

Global Thermonuclear War - Rule Book

I. OBJECTIVE

Win the Cold War through strategic dominance, cultural influence, technological advancements, and psychological warfare-without launching global annihilation. (Unless that's the winning move.)

II. SETUP

Player Roles:

- 2 to 6 players
- One player must play as the United States
- One player must play as the Soviet Union
- Others may be Allied Nations, Non-Aligned Powers, or Wildcard Celebrities.

Initial Resources:

- 5 Influence Tokens
- 3 Technology Cards
- 3 Culture Cards
- 1 Propaganda Asset
- 1 Hidden Nuke card (face down)

III. TURN STRUCTURE

Each round represents one geopolitical decade.

Phases:

- Headline Phase (2 minutes): Each player submits and reads 1 'headline'.
- Strategic Action Phase (3 min/player): Play 1 card, act with tokens, and optionally play a Hidden Nuke.
- Judging Phase (5-10 min): Vote on most effective, creative, or disruptive plays.

IV. SCORING & POINT JUDGING

Points per Turn (Max 11):

- Strategic Impact: 1-3

Global Thermonuclear War - Rule Book

- Cultural Disruption: 1-3
- Technological Advance: 1-3
- Style & Creativity: 1-2

Example: 'Soviet Bear Astronaut punches moon' = Tech + Wildcard = high score potential.

V. NUCLEAR OPTION & ESCALATION

Detonation: Wipes 1 opposing asset. Escalates with each use.

MAD: Both use nukes = instant game end. Scores freeze and reviewed by tribunal.

VI. TIME LIMITS AND TURN PACE

- Headline Phase: 2 min
- Action Phase: 3 min/player
- Judging Phase: 5-10 min

(Use chess clock for speed play)

VII. WILDCARD ROLES & CELEBRITY SUBSTITUTIONS

Celebrity Influence can swing outcomes. Players may 'swap' influence figures. Wildcard powers include Reality Twists and Deus Ex Machina plays.

VIII. WINNING THE GAME

Game ends after 6 turns, full-scale war, or a player reaches 40 points.

Victory: Highest total score. Tie: Lowest nuke usage wins. Optional: Vote for 'History Judges' winner.

IX. SAMPLE TURN

Turn 3: The 1970s

Headlines:

- USSR: 'KGB Leaks Disco Blueprints to NY'

Global Thermonuclear War - Rule Book

- USA: 'NASA Funds Punk Rock'

Actions:

- USSR plays 'Tsoi's Rise': +2 Asia

- USA plays 'Laser-Guided Psy-Ops': +1 NATO

Judging:

- USSR: 5 pts

- USA: 3 pts

X. OPTIONAL VARIANTS

- Real-Time Headlines (15s limit)

- Silent Proxy Turn

- Pop Culture Overdrive: Must reference celebrities/media in all plays