

HOW to PLAY



Designed by Andrew Looney

OVERVIEW

In this game you are a time traveler, a descendant of one of the characters in the *Back to the Future* movies. Unfortunately, other time travelers have been tampering with events in your past, endangering your very existence. You must put things back in the ways that seem right to you, then stop Doc Brown from ever inventing time travel, which will freeze reality the way you need it to be, once and for all.

The game is played entirely with cards, but has the feel of a board game since important events are represented by a special grid of 24 cards called the TimeLine.

WHO GOES FIRST?

The player who has most recently watched a *Back to the Future* movie goes first. In the event of a tie, then the player who's seen the movies the greatest number of times goes first.

HOW TO PLAY

Players take turns doing the following:

- **Draw 1:** Take the top card off the main deck, and add it to your hand.
- **Play 1:** Choose any card in your hand, and play it.

2nd DRAW OPTION

If you are supposed to play a card, but don't want to play any of your cards you have at that time, you may instead draw another card. You can exercise this option any time you are called upon to play a card, such as when you get an extra play because you used a really fancy time machine.

Important Info for Chrononauts Players:

If you've already played the game *Chrononauts*, you will notice many similarities between it and this game. You will also notice many differences. Many elements of this game are based on *Chrononauts*, but many things are also different. In particular, you don't win by simply accomplishing your character's goals – you must start by doing that, and then change history so that time travel itself is un-invented, freezing reality in the shape you need it.

Anyway, do not assume you already know how to play, and please read these rules carefully.

Thanks!



SETUP

Divide the cards into 3 piles: TimeLine cards, ID cards, and Game cards.

Arrange the TimeLine cards in the center of the table, in a square grid of 4 rows, 6 cards per row. Use the Time Index values (in the upper right corner) to determine row and column. All TimeLine cards start with the blue or purple sides face up.

You will notice that there are 5 almost identical cards marked B-1. These are to be shuffled together (purple side up) and placed as a stack in the B-1 location on the TimeLine.

Shuffle the Game deck and deal 3 cards to each player. Place the Game deck where all can easily draw from it. Shuffle up the pile of ID cards and deal one to each player. Players should prevent others from looking at their cards, especially their IDs.

Game Deck

Each player starts with 3 cards and draws 1 per turn.

ID Cards

Each player gets 1; describes what you need to do to win



Special Spot

B-1 contains a special stack of 5 shuffled cards, only 1 of which causes the game to end (the other 4 are all duds).



The TimeLine

This grid of cards shows the current flow of history

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ABOUT TIME TRAVEL

The past is filled with important events that a time traveler could reshape, plus other events that "ripple" when events they depend on are changed. The TimeLine features 9 "linchpin" events, each of which is identified by a unique icon. Notice that these icons appear in two colors: black and red. The black icon stands for the original version of the event, while red means altered.

Three kinds of cards allow you to change history by flipping one of the Linchpin cards: Time Machine, DoubleBack, and one of the Actions, called "Hitch a Ride." A Time Machine allows you to change the outcome of any Linchpin. Hitch a Ride lets you change the TimeLine if the previous player made a change to the TimeLine. The DoubleBack cards are more limited, and yet can be more powerful; used alone, they only allow you to flip a specific linchpin, but they can be combined with context-specific Items to change history twice in one turn.

When you play a card that lets you change history, you will start by flipping over the Linchpin. You will then adjust all Ripplepoints that change as a result. Every Linchpin will flip at least one RipplePoint, and may flip several; take note of the list of events listed on the Linchpin cards.

Note that in three cases, Ripplepoints are affected by a pair of Linchpins, not just one. Sometimes these years will change only when both of the dependent events are changed, and sometimes they are more fragile events that will ripple if just one of the vital Linchpin events are reversed. Pay close attention to the words **AND** and **OR** that appear on events A-5, C-3, and D-6.

NOTE: You can only flip Linchpins. (Ripplepoints flip indirectly.)

CARD TYPES

The deck contains 5 types of cards:



When playing an Item, place it face up on the table in front of you. These are important objects that you will need if you are in the right place at the right time. Some Items are useful in and of themselves, while others are useful only in combination with DoubleBacks or Time Machines. Note that many Items have fine print describing various special options; generally, it is not considered a "play" to make use of an Item's special power.



When you play this, flip any Linchpin on the TimeLine. But pay close attention to the fine print: some of these cards have advantages, while others have limitations. Time Machines are not kept like Items, but are discarded immediately upon use.



When you play an Action card, do whatever it says, then discard it.



Power Actions are a lot like regular Actions, except many of them can be played when it's not your turn. (Such cards will explicitly say this.) Also, you can't choose these more powerful cards when using the Power Actions called "Rewind" and "Quick Trip Into The Future".



There are 8 DoubleBack cards, and each one is associated with a specific Linchpin and a specific Item. Used alone, a DoubleBack only lets you flip the associated Linchpin. But if you have the related Item in play on the table in front of you, you can then discard it to flip another Linchpin in the same turn.

HOW TO WIN

Your goal is to change history as required until the vital headlines that appear on your ID card are all showing on the TimeLine. Once you've done this, you must un-invent Time Travel by successfully changing TimeLine event B-1, namely Doc Brown's original invention of the Flux Capacitor (the thing that makes time travel possible).

NOTE: You can only claim victory at the END of YOUR turn.

END GAME

To win, you must fix your history, then un-invent time travel. This last step is tricky, because unseen forces will try to stop you even if other players don't. This is done with a set of 5 almost identical cards which are shuffled and placed in the B-1 location on the timeline. Each time someone tries to flip this linchpin (and isn't stopped by another player's Memo) the topmost card at B-1 is flipped. If you get one that says "Mysterious Forces Prevent You..." then that card is set aside and the game continues. But if it says "Emmett Brown Hangs a Clock" then the game ends!

Whenever you attempt to flip B-1, you must first make sure no other players wants to use a Memo to stop you. (See the section called "Regarding Memos" for more information.)

TIMELINE EXAMPLES

To understand how time travel works, let's look at a section of the timeline. Here's how things begin.

In the original history, Clara Clayton perished on the day she first arrived in town, in an accident in which she fell into a ravine. The next day, an outlaw murdered the town's blacksmith, so the town had a double funeral that week.

TURN A



Here's the same section of TimeLine after someone has changed history at event A-2, i.e. preventing Clara Clayton from falling into the ravine. After first turning over the A-2 card, the player would also turn over the A-6 card, since the ravine no longer gets renamed after her (and instead is named after some Eastwood fella). Note that the only way to change the A-6 event is by changing the A-2 event, which causes the A-6 event to also change.

TURN B



Here's the same section of TimeLine at a different point in the game. As you can see, someone has restored the original flow of history to the A-2 and A-6 events, while someone else has changed history at A-3, thus also rippling history at A-4.

Note that A-5 has remained unchanged throughout all these historical rewrites. Whether it's a funeral for the new school teacher, or the new blacksmith, or both of them, Hill Valley still has a funeral.

TURN H



Here's the TimeLine at still another point in the game. Now, both A-2 and A-3 have been changed, and since both the teacher and the blacksmith are alive, the town doesn't have a funeral and instead host a wedding party for the newly love-struck couple. (Meanwhile, the outlaw goes to jail for a lesser offense.)

TURN M



KNOW YOUR ID CARD

Your ID card lists the events that define your home reality. One of these will always be an original event, and two will be alternate reality events.

YOU ARE Verne Brown

set these: to bring about these events:

	Emmett Arrives in Old West Alt A-1
	Hill Valley Hosts Wedding Alt A-5
	Emmett Brown Commended C-5

then, un-invent Time Travel by changing B-1

To win, you must reshape the TimeLine to match ALL of your required events, and then successfully flip event B-1.

Events that aren't shown on your ID card don't affect your victory conditions.

IDENTITY MULLIGAN

If the character you get is someone you've just played, or someone you've gotten too many times, or just someone you really don't care for, you can try again. But no whining the second time!

Do you have a question that isn't answered here?

If so, please visit us at LooneyLabs.com to find the latest FAQ answers, or to contact us for support.

REGARDING MEMOS

Players may only play their cards during their own turns, with the exception of various time-bending cards like the Memo From Your Future Self and the 3 Item cards that do the same thing. (We'll use "Memos" to refer to all types of turn-canceling actions.) This card can be played at any time, to negate a card being played by someone else. Note that playing a Memo just cancels and discards the card being played; it doesn't change whose turn it is.

Be Punctual: Remember that a Memo must be used to stop a card as it's being played. Obviously it takes a little bit of time to absorb another player's action and decide to use the Memo on it, but you also can't let too much time go by and still expect to have the Memo honored. In general, once another card has been played, or drawn, it's too late.

Memos Aren't Retroactive: Since certain cards allow you to play more than one card in a row, it must be noted that a Memo only cancels the most recently played card. If you play a Memo as soon as another player plays a DoubleBack, then the entire DoubleBack is canceled, and the other player doesn't even have to discard the secondary card they may have been planning to use; however, if you wait until the player has taken their first DoubleBack action and is discarding something to take the second action, then only the second TimeLine flip is stopped, the first change stands. (But they still lose the object.)

Ending The Game: As soon as the red side of the actual, game-terminating B-1 card is revealed, the game ends and it becomes too late to use a Memo. (Memos can't stop victory itself.) Therefore, whenever you are seeking to un-invent time travel, you must clearly announce what you're doing and give all players a chance to decide, before you flip the card, if they wish to use a Memo to stop you or not.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Q: What happens if two players have their winning conditions met when time travel is un-invented?

A: The winner is the player whose turn it is, i.e. the one whose actions caused the un-invention of time travel.

Q: What happens if a player un-invents time travel but doesn't have their winning conditions set?

A: If exactly one other player does have their winning conditions properly set, then that player wins. Otherwise, re-shuffle the B-1 stack (not including any B-1s previously set aside) and continue with the next player. (Mysterious Forces prevent anything from happening that turn.)

Q: How do you turn over a Ripplepoint?

A: It can only be done indirectly. Ripplepoints are flipped as a result of flipping a Linchpin.

Q: Can you use a Memo (or the Fax, Telegram, or Newspaper) to stop another Memo?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you use the Fax, Telegram, or Newspaper to stop someone from stealing said card from you?

A: No.

Q: What happens if the draw pile runs out of cards?

A: Shuffle the discard pile and continue playing. But don't shuffle early! The discard pile should be maintained until someone needs to draw a card and finds no cards available in the draw deck.

Q: Does it count as changing the Timeline (for "Hitch a Ride") if you get the "Mysterious Forces" card at B-1?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you play a Rewind to replay the Time Train as the extra play you get when you play the Time Train?

A: Yes.

Q: What if I don't want to play any of my cards at the moment?

A: That's what the 2nd Draw Option is for! It's easy to forget about but it's a great thing to do when you aren't sure what to play.

CONTENTS

This game contains the following cards:

- 28 TimeLine cards
- 10 Character cards
- 62 Game cards:
 - 17 Items
 - 6 Time Machines
 - 8 DoubleBacks
 - 17 Actions
 - 14 Power Actions

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roster.looneylabs.com

CREDITS

This game is based on the movies *Back to the Future*, *Back to the Future Part 2*, and *Back to the Future Part 3*, and on the card game *Chrononauts*.

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US Patent #6,474,650
Item #LOO-044
ISBN #1-936112-05-1

Printed in the USA by Delano Service

