

HOW TO PLAY

Chrononauts™

Designed by Andrew Looney

OVERVIEW

In this game you're a Time Traveler with a unique Identity, a secret Mission, and a very important job: Paradox Repair.

The game is played entirely with cards, but has the feel of a board game since History is represented by a special grid of 32 cards called the TimeLine.

WINNING

Accomplish ONE of the following goals:

There are three different ways to win:

1) Going Home: You win if your character can return to the alternate reality listed on your ID card. To do this, the 3 key events must appear on the TimeLine exactly as they do on your ID card, when your turn ends.

2) Completing Your Mission: The three Artifacts listed on your Mission card must be on the table in front of you at the end of your turn for you to win by completing your Mission.

3) Achieving Power and Success: If, after you've completed your turn, you have 10 cards in your hand (not counting your ID or Mission) you win!

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

HOW TO PLAY

To determine who goes first, all players will attempt to guess the current time. Whoever comes closest starts the game.

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 either play it, or discard it. If you can't (or don't want to) play any of your cards, you must discard one.

If you choose to discard a card instead of playing, you may also choose to discard a second card, and draw one to replace it. This option is called Killing Time.

CARD TYPES



Artifacts

mission objectives

When playing an Artifact, place it face up on the table in front of you. These are amazing items from the Past or Future which only a time traveler can acquire.



Gadgets

things that do stuff

When playing a Gadget, place it face up on the table in front of you. Gadgets have their own special features you can use later. Follow the directions on the card.



Actions

single-use event cards

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



Timewarps

a special type of action

Timewarps are extra powerful Action cards. When you play a Timewarp card, do whatever it says, then discard it.



Inverters

how to change history

History is filled with important events that a time traveler could reshape, plus other events that "ripple" when history changes. The TimeLine features 13 "linchpin" events, each of which is identified by a unique icon. Notice that these icons have two forms: black (True) and red (Prime).

Inverters are used to reverse Linchpins. There are several different kinds of Inverters, some of which can be used on any Linchpin card, and some of which can only be used on specific Linchpins.

When you play an Inverter, turn over the Linchpin you want to flip, then adjust all Ripplepoints that change as a result (see below for detailed examples), and lastly, place the Inverter on the discard pile.

NOTE: Inverters only flip Linchpins. (Ripplepoints flip indirectly.)



Patches

how to repair history

When a Linchpin changes, other events on the TimeLine will change as well. At first, holes called Paradoxes will appear. These holes are repaired with Patches.

A Patch can only be played onto its corresponding Paradox on the TimeLine (as indicated by the card's year and Time Index). To Patch a year, simply place the Patch card over the appropriate Paradox. When you do this, you immediately get to draw a card (as payment for your efforts by the Time Repair Agency).

Some Patches, specifically 1945 and 1962, have special properties; see the section on "Temporal Anomalies."

Patches are Nullified (i.e. removed from the TimeLine and discarded) if history is changed back again. Just follow the symbols at the bottom of the Patch card.

NOTE: Patches are ONLY played on Paradoxes, not Ripplepoints.

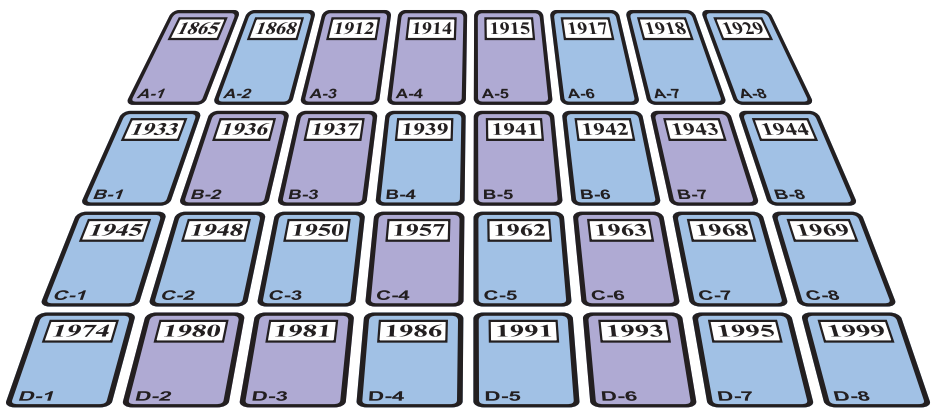
SETUP

Arrange the 32 double-sided TimeLine cards in an 8x4 grid on the table, according to the Time Index (A1-8, B1-8, C1-8, and D1-8) located in the lower left corner of each card, with all cards set to True History (i.e. Ripplepoints blue, and Linchpins purple).



Create shuffled draw piles for each of the other types of cards, and deal to each player:

- 1 Mission card
- 1 Identity card
- 3 cards from the main deck

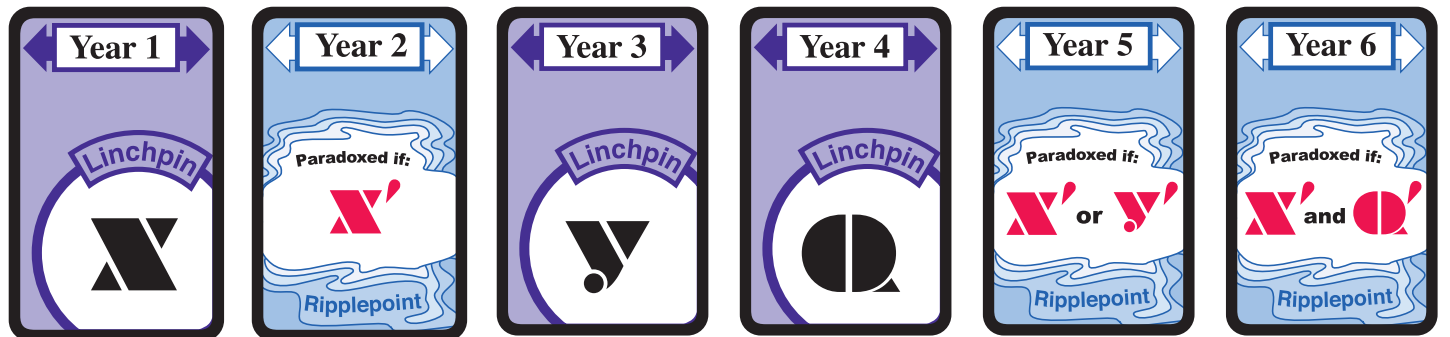


TIMELINE EXAMPLES

Here's a representative section of a generic TimeLine, consisting of three Linchpins and three Ripplepoints. At the start, all TimeLine are set to true history.

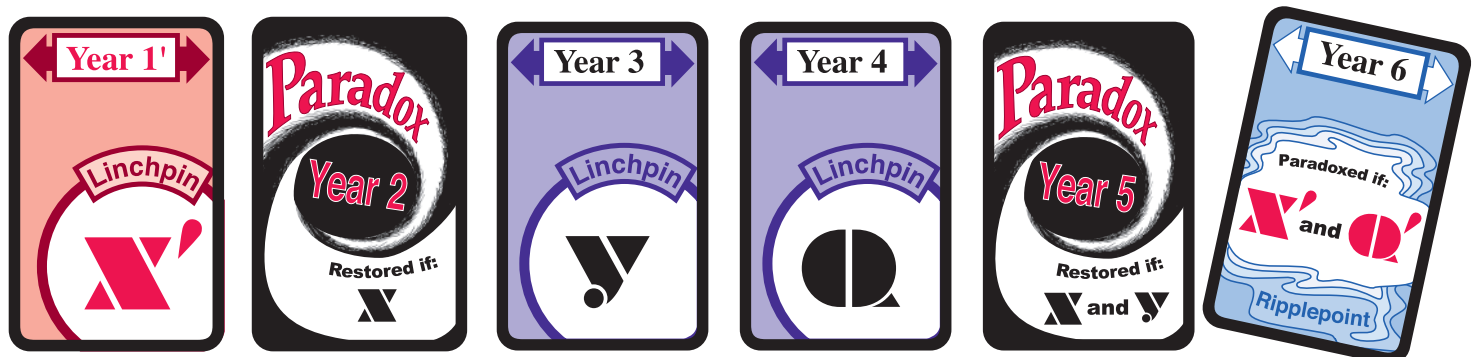
Notice that all three Ripplepoints are dependent on the Linchpin **X**, and that Year 5 also depends on another event (Linchpin **Y**), as does Year 6 (linked to Linchpin **Z**). Furthermore, notice that Year 5 has an OR, and Year 6 an AND.

TURN A



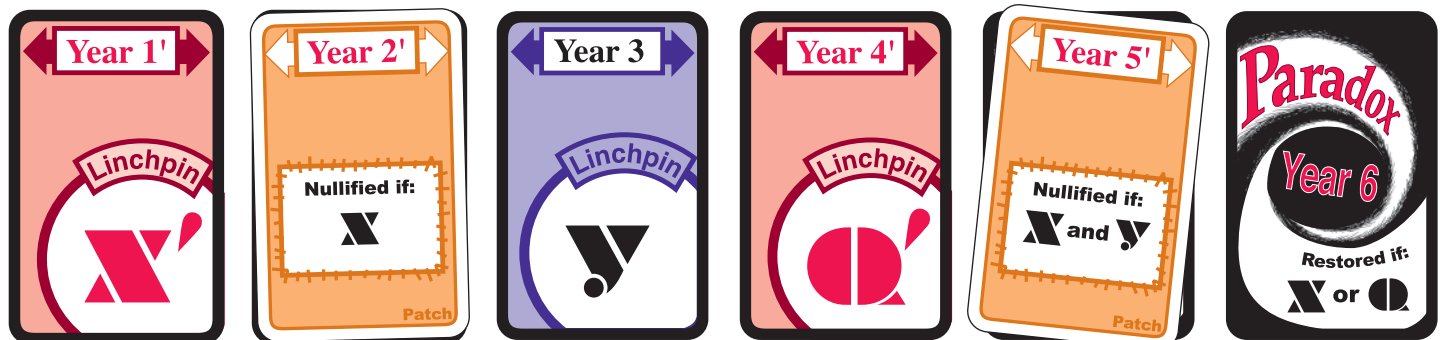
Here's the same section of TimeLine after someone has used an Inverter card to change history at Year 1. Linchpin **X** has been turned over, revealing the alternate outcome for that event. The Year 2 and Year 5 cards have also been flipped as a result, since they depend on Linchpin **X**. Year 6 is unflipped because it shares an AND dependency with **Z** and that event has not yet been inverted. (It has been placed askew, as some players prefer, to note the partial paradox.)

TURN B



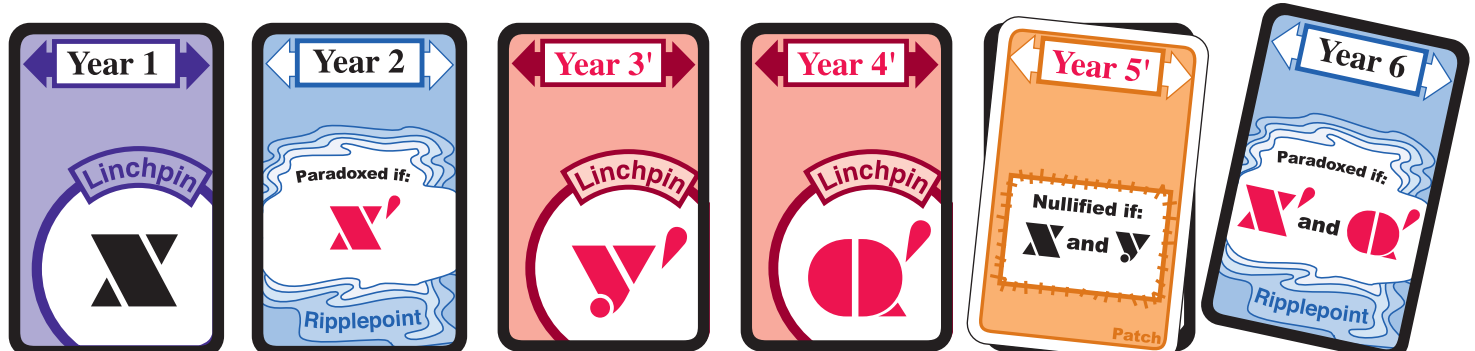
Here's the same section of TimeLine at a later stage in the game. Two Patch cards have now been used to repair the Paradoxes at Years 2 and 5. Note also that Linchpin **Z** has now been inverted, causing Year 6 to be fully paradoxed.

TURN H



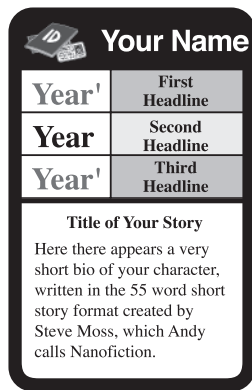
Here's the TimeLine once more, still later on. Notice that Linchpin **X** has now been flipped back to the purple side. This has caused Year 2 to revert, which has both discarded the Year 2 patch, and flipped the underlying Ripplepoint back to blue. Notice also that the Year 5 Patch is still intact, even though Linchpin **X** is now black... this is legal because Linchpin **Y** has also been flipped. Lastly, note that Year 6 is halfway paradoxed again, this time because Linchpin **Z** has flipped.

TURN M



KNOW YOUR ID CARD

Your ID card provides all the details you need to know about the character you are playing. The bottom half is purely informational, while the top half lists the 3 events that define your home reality. One of these will always be a real event, with the other 2 being alternate realities that are described on Patches. To win by getting home, you must reshape the TimeLine to match all 3 of these years.



NOTE: Paradoxes block your way. You win ONLY if all 3 of your headlines are on the TimeLine.

THE 13th PARADOX

It must be understood that Paradoxes are BAD. Really, really bad. Each one is a dangerous hole in the space-time continuum and needs to be patched. If too many are open at once, they will cascade into a chain reaction that will rip apart the fabric of history and destroy the entire universe. (That's what we mean by "bad.") **This collapse will occur immediately anytime there are 13 Paradoxes showing at once.** If this ever happens, the game ends and all players LOSE.

Because Paradox repair is so important, the Time Repair Agency rewards everyone for doing this work. Thus, you get to draw one extra card every time you Patch a Paradox.



KNOW YOUR MISSION

To win with your Mission, you must have the items listed on the table in front of you (not just in your hand) so make sure you play them before you reveal your secret Mission. Note that some Missions require any 3 from a list of 4 Artifacts.

TEMPORAL ANOMALIES

The TimeLine has two hotspots that can cause time travelers particular trouble:

1945: The Nexus

1945 is special for three reasons. First, it can be paradoxed by three different Linchpins (all other years are dependent on either one or two). Secondly, 1945 can be repaired with four different patches (for all other years, there's just one patch that will fit). Finally, the alternate 1945s are all what we call Unstable Patches. This means they won't necessarily fit, and may be nullified without the accompanying closure of the Paradox. Therefore, when playing a 1945 Patch, be careful to double-check the icons listed under "Playable If", to make sure the Patch won't immediately be Nullified.

1962: The ÜberParadox

World War 3 creates a special situation we call the ÜberParadox. As long as the 1962' Patch is in play on the TimeLine, nothing beyond it is accessible. (Well, nothing except the world of the distant future that a super-evolved cockroach calls home.) To emphasize this, all of the TimeLine cards after 1962 should be moved down an inch or so on the table, to remind the players that they are unreachable. If all three years listed on your ID pre-date 1962, you can still win by going home, but you're stuck if your home reality depends on any events after 1962. (Unless you are Squa Tront.) You also cannot collect Artifacts from the Future during an ÜberParadox.

NOTE: The ÜberParadox only occurs when the 1962' Patch is in play.

REGARDING MEMOS

Players may only play their cards during their own turns, with one exception: the Memo From Your Future Self. 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. Here's a good rule of thumb: 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 reveals a Fast Forward, then the entire Fast Forward is canceled; however, if you wait until the player has revealed one of the cards being played as a result of the Fast Forward, then it is only the new card that is canceled. In this case, the Fast Forwarding player may still play a second card.

Memos Can't Stop Victory Itself: The Memo cannot be used to cancel an ID or Mission card. Once a player declares victory by revealing one of these cards, it's too late to use a Memo to cancel the card they used to achieve that victory. Given this, though, etiquette (and coolness) suggests a good solid pause after making a play that's going to let you win, to make sure no one wants to use a Memo on you, before revealing your ID or Mission (and doing the Chrononauts Victory Dance).

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!

TOPICS FOR DEBATE

Wouldn't history be radically more different if the past were changed?

Time Travel literature tells us there are three possible ways it could work:

- 1) History cannot be changed at all
- 2) History is totally changeable
- 3) History is somewhat flexible

In case #3, Fate or the Time Police will prevent you from making big changes, though they will allow you to alter the destiny of someone unimportant.

This game combines these ideas. History CAN be changed -- but only at specific hotspots in the time-space continuum. One could argue, for example, that World War II would never have happened if it weren't for World War I; however, in Chrononauts, time isn't so volatile. Preventing the first great war simply renames the second one.

Isn't it in poor taste to include Tragedy X in a game like this?

Chrononauts is a work of fiction, and no disrespect is intended towards the memory, or the survivors, of anything in this game. Tragedies are included because these are the sorts of events that would-be time travelers fantasize about undoing. Surely, more than anyone else, those touched by these tragedies would welcome a chance to erase them.

Why would Event X cause Event Y?

Some of the alternate realities in this game make total sense, but others are harder to understand. To see the logic behind Andy's ideas, look for "Mysteries of the TimeLine" at wunderland.com.

Also, look for Parts 2 & 3 of the story on Werner's ID card at Andy's website.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Q: Can someone Memo a Memo?
A: Yes! (And it's mighty satisfying, too!)

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: During the ÜberParadox, can players still alter history after 1962 (in hopes of winning after restoration of the timeline)?
A: No. During the ÜberParadox, that history doesn't exist, so it cannot be altered. You must clear the ÜberParadox before making changes after 1962.

Q: Do paradoxes after 1962' (during the ÜberParadox) count towards the 13 paradox limit?
A: No. Any Paradoxes after 1962' are counted as part of the one big paradox that is the ÜberParadox.

Q: Do you get an extra card if you erase a Paradox by flipping a Linchpin?
A: No, only for playing a Patch.

Q: What's with all the Mona Lisas?
A: There are 3 versions of the Mona Lisa in the game, the Real Thing, an excellent forgery, and an obvious forgery. Several Missions revolve around these paintings, each requiring different versions to win.

CONTENTS

This game contains the following cards:

- 32 TimeLine cards
- 14 ID cards
- 10 Mission cards
- 84 Chrononauts cards:
 - 19 Artifacts
 - 18 Inverters
 - 22 Patches
 - 14 Actions
 - 9 Timewarps
 - 2 Gadgets

EXPANSION SETS

For more time travel fun, look for these other Chrononauts products:

Early American Chrononauts

A complete stand-alone game with a TimeLine stretching from 1770-1904! (Will the South win the Civil War?) You can combine EAC with Chrononauts for extra big fun we call ÜberChrononauts!

Lost Identities

Ready for a new cast of characters? This packet contains 13 new ID cards, plus a new mission! (Includes Crazy Joe!)

The Gore Years

What if Al Gore had won the election in 2000? Extend the TimeLine into the 21st century with this set of 11 new cards!

Look for Looney Labs games at a game store near you:
roster.looneylabs.com

CREDITS

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OTHER WAYS TO PLAY CHRONONAUTS

SOLONAUTS

Overview: This is a solitaire game in which the challenge is to get eight Chrononauts home on a single pass through the deck. It's a great way to learn the ins and outs the TimeLine when you don't have any opponents on hand for a full game.

Number of Players: one

Setup: Remove and set aside all the Artifacts, Gadgets, Actions, Timewarps, and Missions. Shuffle the Patches and Inverters together, and set up the TimeLine as usual. Then deal out eight random ID cards, and arrange them face-up underneath the TimeLine. Finally, deal out five cards from the reduced play deck, and line them up under the characters.

How to Play: Choose one of your five cards and play it just as you would in the full game, except without drawing an extra card after playing a Patch. Feel free to discard any Patches you know you aren't going to need. Draw back to five cards and keep playing until one of the characters can get home. Move that character up to the space above the TimeLine, and carry on. Remember, you only get one pass through the deck, so plan carefully!

How to Win: To win, you must get all eight of your characters home before you run out of cards.

To Adjust the Challenge: To make the game even more challenging, try increasing the number of IDs you start with. (Or, to make it easier, play it with just 6 or 7 characters.)

ARTIFAXX

Overview: This is a fast and easy time travel game that uses a subset of the cards from the Chrononauts deck. It's a faster, lighter-weight version of the game that leaves out all the complexities that crop up when people use time travel to change history. Artifaxx is also good if you've got younger players, who may have trouble grasping all the historical events on the TimeLine. Finally, Artifaxx is a great variation for the airplane or the lunch counter, where space for the entire TimeLine isn't available.

Number of Players: 2-4

Setup: Sort out all the Artifacts, Actions, Timewarps, and Missions. The rest of the deck is not used for this game (but it can be used by someone else to play Solonauts). Also set aside the Gadgets, the "Beatles Reunion CD" and "German Cake" Artifacts, and the Action called "Your Parents Never Met." Shuffle the Artifacts, Actions, and Timewarps together, and deal three cards to each player, along with one random Mission card.

How to Play: Players take turns drawing one and playing one until someone achieves their secret Mission. To play an Artifact, just set it out on the table in front of you, face-up. To play an Action or a Timewarp card, place it on the discard pile and do whatever it says.

How to Win: You win if you have the three Artifacts listed on your Mission on the table in front when your turn ends.