



CULT OF DIONYSUS

Cult of Dionysus is a truth or dare style party game of strategy, skill, and chance, in the form of an ancient herm (a 4-sided column with a bust on top). Players take turns pulling blocks, doing what they say, taking penalties, and trying not to topple the bust. After each topple, rebuild from the rubble until no blocks remain. The player with the fewest penalties at the end wins.

Rules

1. The Host of the Party Becomes the Symposiarch

The Symposiarch (*i.e., the host of the party*) presides over the symposium (*i.e., the party*), settling disputes about rules and instructions. *Give it up for your fabulous master of ceremonies!*

2. Symposiarch Reads the three Maxims Out Loud

The symposiarch reads these pithy sayings to the group before starting. These maxims contain ancient wisdom to guide players during play.

“Know Yourself.” Don't do anything you don't want to do and speak up if you're uncomfortable. Offer friendly encouragement to others (*e.g., clapping, snapping, hooting, hollering, and chanting player's names*), but don't pressure them to participate.

“Nothing in Excess.” If you choose to drink alcohol, do so responsibly. Know your limits and respect the limits of others. *Dionysus himself advised a limit of three drinks: one for health, one for love and pleasure, and one for sleep. He said that “[w]hen these cups are emptied, the wise go home.”*

“Shun Evil.” Always ask for consent before touching, photographing, or videoing others. Remember that ‘No’ means ‘NO!’ (*as does “I don't think so,” “I'm all set,” “I'll pass,” “I'd rather not,” “maybe next time,” ...etc.*) and people incapacitated by drugs or alcohol cannot give consent. If you see someone violating this rule, intervene. *Be a hero not a bystander.*

3. Symposiarch Prepares the Scorecard

The Symposiarch writes all player's names on a sheet of paper. Each time a player takes a penalty, they will jot a tally next to that player's name. The player with the fewest penalties at the end wins. *Let the competition begin!*

4. All Players Put Their Names In The Cup of Consent

All players write their names on slips of paper, crumple them up, then toss them into the Cup of Consent (*i.e., a bowl*). If your name is drawn, but you don't want to participate, say “no, thanks” and have them draw another name. (*No clean bowls? Use a saucepan, top hat, or empty pickle tub.*)

5. Symposiarch Chooses a Block Configuration

Erect the herm on the floor atop a rug, blanket, or towel to protect the blocks and floor from damage. See reverse side for suggested block configurations.

6. Taking Turns

1. Take turns clockwise, starting with the Symposiarch.
2. Skip players who aren't present.
3. Pull a block, read the instructions out loud (or have another player read for you), then do what it says.
4. Once your turn is over, set the block aside to form a column of played blocks.
5. If you're unable to attempt what a block says for any reason (*e.g., due to disability*), put the block back into the column in any open space and pull again.
6. If you're unwilling to attempt what a block says, put the block back into the column in any open space and skip your turn.

7. Pulling Blocks & Toppling the Bust

Obey the following block-pulling rules: Rulebreakers must **take a penalty**.

WARNING: Demolition in progress. Keep drinks and breakables clear of the herm.

1. You may NOT touch the bust of Dionysus.
2. You may pull from any row.
3. You may use both hands, but you may NOT use tools.
4. You may touch multiple blocks before choosing one, but you may NOT touch more than one block at a time (even to avoid toppling the bust).
5. You may shift the balance of the herm, but you may NOT lift any part of it.
6. You may NOT pull more than one block. If more than one block falls or completely pulls away from the column, put the other block(s) back into any empty space(s) in the column, **take a penalty**, then play the block you pulled.
7. If you topple the bust of Dionysus during your turn, skip your turn, **take 3 penalties**, then rebuild the herm according to the rules below. If you topple the bust NOT during your turn (*e.g., by bumping into it while twerking*), **take 3 penalties** and rebuild the herm.

8. Rebuilding

Topple the herm and rebuild it from the rubble using at least two blocks per row. (*Do NOT use blocks that have already been played.*) Pull blocks as usual until only one block remains, then set the bust of Dionysus aside and play the final block.

House Rules

– Optional –

Group Photo: Before the game starts, have everybody grab a block and strike a pose. Hold the block up to your face with the eyes looking out, like a mask. #cultofdionysus

Helm of Hades: The Symposiarch chooses an item to wear on their head temporarily, giving them immunity from their next penalty. Instead of taking their next penalty, they pass the Helm to their right, giving the next player immunity. Continue this way for the rest of the game. *Suggested Helms: a bicycle helmet, a colander, or a mullet wig.*

Double Trouble: If it's a special occasion to celebrate a guest of honor (*e.g., a birthday, graduation, bachelor/bachelorette party*), put that player's name in the Cup of Consent twice.

Phallos: (For use when playing with the Ithyphallic configuration) The “phallus” blocks must NOT be pulled by hand.

Tribal Warfare: Divide the group into even teams and wage war. Instead of drawing names, choose a player from your team for cooperative challenges and a player from the opposing team for competitive challenges. (If the Zeus block is in play, Zeus may force players to compete against their own team.) Try to be impartial when judging competitions and superlatives.

Row-Clearing: (WARNING: for masters only!) If you clear a row by successfully pulling the last block in that row, you may **give 3 penalties** to players of your choice. You may only give one penalty per player. (If you succeed but other blocks fall or pull away from the column completely, **take a penalty** and put the other block(s) back, then **give 3 penalties**.)

Call-Shot: (WARNING: for masters only!) You must begin your turn by announcing which block you intend to pull by calling its name or touching it. Once you've called your block, you may move other blocks to shift the balance of the column before pulling the one you called.

Lightning Speed: To quicken the pace of play, use the **Dionysian** configuration so players don't waste time seeking specific blocks. Have players start reading from the play symbol (“▶”) featured in every prompt, and skip italicized text and parentheses.

Wine Mode: Each time you take a penalty, take a sip (NOT a gulp) of your drink. If you topple the bust of Dionysus, take 3 sips. Remember the 2nd Maxim and that water is always an option. *Savor that sweet nectar!*

Disrobing Mode: (WARNING: only for the daring!) Each time you take a penalty, remove one item of clothing (see disrobing rules below). If you topple the bust of Dionysus, leave on what you're wearing and receive one spanking from each player. *Do like the ancient Greeks and let it all hang out!*

1. Each piece of clothing counts as one item, unless otherwise stated below.

- a. Each shoe/sock counts as **ONE** item. Tights functioning as socks count as **TWO**.
- b. Clothing items functioning as both a top and a bottom at the start of the game count as **TWO** items (*e.g., dresses, rompers, leotards, jumpsuits, and onesies*).
- c. Overalls count as **ONE** item, unless you're NOT wearing a shirt underneath at the start of the game. (*Also, the '90s called...because they couldn't text.*)

2. You may count accessories, including jewelry, as clothing items. You may count these items without removing them, keeping track under the honors system. Here's an incomplete list of possible accessories by category:

- a. Head & Hair (*e.g., hats, sunglasses, hair clips, earrings, tiaras...etc.*)
- b. Neck (*e.g., necklaces, scarves, neckties, ID badge lanyards...etc.*)
- c. Torso (*e.g., Belts, suspenders, pin-back buttons, nipple rings...etc.*)
- d. Wrist & Arm (*e.g., bracelets, watches, sweatbands...etc.*)
- e. Hand (*e.g., gloves, rings, brass knuckles...etc.*)
- f. Ankle & Foot (*e.g., toe rings, anklets, house arrest monitors...etc.*)

3. Be prepared to strip down at least to your underwear (if not your birthday suit). *You can always cover your junk with your hand, a throw pillow, or a grape leaf.*
4. Once you're naked (or as close as you care to get), keep playing! You may switch to the wine mode or just say “Naw, I'm good” when you incur penalties.
5. Body-shaming (including self-deprecation) is strictly forbidden!
6. Spankings should be a quick tap (½ second max) with NO lingering hands, pinching, or squeezing. *Line up, pick a cheek, and keep your head in the game!*
7. It's okay if you get turned on. It's NOT okay to stare or escalate things sexually. *Don't make it weird.*

Strategy Guide

Cult of Dionysus features a golden ratio of five different types of prompts. For every 18 blocks there are 9 Challenges, 5 Truths, 2 Superlatives, 1 Decree, and 1 Rally. Use this guide to learn each block's type, which blocks are safe or risky, and which blocks are most powerful, then seek them out by name and motif.

Rally — Rallies get the other players to race and let you judge the winner. (They're best pulled when other players are distracted.)

ANTAEUS	ASCALABUS	CLEOPATRA	TANTALUS
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Decree — Decrees offer a way to edge out the competition by conniving to get others to break the rules. Follow these for Decree blocks:

- Decrees remain in effect until the player who pulled them finishes their next turn.
- Multiple decrees can be in effect at once.
- Decrees can only be disobeyed if instructed by another block.

CHORUS	CYNEGEIRUS	HARPOCRATES	SOCRATES
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Superlative — Superlatives establish a friendly vibe (and provide an opportunity to flirt) by letting you decide which player excels most in a given area.

ARCHAIC SMILE	ATHENA	BERENICE	CHARITIES
HELEN OF TROY	HERACLES	HYGIEIA	SINIS

Truth — Truths keep with the philosophical tradition of the ancient symposium and allow players to get to know each other on a deeper level.

ACHILLES	ALAZON	ALEXANDER	ARISTOTLE
ARTEMIS	DIENEKES	DIONYSUS	ELPIS
ELYSIAN FIELDS	HECATE	KOALEMOS	LION'S HIDE
LYSSA	ODYSSEUS	PANDORA	PHOBOS
PLATO	POLYGLOT	SOLON	TIRESIAS

Challenge — Challenges keep the energy high with daring deeds, group games, cooperation, and competition.

APATE	APOLLO	ARACHNE	ARES
ASCLEPIUS	CALLIOPE	CARYATID	CATEGORIES
CHARYBDIS	DEMETER	DEMOCRACY	EPITHET
GYMNASIUM	HEBE & GERAS	HECATERUS	HERMES
HESTIA	KOTTABOS	MATI	MEDUSA
MELANKOMAS	MELPOMENE	ORTHRUS	PAEAN
PANKRATON	POSEIDON	PYTHAGORAS	PYTHIA
RHAPSODY	SILENUS	SPHINX	SYMPENEIN
TERPSICHORE	THAMYRIS	THESPIS	ZEUS

Key *RISK OF PENALTY *NO RISK OF PENALTY (BUT NOT RISK-FREE) RISK-FREE & POWERFUL
 *COLORS ARE BASED ON THE RISK POSED TO THE BLOCK PULLER DURING THEIR TURN, NOT THE OTHER PLAYERS.



1. Archaic
Difficulty - Easy



2. Dionysian
Difficulty - Medium



3. Kalon
Difficulty - Medium



4. Olympian
Difficulty - Hard



5. Ithyphallic
Difficulty - Hard...



6. Helepolis
Difficulty - Expert



7. Moirai
Difficulty - Expert
Best after 1+ topples(s)



8. Argus
Difficulty - Master



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CULT OF DIONYSUS



4-18



21+



1-3H

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