

Tips & Strategy Guide for **Are You the Traitor?**

General Tips and Strategy

- Examples of typical questions

Specific Tips and Strategy for Each Role

- Guard
- Good Wizard
- Keyholder
- Evil Wizard
- Traitor

What Are You the Traitor? is and is not

- Comparisons and contrasts to other deception party games like Werewolf and Mafia

General Tips and Strategy for the freeform discussion portion of each round

This is a game of trying to figure out if people are bluffing or not. That means the primary action is asking the other players questions, then looking for signs that they might be bluffing, also known as "tells". Common tells include: hesitation, biting the lip, covering the mouth, excessive smiling, being too talkative, or not talking enough, and general nervousness. Tells vary between people, so you're not necessarily looking for a set of definitive behaviors. Ultimately, tells are about noticing when someone is acting different than they usually do.

Other things to take into consideration are who other players are questioning, and what they seem to be caring most about. Each character has slightly different goals, and is trying to find or figure out a certain other player. Seeing where people focus their attention can be very revealing.

Examples of typical questions:

(To Ask Adventurers)

- Are you the Traitor?
- If you're not the Traitor, who do you think the Traitor is, and why?
- Which Wizard do you think is Good or Evil, and why?
- What makes you think that?

(To Ask Wizards)

- Are you the Good Wizard? (or, conversely: Are you the Evil Wizard?)
- What about the other Wizard – are they Good or Evil?
- Why should I believe you?
- Who are you trying to find?
- Who do you think the Traitor is, and why?
- Who do you think the Keyholder is?

Some of these might seem like stupid questions. "He just said he's the Good Wizard, why ask him whether the other Wizard is Good or Evil?", but the idea is to get people talking. The more you can get people to talk, the greater the chance that someone who's bluffing will slip up. Remember: telling the truth is easy; bluffing is hard work and takes concentration.

This is an important point that can't be repeated too much: getting people talking and giving them time to show their true colors is essential to success in this game. So don't be too hasty – it's usually best to let at least a few minutes of conversation go by before calling Stop. If you feel you've got a really good read on someone, don't be afraid to call Stop, but don't just make a random choice because you have an itchy trigger finger and you don't know what else to do. Be patient – someone else may be close to making a more informed call, which could give you the win anyhow.

- If you're in the Adventuring group, then you want to act like a Guard, whether you are or not: if you're the Traitor, you don't want to get caught, and if you're the Keyholder you don't want the Evil Wizard to grab you.
- If you are a Wizard, you want to act like the Good Wizard, whether you are or not, so that the Keyholder will give they Key to you, and not the other guy.

Specific Tips and Strategy for Each Role

GUARDS

Your main goal as a Guard is to find the Traitor. To this end, you'll mostly be grilling your fellow Adventurers as to whether they are the Traitor or not, using questions like those suggested above. Be sure to also ask the Keyholder if they are the Traitor (even though you know they're not) – if you consistently pass over a certain person in questioning, it can send a clear signal to the Evil Wizard that the person is the Keyholder.

A secondary goal of Guards is to camouflage the Keyholder and help them out. Aside from not inadvertently giving the Keyholder away, it's helpful to also question the Wizards. In addition to simply getting the Wizards talking so the Keyholder has more information, you also draw attention away from the Keyholder since the Keyholder is the one looking for a specific Wizard.

GOOD WIZARD

Your main concern as the Good Wizard is to convince the Adventuring group that you are, in fact, the Good Wizard. This is done mainly by acting calm, relaxed, and assured in your assertions that you are Good. This should be easier since you ARE actually Good. Conversely, if you are one of exactly two Wizards, then another tactic is to try to convince everyone that the other Wizard is Evil, by pointing out any tells you can find – or even make up (after all, if you're one of two Wizards, then you know the other Wizard is bluffing!)

If there are three Wizards, however, then you can't be sure of the alignment of the other Wizards. In these cases, admit that you don't know the status of the other Wizards (unless you see obvious tells). When in doubt, encourage deep thought and careful consideration rather than pressing the Keyholder to hand over the key to you. The more time for conversation, the more chances that people's true colors will show.

The other main way you convince people you are the Good Wizard is to look for the Traitor, since that's the Good Wizard's target. Question all the Adventurers using questions such as those suggested above. Keep in mind, however that you have less information than the Guards (a Guard can eliminate both himself and the Keyholder from his list of potential suspects). This is not to say you shouldn't accuse the Traitor if you feel fairly certain, but don't go with a random guess, since your odds are markedly worse than those of the Guards. Indicating your suspicions to the crowd might be more useful to your team.

KEYHOLDER

As the Keyholder, your main job is to figure out which Wizard is Good so you can give them the Key. In addition to asking the Wizard-directed questions above, try to see if one Wizard seems overly pushy or concerned with who the Keyholder is – that's more likely to be the Evil Wizard. The Wizard who seems to be genuinely looking for the Traitor, and encouraging you to make a careful decision is probably Good.

Your only other concern is not getting caught by the Evil Wizard. To camouflage yourself as a Guard, be sure to question your fellow Adventurers about their Traitor status in addition to questioning the Wizards. The Guards should be helping you out by doing the same. Be totally silent when revealing yourself while the Wizards are asleep: typically just pointing to yourself and nodding is enough. Make sure everyone gets your signal, however! Eye contact with everyone is a good way to verify this.

EVIL WIZARD

As the Evil Wizard you are essentially trying to behave exactly like the Good Wizard, in the hopes that the Keyholder will hand over the Key. The best way to achieve this is to check out all the advice given above for the Good Wizard, and try to act just like that:

- Act calm, open, and honest and point out fictitious tells of the other Wizard(s).
- Interrogate the Adventurers to look for the Traitor
- Try not to seem overly concerned with the Key or push for a hasty decision.

Meanwhile, you do want to try to figure out who the Keyholder is. Clearly, you can't actually question anyone directly about this without completely giving yourself away, but a Guard might slip up, or the Traitor might tip you off. Watch carefully to see who is questioning whom – is everyone being questioned except for one person? Does that person seem particularly anxious about the Wizard alignments? That person is probably the Keyholder.

Making a genuine search for the Traitor is actually useful for you. You might be able to signal them, or watch for their signal, and it's one less person who might be the Keyholder. Also, being sincere in your search makes

your Good-Wizard act more convincing. If you simply feel you're not good at pretending to be Good, take comfort in the fact that the Traitor does need to be able to figure out who you are in order to signal you. As long as the Keyholder is sufficiently undecided, there's little danger in having a Guard or two suspect that you are Evil. No one can call Stop on the Evil Wizard.

TRAITOR

The role of the Traitor is most difficult, because you cannot directly call Stop on anyone. Since most of the other people in the game are looking for you, your foremost concern should be not getting caught. However if you can correctly identify the Evil Wizard and signal to them who the Keyholder is, it's pretty much a guaranteed win for Evil, so keep your eye out for opportunities.

Not getting caught mostly consists of acting like a Guard by grilling your fellow Adventurers. As you question your companions, you also cast suspicion around the group and away from yourself. You can even make yourself look like a conscientious Key-protector by also grilling the Wizards, as you try to figure out which one is Evil so you can signal to them. If you're just not sure who to signal, just sowing general misdirection is also good too, in the hopes someone else will be accused of being the Traitor instead of you.

If you think you have identified the Evil Wizard, you can try to tip them off as to who the Keyholder is. If they're sitting next to you, you could nudge them, or tap their foot. If they're across from you, you could try to catch their eye. If the pressure is on, and you don't feel like you can safely signal (or the Evil Wizard is particularly oblivious) you can try to actively convince the Keyholder to hand over the Key to the wrong Wizard.

What Traitor IS and is NOT (Comparing Traitor to Werewolf or Mafia)

- TRAITOR IS NOT... Werewolf. They are different games with different goals that share many elements. Werewolf players who enjoy making off-the-cuff accusations knowing the crowd will help moderate their impulsiveness will find they need to adjust their strategy for Traitor.
- TRAITOR IS NOT... about manipulating people. In Werewolf, a key element is getting people to go along with what you want to happen. In Traitor, this skill can be useful (if you ARE the Traitor) but mostly the game is about your ability to deduce what secret roles others have. Werewolf is a game of mob rule, Traitor is a game of individual detective work.
- TRAITOR IS NOT... the same experience with every number of players. One of the wonderful and interesting things about Traitor is that playing with 4 people is different from playing with 6, which is different than with 8 or 10.
- TRAITOR IS NOT... as stressful as Werewolf. Because Werewolf games generally take longer, some players angst over every decision, intensively grilling subjects before committing to a vote. In this environment, many find it very stressful to be a Werewolf, since they will be faced with having to bluff for the entire game. While a detective mentality is a good tool in Traitor, each short round is just one of many, so one bad decision does not ruin the game since there's always the next round.
- TRAITOR IS NOT... intended to replace Werewolf entirely! Remember that Traitor is a different game with different goals, it's ok to like them both. Traitor is especially designed to be played with lower numbers of players (that wouldn't make for good Werewolf groups) so while you're waiting for that 11th player to show up, brush up on your detective skills!
- TRAITOR IS... a non elimination game. You'll never have to worry about getting mauled or lynched in the first round again! Even a quick round in which your side loses is only a quick re-deal away from the next one. Many people find Traitor to be less stressful because of this.
- TRAITOR IS... a game where you get to change roles frequently. This has the advantage of allowing you to employ varied strategies, as well as truly hone in on and learn other's tells.
- TRAITOR IS... playable with less people. It is designed for 4-10 people, and provides a unique gameplay experience for each size group (though at least 6 people seems to be best).