

GANGS AT WAR



GAME CHEF 2007

INGREDIENTS

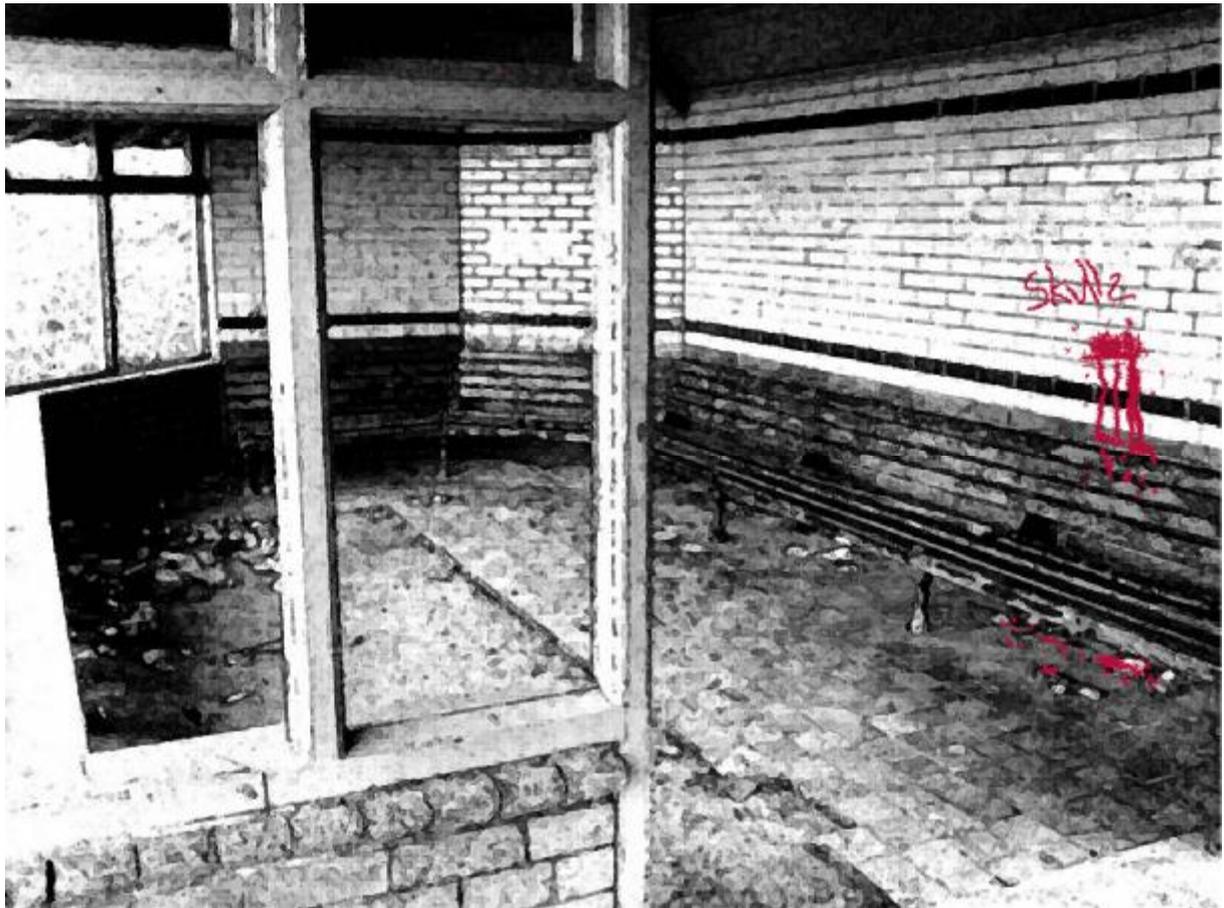
DRUG, CURRENCY & MEMORY



BY THE HITCHER



GANGS AT WAR



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DRUG, CURRENCY & MEMORY

By THE HITCHER

ONE OF THE EPIES, GROUP EPSILON



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GANGS AT WAR

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Play the role of a gang boss. You're locked in a vicious turf war over the drug trade. Blood has been spilled, memories forged and vendettas entrenched. The market is black indeed.

Can one boss achieve total domination?

Gangs at War is a story game for 2 - 6 players.

GaW involves: strategic resource management, card-play and role-play.

To play you need: a deck of cards with jokers, paper and pencils and some counters.

The game involves the following steps:

- i. Agreeing to play and to wagers (social contract level)
- ii. Deciding upon a setting
- iii. Creating gangs and bosses
- iv. Set policing level
- v. Play

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STEP ONE – Strictly social governor

Assemble a group of two or more players. Decide if you are to play for pride or whether cash will be on the table.

Try not to break any laws.

STEP TWO – Fluff it up

The players need to choose where the game will be set.

The game will always be about gang bosses battling to control territory and the drugs trade.

However, within that remit there is wide scope for different settings.

The opium trade in 19th century china, crack dealing in 90s LA, alcohol in the roaring 20s, heroin in Hong Kong, super skunk in Brixton, Compound K on Mars-base Gamma, spleen of siren in the city-state of Greyspyre or a plate of sinners soul in the depths of the seven hells.

Choose an evocative setting.

Be as grognardly historical as you like. Or not.

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STEP THREE – Gang builders

Everyone grabs a gang sheet (pg 28).

Come up with a gang concept.

Write down your gang's name, design their motif (skulls and bleeding knives are encouraged), record any trademark characteristics like: bandana colours, modes of dress, ritual scars, tattoos, race and ethnicity, favoured weapons...etc.

Write down the name of your gang's BOSS, he's your PRIMARY CHARACTER (PC). Draw his mug-shot, no matter how artistically impaired you are.

VENDETTA – write the name of an event or memory which represents a critical flashpoint for the inter-gang feuds. Just go for a name here - you come up with the details later during a nostalgic flashback.

E.g. The River City massacre, Beck's betrayal or Big Thom's funeral.

Each BOSS starts with a single CREW – his loyal lieutenant. Write down the name of your lieutenant. As your CREW expands you will need to create new members. Each CREW member may control a few mooks during scenes.

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Record starting GANG SIZE [1], LOYALTY [3] & CURRENCY [1]
GEAR and TOOLS start at zero.

These values will fluctuate during the game but cannot go below 0. In later games adjust the values as desired.

STEP FOUR – Hot Fuzz

The antitheses to the drug gangs are the filth, the fuzz, the law pigs.

The power of the police greatly affects the game-play.

Get a PRECINCT card and record:

RESPONSE [7] RAID [5] RESIST [10] ARMOURY [5]

For later games you can adjust the values as desired to reflect the setting.

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STEP FIVE – Go play go!

Hand each player a HQ card. Place the PRECINCT, the BATTLEGROUNDS and two TERRITORY cards per player in the centre. If anyone feels like illustrating their cards during the game – go for it!

Each player needs a BOSS counter and some CREW counters. The game works best if each player has distinctive counters.

Play follows a set sequence of scenes or *SLICES*.

PLAY SEQUENCE:

1. Change/declare dealer
2. Addiction draw
3. Boss scenes
4. Assign crews
5. Fights + fallout
6. Other scenes

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SLICE ONE - Pass the deal on the left hand side

Deal passes left. On turn one cut the deck to determine the dealer. Everyone with a HQ gains +1 CURRENCY.

SLICE TWO – The Monkey's Men

Deal each player a card. If the value on the card is equal to or higher than the GANG'S ADDICTION LEVEL (TRACK MARKS) then nothing happens. For every point below the ADDICTION LEVEL, one CREW succumbs.

CREW who succumb to addiction must be placed in own gang TERRITORY and will try to FREEBASE this round.

SLICE THREE – Boss it

Look out there's role-play about. Starting from the dealer's left, describe a scene featuring your BOSS as he decides what action to take this round. BOSSES can:

- CALL OUT another GANG.
- INCITE a mutiny.
- HEADHUNT CREW
- SNITCH to the fuzz.
- ASSAULT the PRECINCT.
- Or act as a CREW (see CREW ACTIONS pg 20).

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CALL OUTS

Move your BOSS to the ARENA. Each other player can either add a BOSS/CREW or lose one LOYALTY. All involved players stake their maximum CREW bid. Then, starting from the dealer's left they choose to run (-1 LOYALTY) or FIGHT for reputation. An unopposed BOSS gains +1 LOYALTY and may redeploy his CREW during the allocation phase. The BATTLEGROUNDS cannot be SEIZED (see CREW actions pg 20).

INCITE MUTINY

Place your BOSS in his HQ. Frame a scene where he tries to provoke enemy CREW to turn on their BOSS. This will only work if a GANG has SIZE > LOYALTY. Choose an enemy GANG. Spend any amount of CURRENCY to engineer this revolt. Draw cards equal to the target's GANG SIZE + CURRENCY spent. The opposing player draws cards equal to his GANG'S LOYALTY. Best hand wins the check. In this case both players may lead. See page 16 for hand scoring.

If you win the check then a number of CREW equal to the SIZE minus LOYALTY shortfall turn against the BOSS. A FIGHT erupts at their HQ. Has the BOSS enough loyal CREW left to survive?

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HEADHUNT

Place your BOSS in his HQ. Pay CURRENCY equal to target crew's LOYALTY, they join your GANG. The CREW's current owner may pay an equal amount and lose one LOYALTY to block the move, in this case you can retain the original CURRENCY.

SNITCH

Place your BOSS on the PRECINCT. SNITCH on one of the other GANGS to try and get the fuzz to RAID them. Draw cards equal to target GANG's total TERRITORIES or total KITCHENS plus SHEDS. Draw an additional card per point of CURRENCY spent as a bribe. The player to your left draws a number of cards equal to the police RESPONSE score. Best hand wins the check. In this case both players may lead. See page 16 for hand scoring. If the SNITCH gets the high hand then the cops will RAID one of the target GANG's TERRITORIES. Otherwise the cops ignore the SNITCH. If the cops succeed in the RAID the TERRITORY reverts to being uncontrolled.

ASSAULT

Place your BOSS on the PRECINCT. It's time to destroy the filth! During the CREW allocation you can send CREW to

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attack the PRECINCT (you'll need a lot). A FIGHT happens there, if you win the cops are killed, the gangland becomes a no-go area and you can SEIZE the PRECINCT as a TERRITORY. The PRECINCT counts as having a number of SHEDS equal to the ARMOURY score.

SLICE FOUR – CREW allocation

Starting with the dealer, each player now places his CREW counters on TERRITORIES. Assign CREW to your own TERRITORIES to work them; or to other territories to attack and SEIZE them. CREW can also be held in reserve CHILLIN' which means they can deploy to reinforce any FIGHT. CREW can only be sent to attack an enemy HQ if the enemy control no other TERRITORY.

Anyone who allocates CREW to undefined TERRITORY must name the TERRITORY and add one point to the card's RESISTANCE, KITCHENS or SHEDS. The player to his left then adds another point to one of the three.

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SLICE FIVE – Fighty time

FIGHTS break out whenever there are opposing forces in a TERRITORY. FIGHTS occur when:

A TERRITORY RESISTS being attacked [stake=TERRITORY]

A GANG answers a CALL OUT [stake=LOYALTY]

CREW mutiny [stake=control of the GANG]

The fuzz raid a TERRITORY [stake=TERRITORY]

A GANG ASSAULTS the PRECINCT [stake=PRECINCT]

Something is always at stake during a FIGHT – usually control of a TERRITORY.

The combat mechanics are inspired by the Asian card game *Gang of Four*.

Each player involved in a FIGHT is dealt a hand of 8 cards.

FIGHTS are resolved one TERRITORY at a time.

FIGHTS consist of three main segments:

I. STARTING HANDS

II. CARDPLAY

III. FALLOUT

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DETERMINING STARTING HAND

Weight of numbers is vital in gang warfare. If a side is outnumbered then their player must give his best card(s) to his opponents. A TERRITORY always counts as having a number of CREW defending it equal to its card's RESISTANCE. Local RESISTANCE and the cops are played by the player to your left, unless he has gang members present in which case control passes left.

If outnumbered give away your highest card to whoever outnumbers you. If you are outnumbered 2:1 or more, even stiffer penalties apply.

Outnumbered 2:1 give away 2 highest

3:1 give 3 highest

4:1 give 4 highest

5+:1 or more give away your five best cards.

BOSSES count as three CREW for determining numbers. Cops have a CREW strength equivalent to RAID on RAIDS and equal to RESIST when defending the PRECINCT.

The players with numerical superiority look at the cards they've been given and choose the same number of cards to return. All cards given away and given in return are passed face up.

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A BOSS may use a nostalgia FLASHBACK to discard and redraw his entire hand at this point. Cards must still be given to numerically superior forces, but not taken by superior forces who use a FLASHBACK. The player must narrate and/or role-play a scene involving the BOSS. This short sequence must draw upon a VENDETTA event. The memory of a fallen CREW member counts as a VENDETTA event. Each EVENT can only be used once in this manner.

All cards are discarded face up. If the deck is exhausted, reshuffle the discards.

Each player draws a number of cards equal to their TOOLS, then chooses and discards the same amount.

Every player with his PC boss present gets to draw a card and discard a card.

Finally, each player may smack his bitches up. Each CREW and BOSS may use a point of GEAR. For everyone that does, discard a card and draw another. Add one to your gang's ADDICTION LEVEL (TRACK MARKS) for each point of GEAR you use in this way.

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CARDPLAY ♥ ♠ ♣ ♦

The object is to play all your cards first. Whoever does this wins the FIGHT stakes, plus a point of LOYALTY (another point of LOYALTY is the stake for ARENA FIGHTS).

Whenever cards are played they should be accompanied with appropriate fight narration or roleplay.

On your turn you may only play cards of equal or better value than the preceding cards. You must play the same number of cards as the leader, unless playing a GANG.

Pairs are legal, and must be beaten by higher pairs or a GANG.

Three card straights (any suits in a running order e.g - 4♠,5♣,6♦) are legal, and can be beaten by higher straights or three of a kind.

Four card straights can only be beaten by a higher 4 card straight or a GANG.

Five card straights can be beaten by a five card flush (all same suit), which can be beaten by a full house (three-

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of-a-kind plus a pair), which can be beaten by a five card straight flush (running and suited e.g. - 3♥,4♥,5♥,6♥,7♥). A 5 card straight flush can only be beaten by a GANG.

What's a fackin' gang then?

Glad you asked. A gang-of-four is four cards of-a-kind (e.g. four jacks). A gang-of-five is four-of-a-kind plus a joker and the best possible single hand is a GANG of six comprised of four aces plus two jokers "BMF". If you ever draw it buy a lottery ticket, seriously. GANGS can always be played, regardless of how many cards were played before.

The most powerful complete hand is two GANGS of four, "a gangbang".

The defender gets to lead first. If there is no defender cut the deck to determine who leads (high card chooses). Play proceeds clockwise.

Any time a combatant cannot (or chooses not to) play a card he must knock and place a FALLOUT card face down in front of him. If every opponent knocks, then the last player to lay a card leads.

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Whenever a player knocks, he has the option to CUT AND RUN. Choosing this option means taking another FALLOUT card and losing the FIGHT. However, CUTTING AND RUNNING means you can discard your hand – which would have become FALLOUT if you'd been defeated. When cutting and running a player should narrate his GANG's exit - perhaps the fuzz show up.

The first player to play all his cards wins the FIGHT. As well as gaining the stakes, the winner may discard one FALLOUT card of his choice. When a player wins, any cards held by other players become FALLOUT.

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FALLOUT

A FALLOUT card's suit determines the effect:

♥ HEART; minus 1 LOYALTY as the GANG loses heart.

♣ CLUB; minus 1 TOOLS. Weaponry is lost or destroyed.

♦ DIAMOND; minus 1 CURRENCY or minus 1 GEAR if CURRENCY is zero. An expensive mistake.

♠ SPADE; minus 1 CREW. A death in the family. Only CREW participating in the FIGHT can be killed. BOSSES can be lost in this manner too!

Narrate/role-play the FALLOUT and record any mechanical changes.

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SLICE SIX – Let's go to work

Now it's time for other scenes. Starting from the dealer's left, each player may narrate/roleplay his allocated CREWS' actions. Remove the CREW's counter from the card after resolving the action. CREW who cut and ran cannot take any further actions. CREW who were CHILLIN' also cannot take any further actions. CREW in uncontrolled TERRITORY can only TRASH it or SEIZE it.

CREW ACTIONS

PUSH – sell gear

RECRUIT – enlist more crew

BUILD – set up another gear kitchen or tool shed

COOK UP – brew or import more gear

TOOL UP – find better weapons

FREEBASE – get high on your own supply

TRASH – wreck the joint

SEIZE – grab the territory

PUSH – the fastest way to make a dirty buck

Each controlled TERRITORY (including HQ) can only be worked by one CREW. This generates 1 CURRENCY. Each CREW pushing can pay 1 GEAR to gain an extra 2 CURRENCY.

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RECRUIT – war always needs more soldiers

Each controlled TERRITORY (including HQ) can be recruited from by a single CREW. This yields a new CREW, write his name on your gang sheet. A CREW on RECRUITMENT can recruit an extra CREW by paying one CURRENCY or one GEAR. If GEAR is used in this manner add one to TRACK MARKS (ADDICTION LEVEL).

BUILD – gangland assets

CREWS can build another KITCHEN or SHED in the TERRITORY they occupy. It takes X CURRENCY plus X CREW to build a new ASSET. X is equal to the number of ASSETS already in the TERRITORY. A CREW can build an ASSET on a TERRITORY without any KITCHENS or SHEDS for 0 CURRENCY.

COOK UP – gear for the cogs of war

One CREW per KITCHEN can COOK UP (or import) a batch of drugs, gain +1 GEAR.

TOOL UP – damage tech

TOOLING UP represents your entire GANG getting better weapons or equipment. A GANG's TOOLS cannot be raised higher than the number of SHEDS they control. Each GANG can TOOL UP once per round. The CREW must be in a TERRITORY with a SHED. TOOLING UP costs X CURRENCY, with X

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equal to current TOOLS level.

FREEBASE – getting even higher

Any CREW can FREEBASE, expending one point of GEAR and gaining one point of LOYALTY. If you have no GEAR you can spend a point of CURRENCY instead. Increase TRACK MARKS by a point every time one of your CREW FREEBASE.

If CREW failing an ADDICTION CHECK cannot FREEBASE due to lack of CURRENCY, subtract 1 LOYALTY per CREW and they can take another action.

TRASH – wreck it

A CREW may elect to trash the TERRITORY they are in, destroying all ASSETS (KITCHENS and SHEDS).

SEIZE – the power swings

A CREW in enemy or uncontrolled TERRITORY may SEIZE the TERRITORY and bring it under their GANG's control. They now own it.

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MORE RULES

DRUG KARMA

If any player does something you think is cool, or adding to the enjoyment of the game you may reward them with +1 GEAR in a fortunate incident.

HOMELESSNESS

If your BOSS loses his HQ, he can gain a new HQ next turn or become another GANG'S LIEUTENANT (with the BOSS's invitation) or turn SUPER-GRASS.

BAD LIEUTENANTS

A LIEUTENANT is a second PC in a GANG. He counts as a CREW, but draws and discards an extra card in FIGHT, like a BOSS. The LIEUTENANT chooses his own allocation and action per round. A LIEUTENANT can INCITE a mutiny against his BOSS. If a MUTINY is declared against the BOSS by another player a LIEUTENANT may choose to lead it or aid his BOSS. BAD LIEUTENANTS may be HEADHUNTED and get to make their own choice about the offer. A LIEUTENANT can also turn SUPER-GRASS.

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CAUGHT BY THE FUZZ

A SUPER-GRASS is placed in the PRECINCT. The only actions he can take are to SNITCH, INCITE a mutiny or set up a new HQ. A SUPER-GRASS can be HEADHUNTED and become a LIEUTENANT.

DEATH

If your boss is killed you may:

- Promote a CREW to become the new BOSS and continue with the same GANG.
- Start again with a new GANG and BOSS.
- Play a LIEUTENANT in another GANG.

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ENDING THE GAME

VICTORY!

If one gang controls all the basic TERRITORIES (not HQs, PRECINCT and ARENA) then they achieve domination, winning the war and the game.

ENDGAME OPTION

After a set number of turns, or amount of time, a final battle takes place. This FIGHT occurs at either the BATTLEGROUND or the PRECINCT (if there is someone to play the cops' hand).

Keep playing hands and taking FALLOUT until only one GANG remains. No-one can CUT AND RUN during the final battle. If involved, the PRECINCT takes FALLOUT too.

The last BOSS standing's player narrates the final outcome of the gang war. Much kudos can be gained by reintegrating vendetta events and highlights from the game!

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THANKS TO

PlayTesters: Jose, Diamond Dave and Fingers McGray.
All at Game Chef 2007. Come on you Eppies, especially
Chef Blackstock (much less grumpy these days).

Thx 2 1337MaGuS u F@{<3R.

Claire, Doc, Phil and Ade - for introducing me to *Gang of Four*. At which I am STILL UNBEATEN! MWHAAAAHA.

HELP THE HITCHER...

I know I need a glossary and examples. Instead of telling me I need an example why not write a **Gangs at War** example. There'll be a prize for the best!

I want you to do something for me - play the game. Share your experiences, no matter how gruesome. Unless you're scared of losing ya hippy torag!

I want to win The "Hidden Under the Soap" Award from Mischa Krilov (GC 2005).

However, I've bitten down on Wurmwood's theory bait, so here's me triple theory design section!

Big Model + GNS

Social contract, that most important ting is addressed early on. **GaW** is pure gamism. It's a game to be won.

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You think D&D is gamist - you've got a GM holding your hand (if he holds you elsewhere call the fuzz).

There's a hat tip to narrativist kickers and inclusion via *vendetta mechanics* and *drug karma*.

Step on up MFS!

GENIUS Theory

The fun is focused on the gaming. Narrative and exploration emerge from the mechanics and morality takes a back seat. Immersion can be set at each player's comfort level to help noobs or lazy gamers.

Me own Theory - MF Theory

Mechanics First. Mechanics drive the game. Only good mechanics will take play to the heart of the game's themes.

Join me on the game chef forums www.game-chef.com and www.collective-endeavour.com

Become part of the **Gangs at War** project. Help The Hitcher get richer.

It's been a pleasure doing ya

– **THE HITCHER**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zWnLgXERPw>

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CHEAT SHEET

PLAY SEQUENCE

1. Change dealer
2. Addiction draw
3. Boss scenes
4. Assign crews
5. Fights + fallout
6. Other scenes

CREW ACTIONS

- PUSH –sell GEAR
- RECRUIT – enlist more CREW
- BUILD – another ASSET
- COOK UP – brew more GEAR
- TOOL UP – upgrade weapons
- FREEBASE – get high
- TRASH – wreck the joint
- SEIZE – grab the TERRITORY

BOSS ACTIONS

- CALL OUT another GANG
- INCITE a mutiny
- HEADHUNT CREW
- SNITCH to the fuzz
- ASSAULT the PRECINCT

HAND SCORING

Single Card	
Pair	 
3 straight	  
3 of-a-kind	  
4 straight	   
5 straight	    
Flush	    
Full house	    
Straight flush	    
GANG OF FOUR	   

PRECINCT 13

POLICE

RESPONSE

RAID

RESIST

ARMOURY



BATTLEGROUND

ARENA

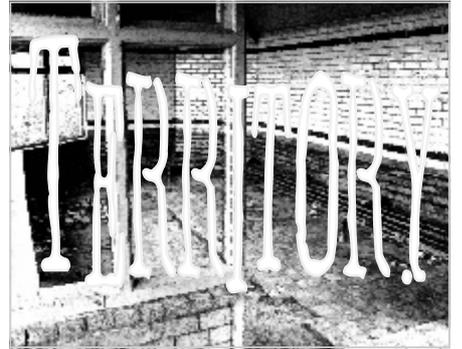
RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



HILL EDGE SLUMS



RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

HQ

INCOME

RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

HQ

INCOME

RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE

KITCHENS

SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

HQ

INCOME RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

HQ

INCOME RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

HQ

INCOME RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS



GANGS AT WAR

TERRITORY

RESISTANCE KITCHENS SHEDS

