# SYSTEMS FAILING

2 Players | 20 Minutes | Ages 10+

A GAME BY GREG SANTO

# VERVIEW

Systems Failing! Systems Failing! The ship's sirens blare as explosions detonate all around you. Your ship just barreled through an asteroid field and you and your partner are the only surviving crew members. Disasters are cropping up all across the ship and, if they spread to the ship's core, you're doomed. You must both work together to repair the six escape sequences, launch the escape pods, and get out of there before it's too late.

# Contents







# Setup

Place the core and zone cards side-by-side in the center of the table forming 4 columns in the following order: Core, Zone 1, Zone 2, and Zone 3. Shuffle the 6 escape sequence cards and stack them to the right of Zone 3. Set aside the 9 white cubes and place the remaining 30 colored resource cubes in the bag. Randomly assign each player a role card and set aside the remaining 4 cards. Determine which player will take their turn first and place the *first player marker* next to their *role card*. Starting with the first player, each player must draw 6 resource cubes from the bag and place them in their resource pool directly in front of them.



## CHOOSE YOUR DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Choose your difficulty level (easy, medium, or hard) and set the  $\checkmark$  meter accordingly. Set the  $\cancel{}$  meter to 0.



Add *white cubes* to the bag according to the difficulty level

you selected. Also, shuffle the disaster deck and deal out 4 *disaster cards* face-up according to the difficulty level you selected:

- **Easy** Add 2 *white cubes* to the bag. Place the first 2 *disaster cards* in *Zone 1*. Place the next *disaster card* in *Zone 2*. Place the last *disaster card* in *Zone 3*.
- Medium Add 3 *white cubes* to the bag. Place the first 2 *disaster cards* in *Zone 1*. Place the next 2 *disaster cards* in *Zone 2*.
- Hard Add 4 white cubes to the bag. Place the first 3 disaster cards in Zone 1. Place the next disaster card in Zone 2.

**Note:** During this initial setup, *disaster cards* are placed differently than during normal game play. Follow the directions above to determine the zone in which to place a card (ignore the text on the cards themselves).

**Note:** The total  $\cancel{A}_{2}$  (damage value) of the four starting *disaster cards* must be 7 or higher. If the total  $\cancel{A}_{2}$  is less than 7, discard and replace the lowest-valued card with the next *disaster card* in the deck. If there are multiple cards tied for the lowest value, begin with the lowest-numbered zone first (working your way from top to bottom within it).

Repeat this process until the total 4 of the four starting *disaster cards* is 7 or higher. Any discarded cards should then be shuffled back into the disaster deck.



The total  $A_{+}$  of these disasters is 8.

#### THE DISASTER DECK

Finally, separate the disaster deck into 5 separate stacks, each containing approximately the same number of cards. Shuffle a *systems failing card* into each of the 5 stacks. Take the 5 stacks and place them on top of one another (do not shuffle them) to form the final disaster deck. Place the deck face-down in the play-area.

# GAME PLAY

Systems Failing is played over multiple rounds, each consisting of the following phases:

- 1. Players Take Their Turns
- 2. Players Stock Up
- 3. Disasters Move
- 4. New Disasters Appear

## 1. PLAYERS TAKE THEIR TURNS

Starting with the first player, each player will **perform up to 4 actions** from the following list. Actions can be performed in any order and the same action may be repeated multiple times. A player may also choose to skip their turn.

- Scavenge
- Transfer
- Repair
- Discard

#### SCAVENGE

As an action, a player may draw 2 (and only 2) resource cubes from the bag and add them to their resource pool. A player cannot have more than 10 cubes in their resource pool. If the scavenge action results in a player having more than 10 cubes, they must immediately discard cubes into the bag until their resource pool reaches 10 cubes.

#### White Cubes

White cubes are special cubes which represent the increasing instability of the ship's systems (as indicated by the  $\checkmark$  meter). More white cubes will be added to the bag as the systems grow more unstable. White cubes cause disasters to move through the zones toward the core.

When a player draws a white cube during the scavenge action, an immediate *system surge* occurs (see the *System Surge* section for more details).

**Note:** White cubes are never added to a player's resource pool. Instead, when a white cube is drawn it must be placed on top of the disaster deck. Do not draw any additional cubes from the bag to replace white cubes.

**Note:** If 2 white cubes are drawn during the scavenge action, you must resolve the first *system surge* and then immediately resolve the second.

#### TRANSFER

As an action and with the other player's permission, a player may take one resource cube from the other player's resource pool and add it to their own. A player cannot have more than 10 cubes in their resource pool. If the transfer action results in a player having more than 10 cubes, they must immediately discard cubes into the bag until their resource pool reaches 10 cubes.

#### Repair

As an action, a player may place one or more resource cubes on either the topmost *escape sequence card* or any single *disaster card*. A player may only place cubes that match one or more of the remaining requirements displayed on the card. If, as a result of the repair action, all of the requirements of a disaster or escape sequence are fulfilled, the disaster or escape sequence is considered *repaired*.

	Resource Type	Color
۶	Electrical	Orange
\$	Mechanical	Blue
	Chemical	Yellow
Ð	Medical	Red
<b>\$</b>	Navigational	Black
Δ	Scientific	Green

#### EXAMPLE

A disaster card requires a blue, red, and green cube to repair it. A red cube was placed on the card during a prior turn. The current player may place either the blue, the green, or both cubes as a single action (provided they have them in their resource pool).





Left: A red cube was placed on the disaster card during a prior turn.

**Right:** As a single action, the Electrical Engineer places both a blue and a green cube on the card. All of the requirements of the card are now fulfilled and the card is considered *repaired*.

#### Removing Cards

When all of the requirements on a card are met, meaning all of the resource cubes required by the card have been placed on top of it, the card is considered *repaired*.

When an *escape sequence card* is repaired it is immediately removed from the playarea (all cubes on top of it are returned to the bag) and the next sequence in the stack becomes active. Removed *escape sequence cards* are placed in front of the player who removed them.

*Disaster cards*, however, must be removed in-order. This means that even if the requirements to repair a disaster are met, the card will only be removed from the play-area when all other disaster cards on top of it (within the same zone) are removed. If the requirements to repair a disaster are met, and there are no other cards on top of it, the card is immediately discarded and all cubes on top of it are returned to the bag.

**Note:** Removing cards does not count as an action. If a *disaster card* is removed and the card underneath it is already *repaired*, that card is immediately removed as well. This does not count as an action.

#### Role Abilities

Each role allows the player to ignore a particular resource during a repair action, provided the action results in the immediate removal of a card.

#### EXAMPLE

The topmost escape sequence card requires blue, yellow, red, black, and green resources to repair it. The current player is the Scientist – who has the ability to ignore green resources.



Left: Red and black cubes were placed on the card during prior turns.

**Right:** As a repair action the Scientist uses their blue and yellow cubes, along with their special ability to ignore green resources, to repair the escape sequence and remove it from the play-area. If they did not have *both* the blue and yellow cubes they would not have been able to use their special ability.

#### DISCARD

As an action, a player may discard all of the cubes in their resource pool and return them to the bag. This is typically performed as a player's last action prior to the **Players Stock Up** phase.

## 2. PLAYERS STOCK UP

After both players have taken their turns the *first player marker* is passed to the next player. Starting with the new first player, any player who currently has less than 6 cubes in their resource pool must draw from the bag until their pool contains 6 cubes (or until the bag is empty). Players with 6 or more cubes already in their pool do not draw any additional cubes.

**Note:** *White cubes* are ignored during this phase. If a *white cube* is drawn, place it back in the bag and draw again to replace it.

# 3. DISASTERS MOVE

After both players have stocked up it is time for the disasters to move. All disasters still in the play-area must shift one zone to the left, making their way toward the ship's core. After the disasters move, any disasters in the core column immediately inflict damage to the ship's core and the  $M_{\star}$  meter is updated accordingly. These cards are then immediately discarded and any cubes on top of them are returned to the bag. The cubes on top of any disasters in Zones 1, 2 and 3 remain untouched.

**Note:** Each *disaster card* has a damage value in the bottom-right corner which represents how much damage is inflicted by that particular disaster.



**Left:** At the end of the players' turn four disasters were left in the play-area. **Right:** After the disasters move, two disasters deal a total of 4 damage to the ship's core. These two cards are then immediately discarded.

## 4. New Disasters Appear

After the disasters move, new disasters will begin to appear on the ship. If there are any *white cubes* on top of the disaster deck, place them back in the bag. Next, draw the number of *disaster cards* from the deck as indicated in the center of the *meter card* and place them (in the order they were drawn) into the corresponding zones within the play-area. New *disaster cards* must be placed on top of any existing disasters within a zone – slide existing disasters down to make room. If the disaster deck runs out, immediately shuffle the discard pile to form a new disaster deck (you do not need to separate/redistribute the *systems failing* cards).

**Note:** If a newly-placed *disaster card* causes a zone to have more than 3 disasters, an immediate *system surge* occurs within that zone (see the *System Surge* section).

### METER CARD

Both the system stability ( $\checkmark$ ) and core's damage level ( $\cancel{M}$ ) contribute to the number of new disasters that appear during the *New Disasters Appear* phase. If both meters are in the same region, you will draw the number of disasters indicated in the center of that region. If the meters are in different regions, you will draw the number of disasters indicated in the center of the higher-numbered region.



**Left:** One meter is in the green region and the other is in the yellow region. Since the yellow region has a higher number you will draw 4 new disaster cards.

**Right:** One meter is in the yellow region and the other is in the red region. Since the red region has a higher number you will draw 5 new disaster cards.

**Note:** The values on the *meter card* may change during the New Disasters Appear phase. Changes to the meters take effect on the next round, not the current round.

## SYSTEMS FAILING CARDS

If you draw a *systems failing card* you must immediately increase the  $\checkmark$  meter and add an additional white cube to the bag. Discard the *systems failing card* and draw new card from the disaster deck to replace it.

## System Surge

A system surge occurs when a zone contains more than 3 disasters or whenever a white cube is drawn from the bag. If a zone contains more than 3 disasters, the surge occurs within that zone. If a white cube causes the surge, the surging zone is the rightmost zone containing at least one disaster.

Whenever a system surge occurs, the bottommost *disaster card* of the surging zone is immediately moved to the top of the zone on its left. Any cubes on top of the disaster card are returned to the bag. If this results in the new zone having more than 3 disasters, the process is repeated until either: a disaster moves into a zone that has less than 3 disasters or until a disaster moves into the ship's core. If a disaster moves into the core column, it immediately inflicts damage to the ship's core and the the meter is updated accordingly. The *disaster card* is then immediately discarded and any cubes on top of it are returned to the bag.

**Note:** After a system surge is completely resolved all zones should have 3 or fewer disasters within them.

#### EXAMPLE

A player draws a white cube from the bag immediately causing a system surge. The surge occurs in Zone 3 since it is the rightmost zone containing at least one disaster.



**1.** The play-area before the white cube is drawn.

**2.** The player draws a white cube causing a system surge in Zone 3. The bottom disaster from Zone 3 moves to the top of Zone 2. Zone 2 now contains more than 3 disasters. This results in a subsequent surge within Zone 2.

**3.** The bottom disaster from Zone 2 moves to the top of Zone 1. Again, this results in a subsequent surge within Zone 1.

**4.** The bottom disaster from Zone 1 moves to the core. This disaster immediately inflicts 1 A damage to the ship's core. The damage meter must be updated accordingly and the disaster card must be discarded.

# Winning and Losing

Players must repair the six *escape sequences* in order to bring the escape pods back on line. When the last *escape sequence card* has been repaired, both players safely hop into the escape pods and immediately win the game. If either the  $\checkmark$  meter or the  $\checkmark$  meter or the size symbol, the ship's core explodes and both players immediately lose the game.

# Rules for Beginners

You may have noticed that the meter card is double-sided. The normal side has been depicted and explained throughout this manual. The beginner's side is available for new players or players who are looking to tone down the difficulty of the game.

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Left: The normal side of the meter card. Right: The beginner's side of the meter card.

When using the normal side of the meter card, both the system stability ( $\checkmark$ ) and core's damage level ( $\checkmark$ ) contribute to the amount of new disasters that appear during the *New Disasters Appear* phase. When using the beginner's side, however, only the system stability contributes. **This is the only difference**.

During the New Disasters Appear phase you will draw the number of disasters indicated on the  $\checkmark$  meter. The  $\checkmark$  meter is not taken into consideration when placing new disasters. However, players will still lose the game if either the  $\checkmark$  meter or the  $\checkmark$  meter reach the  $\Rightarrow$  symbol.



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