Ring of Truth

Setup and Rules

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General Information

Ring of Truth is a fast-paced and exciting social deduction game. Players take on secret roles and try to discover who is helping them—and who is trying to deceive them.

- **Players**: 4-8
- **Game time**: 20-40 minutes
- **Recommended age**: 10+

What You Need

You can assemble the game using items found at home:

- A cloth pouch (can also be a hat or similar container)
- A ring or any round object of similar shape (e.g., a bottle cap ring)
- 3 smooth or soft items (e.g., glass marbles, beans, pieces of sponge) – these represent **Humans**
- 4 rough or hard-edged items (e.g., crumpled aluminum foil balls) – these represent **Goblins**
- 1 uniquely shaped item (distinct and easily distinguishable) – this represents the **Dragon**

Roles and Objectives

The item each player takes determines their secret role and win condition.

- **Ring Bearer**
    - Wins if they correctly guess the roles of at least half the players (rounded down) at the end of the game.

- **Human** *(smooth or soft item)*
    - Wins when the Ring Bearer guesses correctly.
    - Humans cooperate with each other and the Ring Bearer.

- **Goblin** *(rough or edgy item)*
    - Wins if the Ring Bearer makes a mistake.
    - Goblins try to confuse and deceive.

- **Dragon** *(unique item)*
    - Wins regardless of who else wins—**as long as the Dragon is not pointed at** by the Ring Bearer.
    - The Dragon does not wish to meddle in the affairs of mortals.

Game Flow

1. Selection Phase

1. Players sit in a circle.
2. Depending on the player count, place the following set of items into the pouch:

Players	Ring	Goblins	Humans	Dragon
4	1	2	1	1
5	1	2	2	1
6	1	3	2	1
7	1	3	3	1
8	1	4	3	1

3. The **first picker** (the oldest player or chosen randomly) secretly picks **two different** items from the pouch, then passes the pouch clockwise.
4. Each subsequent player picks **one** item and passes the pouch on.
5. Right before the pouch reaches the last player, the first picker must return **one** of their two items to the pouch, without checking what's inside.
6. The last player then chooses one of the two remaining items. If one of them is the Ring, they **must** take it.

7. The final item is placed back into the center of the table—unseen by anyone.
8. Now begins the Discussion Phase.

2. Discussion Phase

During this phase, players may speak freely.

- Players may talk about who they are, what items they had to choose from, and what they passed along.
- Players may ask questions, bluff, or refuse to answer.
- **Players may not show the item they chose!**

This phase ends when the Ring Bearer decides to stop it.

3. End of Game

1. At any moment, the Ring Bearer can stop the discussion and **guess the identity (role) of half the players**, rounded down.
2. The chosen players must truthfully answer **"yes"** or **"no"** to confirm or deny the Ring Bearer's guess.

- If **all** chosen players say "yes," the Ring Bearer and all Humans win.
- If **any** player says "no," the Ring Bearer and all Humans lose, and the Goblins win.
- Additionally, **if the Dragon was not named during the guess**, the Dragon wins (and may share victory with either team).

Example:

In a five-player game, Lucy has the ring. She believes she knows who is lying and announces: "I have the Ring, and I guess: Albert is a Goblin, and Casper is a Human!"

- If **both** Albert and Casper reply "yes," Lucy and all Humans win.
- If **either** says "no," the Goblins win.
- If **neither** was the Dragon, then the Dragon **also** wins.

Next Round

Keep the same seating. Play as many rounds as needed so that each player gets to be the **first picker** once.

Variant: Pass to Any Player

In this variant, instead of passing the pouch to the player on your left, you pass it to **any player** who hasn't had it yet, after choosing your role.

This version works especially well for playing **on the go**—in a train, on a bus, or while walking.

Playtesters

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