing as it does.

Weapons: Tentacle 80%, damage DB + STR drain

Trample 40%, damage 2D6 + DB

For 7th Edition these are altered as follows. First a number of attacks per round is figured. The text informs us that the dark young can attack 4 times with its tentacles and once with its hooves, thus it has 5 attacks per round:

**Attacks per round:** 5. It may only use its Trample attack once per round.

Then the creature's basic Fighting attack is figured. Its most common attack is tentacle, so this value is used, setting its Fighting attack to 80%. Advice is offered on how to describe the attacks, centering around, but not limited to, the use of the tentacles. The Keeper may use the tentacles every time, but may feel this is repetitive and may prefer to use kicks or describe the dark young's bulk simply crushing opponents.

A key feature of the dark young's attacks is that it can grab investigators with its tentacles. This can be done using a fighting maneuver and the use of its Fighting skill, so there is no need for an additional skill to accommodate this. The effect on STR of the strength drain is multiplied by 5; 1D3 gives a range of 1 to 3, multiplied by 5 would give a range of 5 to 15, so this is set to 1D10+5.

**Fighting attacks:** In its masses of tentacles, a typical dark young has four thicker sinuous tentacles with which it attacks. Each of these thicker tentacles can strike out to injure. It may also kick out with its hooves or simply crush or strike with its massive bulk.

**Grab (fighting maneuver):** The dark young can use its tentacles to grab and capture up to four victims. If a victim is grabbed, he or she is held to one of the horrible sucking mouths and drained of 1D10+5 STR per round. This STR loss cannot be restored. While being drained, a victim is capable only of ineffectual writhing and screaming.

**Trample:** The dark young can also trample with its massive hooves, typically hooting and bellowing as it rears up then attempts to trample as many opponents as it can (up to 1D4 humans if they are situated close together).

Fighting 80% (40/16), damage bonus

Grab (fighting maneuver) grabbed and held for 1D10 + 5 STR drain per round

Trample 40% (20/8), damage 2D6 + damage bonus

The Idea roll was commonly used to put the players back on track in older scenarios. Two aspects of the 7th Edition rules come into play here. First, remember not to ask for rolls to uncover clues that you want to players to find (see **Obvious Clues**, page 202). Secondly, the new **Idea roll** (see page 199) has a far more significant effect on play than in previous editions and should only be used occasionally.

- ✦ An Intelligence (INT) roll may be called for by the Keeper when an investigator is attempting to solve an intellectual puzzle of some kind.
- ✦ An Idea roll is made when the players have become stuck at a point in the investigation; perhaps they have missed a vital clue, or just don't know what to do next and the game has stalled. The Idea roll allows the Keeper to get the investigation back on track.

## Skill Modifiers

Where small skill modifiers (of +5 or less) are listed these may be ignored.

To approximate this, assume that a bonus die means a +20% chance, and that a penalty die means a -20% chance.

If a listed modifier seems significant to the Keeper, consider either changing the difficulty level or applying a penalty or bonus die depending on the situation. This may cause some skill rolls to become less likely to succeed, but players now have the option to push the roll.

*An entry in the scenario "Tatters of the King" reads, "If the interview is handled well and the interviewer can either provide some proof of their professional interest in the university and in the expedition, or they succeed in a Fast Talk roll (-10 percentiles if they are operating through an interpreter), Bacci is very helpful."*

*Rather than adjusting the skill roll by 10 percentiles, the Keeper should increase the level of difficulty from Regular to Hard if the investigators are operating through an interpreter.*

## Social Interaction

Where calls for Fast Talk, Bargain, or Persuade are called for, consider if Intimidate or Charm might also be options. This is often obvious from the context, but be prepared to be flexible if your players use one of the new skills in a way you were not expecting.

## Pushing Skill Rolls

This will not be mentioned in publications that pre-date 7th Edition. Often a scenario may include a consequence of failing a skill roll. The Keeper should consider whether such a complication should occur immediately or be reserved as the consequence of failing a pushed roll.

*Using the example above, one of the players seeks to Intimidate Bacci in his office, drawing a gun and yelling demands at him in Italian. The Keeper refers to **Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate, and Persuade Skills: Difficulty Levels** (see page 93). No skill values are listed for Bacci; he's an academic and the Keeper decides that Bacci would not possess Intimidate or Psychology skill in excess of 50%, and so sets the difficulty level to Regular. Bacci is not inclined to divulge details of the expedition to just anyone, but neither is he strongly motivated to keep it secret. The investigator is waving a gun in Bacci's face, so the difficulty level should be made easier. The Keeper rules that the player will succeed unless the Intimidate roll is fumbled. The player fumbles their Intimidate roll. Bacci calls for help and attempts to grab the investigator's gun. A scuffle has broken out and the Keeper switches to combat rounds.*

## Characteristic Rolls

Where characteristic rolls are called for you, should use the following guide.

- ✦ Characteristic x 1 (e.g. POW x 1, STR x 1): use Extreme difficulty level (one-fifth of characteristic).
- ✦ Characteristic x 2 or x 3 (e.g. POW x 2, STR x 3): use Hard difficulty level (half of characteristic).
- ✦ Characteristic x 4 or x 5 or x 6 (e.g. POW x 4, STR x 5): use Regular difficulty level (full characteristic).
- ✦ Characteristic x 7 or x 8 (e.g. POW x 7, STR x 8): use Regular difficulty level (full characteristic) with one bonus die.

## Opposed Rolls and the Resistance Table

7th Edition does not use the Resistance Table from previous editions. Instead, opposed rolls are made. Each opposing party makes a roll under the required skill or characteristic, aiming to roll under their own value while achieving a higher degree of success than the opposing value.

For 6th Edition and earlier, for any mention of a Resistance roll or the Resistance Table, use an opposed roll instead. Thus, making a Resistance Table roll against STR 16 is now opposing a STR of 80. Opposing a sorcerer's POW 18 on the Resistance Table is now an opposed roll against POW 90.

## Poison Potency

In earlier versions of *Call of Cthulhu*, each poison had a Potency (POT) value. The higher the POT value, the more deadly the poison. Use this reckoner to convert old POT values to the poison bands.

| POT   | Poison Band |
|-------|-------------|
| 1-9   | Mild        |
| 10—19 | Strong      |
| 20+   | Lethal      |

## Tomes

Each tome has a value that denotes the number of Cthulhu Mythos skill points that are gained when a character reads the book. In 7th Edition, the total amount of Cthulhu Mythos points remains unchanged, but is divided into two values: Cthulhu Mythos Initial (CMI) for an initial reading of the book (akin to “skim reading”), and Cthulhu Mythos Full (CMF) for a proper, full reading and study of the text.

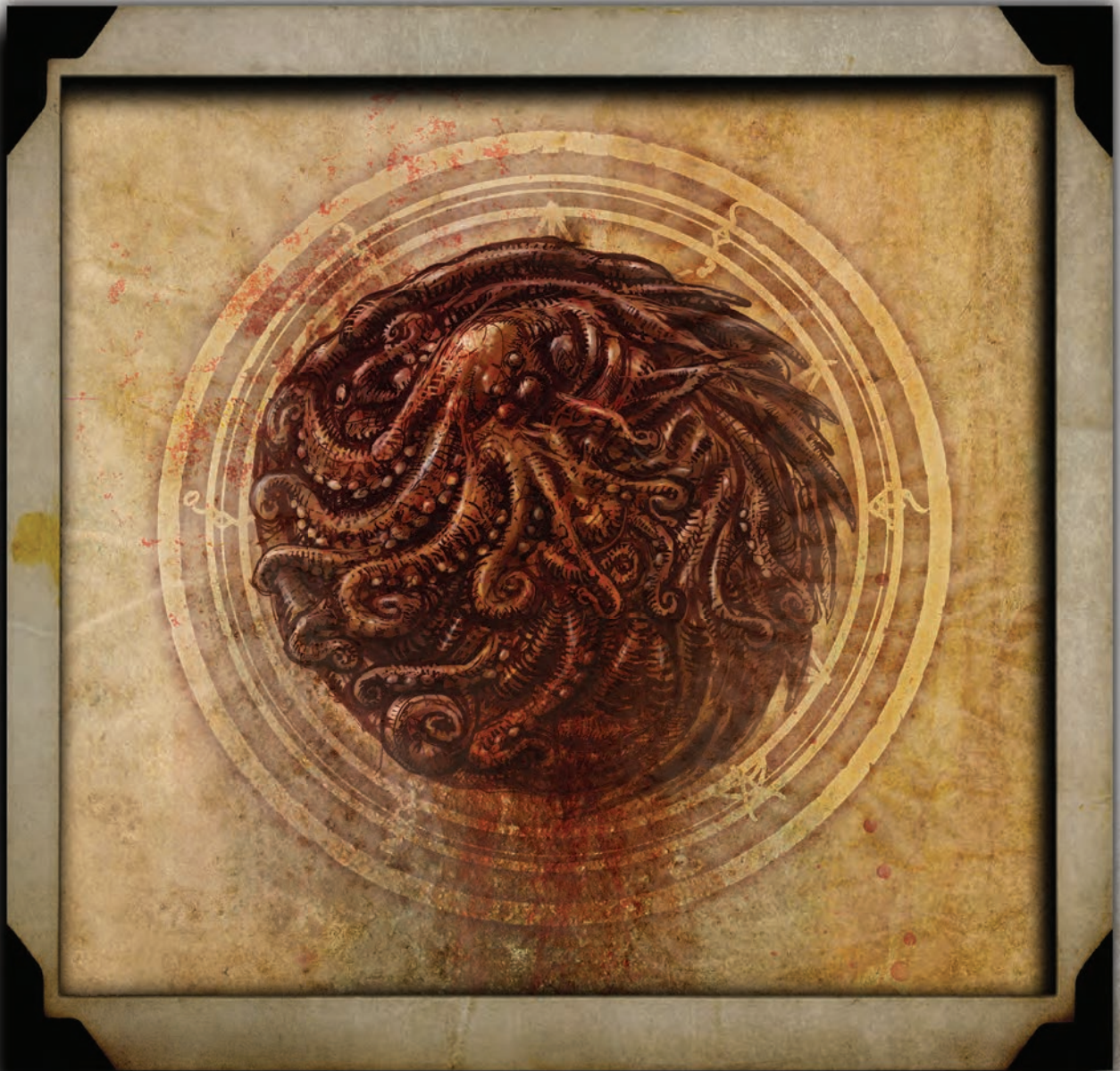
To figure the two values, simply divide the 6th Edition Cthulhu Mythos value of the tome by three and round down; this is the amount of points gained for an initial reading (CMI). The remainder of the points are those gained for a full study reading (CMF).

*In 6th Edition, the Eltdown Shards has a Cthulhu Mythos +11%. Divided by three, this gives a value +3% for the initial reading, and +8% for the full study (+3%/+8%).*

## Conclusion

*Call of Cthulhu* was created over 30 years ago by Sandy Petersen. There have been very few changes in those 30 years. The aim of this new edition is to retain the aspects that made *Call of Cthulhu* so much fun to play and at the same time introduce some new rules that provide the Keeper and players with additional ways to create drama and excitement, such as the ability to push rolls and run chase scenes.

We hope that you enjoy this new edition.



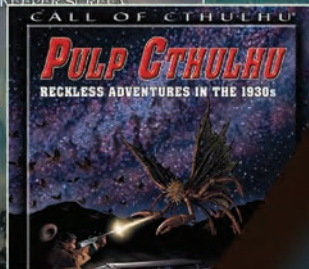
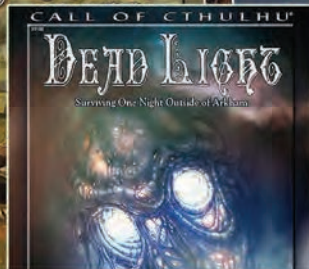
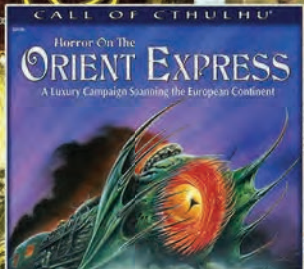




# CALL of CTHULHU

7th Edition

*These recent releases are all written for Call of Cthulhu 7th Edition*



*All Call of Cthulhu supplements  
& scenarios for earlier editions  
are compatible with this  
new edition!*



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“That is not dead which can eternal lie,  
And with strange aeons even death may die.”

—H.P. Lovecraft

# CALL of CTHULHU

## KEEPER RULEBOOK

*The Old Ones ruled the earth aeons before the rise of man. Traces of their cyclopean cities can still be found on remote islands, buried amid the shifting desert sands, and in the frozen wastes of the polar extremes. Originally they came to this world from the stars. They sleep now, some deep within the earth or beneath the sea. When the stars are right they shall again walk the earth.*

*Call of Cthulhu* is a tabletop roleplaying game based upon the worlds of H. P. Lovecraft. It is a game of secrets, mysteries, and horror. Playing the role of steadfast investigators, you travel to strange and dangerous places, uncover foul plots, and stand against the terrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. You encounter sanity-blasting entities, monsters, and insane cultists. Within strange and forgotten tomes of lore you discover revelations that man was not meant to know. You and your companions may very well decide the fate of the world.

This book, the **Keeper Rulebook**, contains the core rules, background, guidance, spells, and monsters of the game. It is intended for use by the Keeper of Arcane Lore (the Keeper) — that player who will present the adventure to the other players. You must have at least one copy of this book to play **Call of Cthulhu**. The other players, the Investigators, should have one or more copies of the **Investigator Handbook**, containing expanded rules for character creation, skills, occupations, equipment, and more.

**Call of Cthulhu, 7th edition**, is backwards-compatible with all other available Chaosium titles.

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