



Soho! is a game of skill and judgement inspired by the two things for which this small, historic patch of London is famous around the globe: its pubs, and its one-way system.

THE SCENARIO

Each player is the editor of a small literary magazine. Before the next issue can be printed, six pieces of rashly commissioned copy need to be retrieved from a somewhat motley bunch of recalcitrant writers:

- Travel blogger and author of *Leicester: City of Crisps*, **Toby D'Azure**.
- Girl-about-town and sparkly-heeled chick-lit tyro **Sophie Blush**.
- Postmodern goremeister and connoisseur of noir **Justin Slick**.
- Aga-endorsing barbour-clad romantic novelist **Lavinia Snowe**.
- Former Para turned lad-mag agony uncle **David "Dave" Green**.
- Otherworldly and oddly androgynous sci-fi bod **CT Vermillion**.

All are published authors but, on account of not being published as often as they feel they should be, will still take freelance work wherever they can get it, and aren't too fussed about style or topic: in fact, all insist that being able to turn in stuff "outside their normal comfort zone" stops them getting stuck in a generic rut and keeps them fresh and edgy; the alternative suggestion – that they have no shame and will do anything for a free lunch and a small sub to get them through till next Friday – is, they say, just insulting nonsense. On this, they are all agreed; on everything else, they are united only in their mutual contempt, jealousy, and suspicion. They are, in a word, writers.

And, being writers, all six are currently holed up in six Soho pubs, cadging free drinks, chatting up people half their age (but with, oddly, twice their looks), and complaining vociferously about their agents, about dumbing down in the publishing industry, and about how they didn't want that *Eastenders* gig anyway as it would have compromised their artistic integrity and also possibly involved buying a TV licence.

The noble editors' thankless task is to contact all six writers and extricate their beer/sauvignon-stained prose from whichever unwholesome pocket or handbag it's been stuffed in. **The first to do so** scores a small moral victory or, to borrow a phrase from *Monopoly*, **wins**.

To get from one pub to the next the editors can walk, hail a cab, or grab a Boris Bike. Taxis are fast, but much of Soho is alleyways or paved, and it's not easy finding somewhere to pull up. Bikes are nippy, but what about those cobbles on Broadwick Street? – ouch! And, of course, this is Soho, where the streets are narrow and the inexplicable commonplace...

HISTORICAL NOTE FOR PEDANTS

Hang on, some of you might be saying, looking at our board, something's not right here: last time I got off at Tottenham Court Road, the streets round Soho Square had been flattened to make way for Crossrail, as had the Bath House. And isn't the Red Lion on Great Windmill Street now cocktail bar Be At One? Is this supposed to be set in the past? If so, why are there Boris Bikes? And why are you including the Kingly Street pedestrianisation which isn't even finished yet? The obvious response to all these questions is, of course, *shut up*. But, given it might well be Christmas, that's maybe a bit mean-spirited, so let's instead say this: while all cities are in constant flux,

a board game is set in stone – or printed on 180 micron plastic, it amounts to the same thing. So, when designing *Soho!*, we needed, as so often in life, to choose our moment. Or, deep breath, our *moments*; because what we've done is gone for a temporal blend, one we thought made for the best game; if it helps, you can think of *Soho!* as existing simultaneously both in some prelapsarian pre-Crossrail idyll, when the Bath House (and Falconberg Court, and the Astoria...) were still standing, AND in some bleak dystopian parallel London in which Boris Johnson has somehow been elected mayor. Oh.

Perhaps we should get on.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

THE BOARD

The board is a map of Soho, accurate in every detail though, for copyright reasons, *not* based on the A-to-Z. The numbers in the corners of some playing squares label them for easy identification – more on this later.

THE PLAYING PIECES

The Noble Editors

Editors are represented by the stackable playing pieces. Each editor has three pieces of the same colour, and whether just one piece is moved around the board, or a stack of two or three, depends on whether the editor is on foot, straddling a saddle, or collapsed in the back of a taxi.

The Writers

The writers are represented by the six coloured pawns.

- Toby** is represented by the **BLUE** pawn.
- Sophie** is represented by the **PINK** pawn
- Justin** is represented by the **BLACK** pawn
- Lavinia** is represented by the **WHITE** pawn
- Dave** is represented by the **GREEN** pawn
- CT** is represented by the **RED** pawn

THE DICE

There are three: **a green 4-sided dice, a blue 12-sided, and a black 20-sided** (we know – *20 sides!*). Which dice is used depends on whether you're on foot (green), on a bike (blue), or in a taxi (black – *and 20 sides!*).

THE CARDS

There are two packs: the 48 **Obstruction** cards each have picture of a Soho pub on the back (bar the two jokers, which don't), while the 24 **Bloody Writers!** cards each have a beer and book symbol.

THE COUNTERS

These represent various obstructions the editors will encounter on their quest, and come in four flavours: red, orange, green and black.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: THE SET UP

This will take a few minutes, but it makes sure that every game of *Soho!* is unique. You'll need the **Obstruction** cards, minus the jokers.

- 1.** First, you need to determine starting positions for the editors. To do this, each player should draw a card at random and place a single stackable piece of their chosen colour in the pub indicated (if your geography's not too hot, you may find the map on the back of this booklet useful!).
- 2.** Next, you need to discover where the writers are skulking. So, count off six more cards, and place a coloured pawn at each of the pubs indicated – it doesn't matter who goes where.
- 3.** And now you need to find out what's currently causing mayhem in Soho, and which roads are closed as a result. There are three sorts of obstruction:

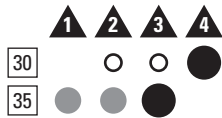
- Obstructions which block the road to **taxis**. These are represented on the board by placing a small **green** counter on the square affected.
- Obstructions which block the road to **taxis AND bikes**. These are represented by a medium-sized **orange** counter.
- Obstructions which block the road to **EVERYTHING** – **taxis, bikes, pedestrians**. These are represented by a large **red** counter.

For that authentic Soho experience, we think there should be 12 obstructions at all times. Which *particular* 12 will change as the game progresses but, to find out which counters need to be in place at the start, count off 12 more cards, and see what the first one says. There'll be a description of something that's currently disrupting traffic and, below it, one or two numbers in square boxes. The numbers are those of the squares on the board on which counters must be placed, and the circles alongside tell you what sort of counter to use:

- means use a **small green counter**
- means use a **medium-sized orange counter**
- means use a **large red counter**

For each number there are up to four circles; that's because each source of disruption has four possible severities. To find out which one applies, you need to throw the green dice.

So, with the first of the 12 cards in front of you, throw the dice, look below the triangle with that number in it, and place the appropriate counter(s) on the square(s) indicated. In the case of the following card, for example:



- If you throw a 1, put an orange counter on square 35.
- If you throw a 2, put a green counter on 30 and an orange on 35.
- If you throw a 3, put a green counter on 30 and a red on 35.
- If you throw a 4, put a red counter on 30 (and nothing on 35).

Repeat this procedure for all 12 cards, then give them a quick shuffle and place them in a pile pub-side-up on the table. Now gather up the rest of the **Obstruction** cards, replace the jokers and the cards you removed in Stages 1 and 2, give the whole lot a good shuffle, and place them in a second pile beside the pile of 12 cards, also pub-side-up.

4. Finally, shuffle the **Bloody Writers!** pack, and place that nearby.

You're now ready to play **Soho!**

MOVING AROUND THE BOARD

1. You can walk, hop on a bike, or take a taxi. You indicate which you're doing by changing the number of pieces in your stack – a single piece means you're on foot, a stack of two means you're on a bike, three means you're in a taxi.

2. If you're on foot, throw the **green** dice. If you're on a bike, throw the **blue** one. If you're in a taxi, throw the **black** one.



3. Streets shaded pale grey and sporting a bike symbol at each end can be used by **BIKES AND PEDESTRIANS ONLY**.



4. Pedestrianised areas – the dark grey streets with paving – are open to **PEDESTRIANS ONLY**.

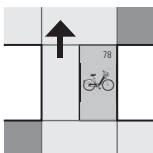


5. Cobbled streets can be used by **TAXIS AND PEDESTRIANS ONLY** – no bikes!

6. Each of the four circuses counts as one large square. **HOWEVER**, cars are bound to get caught at the lights, so a taxi moving into a circus can't move out again on the same move, no matter what number is thrown.

7. The central gardens of **Soho Square** and **Golden Square** are open to pedestrians and count as a single playing square.

8. Taxis and bikes **MUST** obey the one-way system; if there's an arrow at the end of a street, all travel along the street must be in that direction. Though watch out for the odd contra-flow cycle lane, e.g. this one on Wardour Street:



*the arrow means you can only travel north, but it's clearly **not** in the cycle lane so, while taxis can only go north, bikes can go north or south.*

9. And, of course, you also have to take account of the 12 obstructions put in place at the start of the game, so:

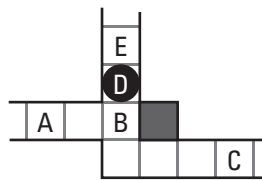
- **taxi can't drive over a square with a green counter on it**
- **neither taxis nor bikes can cross one with an orange counter**
- **nobody at all can get past a square with a large red counter**

And remember: it's not simply that you can't land *on* the square, you actually can't move *past* it – the road is blocked. (If an obstruction doesn't affect you, it's fine to just sit on top of the counter if that's where your throw takes you.)

10. **U-TURNS** by taxis and bikes aren't allowed because Soho's streets are too narrow, i.e. **you can't change direction from one throw to the next**. You can if you're on foot, but you must **miss a turn** apologising to the person behind you. And obviously you can if you're changing your mode of transport.

11. **OVERTAKING** is allowed *only* if you're using a faster mode of transport: e.g. a taxi can overtake a bike, but if there's another taxi ahead you can move only as far as the square behind it. Obviously you can pass someone going in the opposite direction, but if they've just got on a bike or in a taxi, or are at a junction, it might not be entirely clear which way they're heading; in this case, just shout, and get them to tell you. And then make sure they stick to it.

12. Unless you come up against an obstruction forbidding further movement – be it one of the 12 temporary ones, a fellow editor you can't overtake, or something permanent like a pedestrianised zone – **you must use the entire value of your throw**, even if it takes you past your destination or in a direction you don't want to go. That said, there's nothing to stop you deliberately choosing a route that you know will bring you up against an obstruction, as in this example:



*If a taxi at A travelling east throws a 6, it can't stop outside the pub at B, because there are still clear squares ahead of it; it has to continue on towards C, 6 squares away. **BUT**, if the obstruction at D had been one square further north, at E, then the taxi could have turned left and stopped at D, because the road it would then have been travelling along would have been completely blocked up ahead.*

13. CHANGING YOUR MODE OF TRANSPORT

The chance of a taxi being able to pull up right outside a pub, or there being somewhere to lock your bike, is remote – that's why you must use the full value shown on the dice, even if it sends you right past the door! But finding a bike or hailing a taxi also takes time, and in **Soho!** this means missing turns while you add pieces to your stack.

Here's how it works: if you're a pedestrian and want to go by bike, don't throw the dice, just add an extra piece to your single piece to make a stack of two. **And that constitutes your turn** – you can't move till next round. If you want to go by taxi, miss two turns adding pieces to make a stack of three.

If you're on a bike or in a taxi and want to continue on foot, there are two possibilities. If you've been able to use the full amount of your throw, then you can simply remove the extra pieces – whether it's one or two – **as part of the same turn**. Then, next go, you can throw the green dice. If, however, you weren't able to use all of your throw because you were brought to a halt by an obstruction, or by the road being blocked by another player, you have to wait till next turn and then **removing the pieces will count as your turn**.

Changing from taxi to bike or vice versa – or to another vehicle heading in the opposite direction – is a 2-part operation, as you need to briefly become a pedestrian first, i.e. you must remove the old pieces before adding new ones.

Finally – if you decide *after the end of your turn* that you'd like to abandon your bike or taxi, either because you've changed your mind, circumstances have altered, or you were simply hedging your bets, then that's fine – but **removing the unneeded pieces will now count as your next turn**.

14. **WHEELING YOUR BIKE** is allowed when you want to take it the wrong way up a one-way street or across cobbles or a pedestrianised area – though you're still not allowed past orange or red counters. Wheeling is done one square per round – there's no need to throw the dice. Also, you can use your last throw to move **ONE** square into the "forbidden" zone, e.g. if you're two squares from a pedestrianised area and throw at least a three, you can move onto the first of the pedestrianised squares. NB you're not allowed to visit any pubs whilst wheeling your bike and, once you reach the end of the pedestrian, cobbled or one-way zone, **you have get back in the saddle for at least one turn before you're allowed to relinquish your bike!**

15. ENTERING AND LEAVING PUBS

Pubs are the solid green squares, and pub doors are indicated by the gap in the black outline; if there's no gap, there's no door, and you can't go in!

Obviously you need to be on foot to enter a pub. You don't need to throw the exact number, but you can't walk out again on the same move – any unused portion of the throw is lost.

To leave a pub, place your piece on the square immediately outside a door – that accounts for your turn. (This will be everyone's first move in the game.)

You don't need to be meeting a writer to enter a pub – pubs with two doors can be useful short-cuts. But you must obey the above rules to enter/leave.

16. THE SECRET TUNNEL

All Bar One, Pitcher & Piano and Slug & Lettuce are not real pubs, and thus have no place on the *Soho!* board. They *are*, on the other hand, linked by a secret tunnel, which is why anyone entering the ladies in one can often find themselves emerging from the ladies in one of the others and yet *not notice until it's time to find a minicab*; and it seemed worth including them just for that. Here's how it works: you can go through the door of one, but leave through the door of another. It is, if you like, *Soho!*'s version of the secret passage in *Cluedo*; only instead of letting you get to the other side of the board in one move, it lets you get to the other end of Meard Street.

ACCOSTING WRITERS AND WINNING THE GAME

Once you're in a pub where a writer is hiding you can cross him or her off your list. And, don't forget, you need to be on foot to enter a pub, so if you arrive by bike or taxi, you'll have to gamble on how close to get, then remove the extra pieces (as in Rule 13) and walk the final yards. *But hold on*, you might be saying, *can't I just leave the driver waiting and dash inside? And what if I'm lucky enough to find somewhere to leave my bike immediately outside?* Well, yes, and that's why you can also cross a writer off your list if **you're on a bike and you land immediately outside the pub door**, or you're in a taxi and land **immediately outside or one square either side***. Next throw, you're free to carry on in your taxi or on your bike.

To keep track of who's visited whom, a quick table like this is probably best:

	MATT	JUDE	ALEX	WEIRD TONY	UNCLE SHIFTY	MR. HIGGINS
SOPHIE	X			X		X
CT	X		X	X		
DAVE		X			X	
LAVINIA		X		X	X	
JUSTIN	X					
TOBY			X			X

** it's a minor point, but I'm afraid you can't take advantage of this rule when arriving by taxi at the Spice of Life or Cambridge, as a taxi can't wait in Cambridge Circus – you'll need to pay and get out.*

And that's it! First one to visit all six writers is the winner!

OH, NO, WAIT A MINUTE... THERE'S MORE.

Indeed. And this is where the fun starts. You were probably wondering.

THE OBSTRUCTION CARDS

Even in Soho, no street can stay blocked forever. But, equally, no street can stay clear of obstructions forever either. So, here's what happens.

At the end of each round, one player should throw the green dice and, if it comes up a 3 or a 4, do the following with the *Obstruction* cards:

(i) take the top card from the **small** pile of 12 cards, turn it over to see which obstruction it referred to, remove the counter(s) concerned from the board, and put the card back at the bottom of the **large** pile.

(ii) take the top card from the **large** pile, read the text, place a new obstruction on the board as instructed, then put the card at the bottom of the **small** pile. (If you need to place a counter on a square already occupied by an editor, don't worry – he or she will move off next turn.)

In this way, all obstructions are one-by-one replaced by new ones which are, in turn, themselves replaced. And no cheating by looking to see which obstructions are up for removal next – it's up to you to remember!

Two of the *Obstruction* cards are a bit different: the *Victorian Water Main Repair* cards.

VICTORIAN WATER MAIN REPAIRS

All Londoners who've ever tried to get anywhere will know about Victorian Water Main Repairs. Entire streets are suddenly closed off, it seems, seemingly at random. In *Soho!*, this is represented by entire streets being closed off seemingly at random.

Remember the joker cards? Well, eventually either Ken or Boris will make his way to the top of the pile and then, instead of the usual green dice, you use the **blue** one to discover which road is going to be dug up, and place small black counters at all affected junctions; the numbers of the squares are listed below each road name, and sometimes the closure will extend beyond the named thoroughfare, for water is no respecter of nomenclature.

Once a street has been closed by Victorian Water Main Repairs, the following rules of movement must be observed:

1. Only pedestrians can move along OR ACROSS streets closed by VWMR.
2. Even then, they can proceed down the street, or across it, **ONLY ONE SQUARE PER TURN**. So, if you need to walk 6 squares up the street, it will take you 6 turns. If you're simply crossing the street, it will take 2 turns – one to move onto the black counter, and one to move off it.
3. If VWMR works are imposed on a street a player is already on, the player must immediately abandon any bike/taxi and begin moving as above.

In all other respects, the jokers are like a regular *Obstruction* cards – they go to the bottom of the small pile and eventually make their way to the top.

Occasionally, you'll need to place a VWMR counter on a square that's already obstructed; in this case, remove the obstruction, and draw another *Obstruction* card to keep the total number of obstructions at 12 (the original card can be left to resurface in its own good time). Similarly, if you're told to place an obstruction on a square already occupied by a VWMR counter, put the card to the bottom of the pile, and draw another.

THE "BLOODY WRITERS!" CARDS



The thing about writers is, they're not to be trusted. They'll say they're going to be one place but, at the first whiff of a possible schmooze or a free bar at a book launch, they'll up sticks and skedaddle. So:

1. When a player lands on a square bearing the *Bloody Writers!* symbol, he or she should take the top card from the *Bloody Writers!* pack and see what it says. Usually, it will bring news that one or more writers have moved. So, before the next player takes their turn, the writers should be relocated as instructed. Don't worry if their movements seem to defy common sense and logic, or ignore the various obstructions currently in place – writers, as they'll often tell you, have Special Gifts which must never be questioned.
2. Sometimes, you'll need to use the green dice to choose between different courses of action. If two or more writers are to be moved by throwing the dice, they should usually move separately, i.e. the dice should be thrown once for the first writer, then again for the second, and so on.
3. If there's any ambiguity – e.g. if a writer is told to move to his nearest pub but two are equidistant – the player who drew the card gets to choose. And if a move simply isn't possible – e.g. if a writer on Charing Cross Road is told to move east – just leave him or her where she is.
4. If **three or more writers end up together in a pub**, two should be sent **at once** to the pubs on the tops of the two *Obstruction Card* piles – whoever drew the original *Bloody Writers!* card chooses who goes where.
5. If a player is wheeling a bike or negotiating a Victorian Water Main Repair – i.e. moving one-square-per-round – any *Bloody Writers!* squares should be ignored, as obviously it's impossible to avoid them.

ODD RULES THAT DIDN'T FIT ANYWHERE ELSE

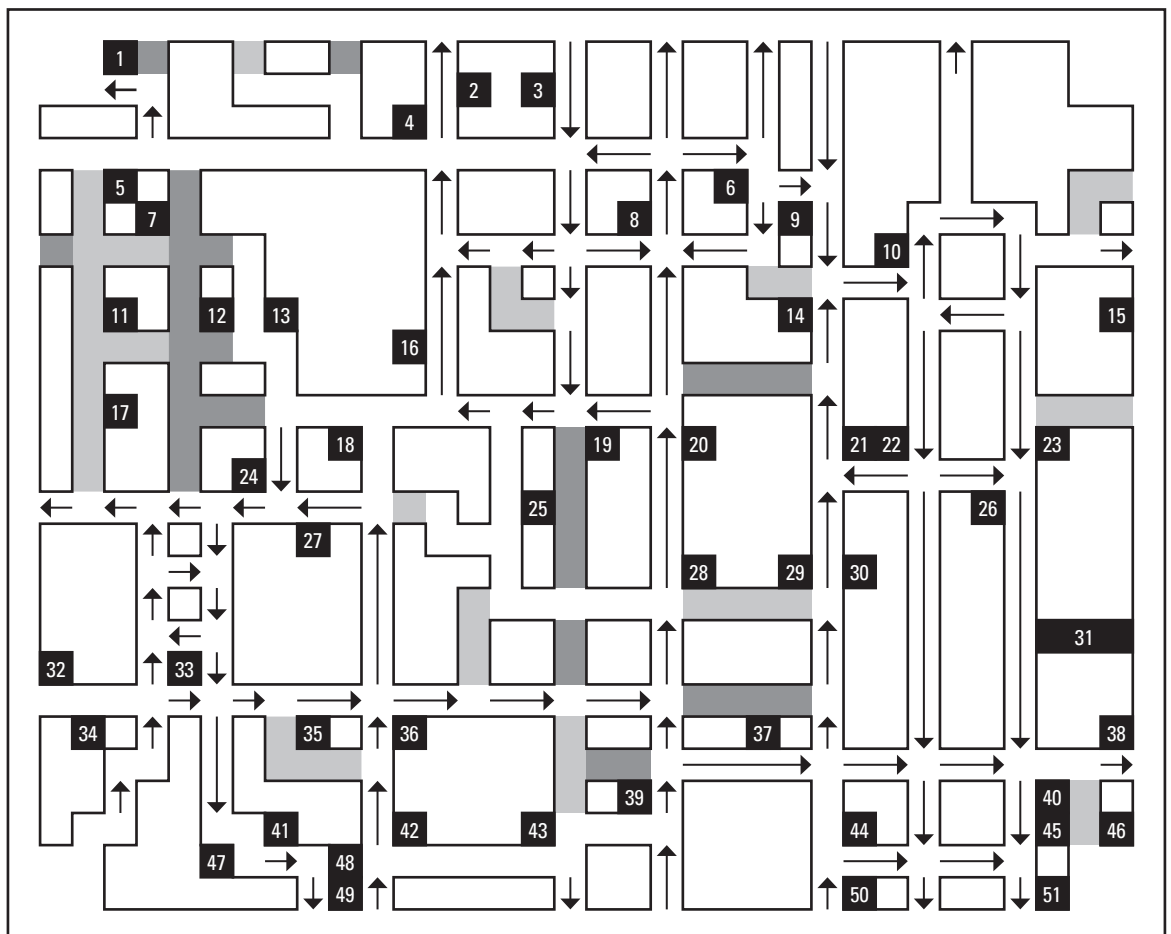
1. Very occasionally, a writer will end up out-of-reach because there are red counters at each of the nearest junctions. If this happens, any player can, at any time, ask for the writer to be moved to the pub on top of the large **Obstruction** card pile.
2. Similarly, it's possible for a player to become trapped between two red counters. In this case, he or she is allowed to **walk** past the obstruction, but must miss **TWO** turns first arguing with people.
3. Any player can, if they're passing, pop into the pub on top of the large **Obstruction** card pile and use the public payphone to invite any writer they've already visited to meet them there. The writer in question should be placed in the pub immediately, which may annoy any fellow editors who'd just been about to meet them somewhere else. This, of course, is the point.

A WORD ABOUT THE ONE-WAY SYSTEM

Please note that the one-way system was devised by Westminster Council, not us, so please direct any complaints to them. Also, to avoid cluttering the board, we've put arrows only where you're most likely to need them, i.e. at junctions and by pub doors, but obviously the entire street will be one-way as far as the next junction. The map below might help stop arguments.

The choice of streets designated as cycle routes is slightly more ad hoc. Technically you *shouldn't* cycle up Silver Place or down Meard Street, and a taxi *could* squeeze down Manette Street or up Ramillies Place, but we think our scheme captures the spirit of getting around Soho and, frankly, I'm not convinced that even Westminster Council are too sure of the rules; I cite, in evidence, the two one-way arrows pointing in opposite directions at the bottom end of Rupert Street. But pedants and sticklers should feel free to customise: you could, for instance, agree that it's acceptable to drive down Berwick Street if you're playing the game on a Sunday, as the market's only there on weekdays.

- Admiral Duncan - 37
- Argyll Arms - 1
- Bath House - 9
- Blue Posts (Berwick Street) - 19
- Blue Posts (Kingly Street) - 11
- Cambridge - 46
- Carlisle Arms - 26
- Clachan - 5
- Coach & Horses (Gt Marl. St.) - 4
- Coach & Horses (Greek St.) - 45
- Crown - 33
- Crown & Two Chairmen - 21
- Devonshire Arms - 47
- Dog & Duck - 22
- Duke of Argyll - 36
- Duke of Wellington - 39
- Endurance - 25
- French House - 44
- George - 8
- Glassblower - 34
- Glasshouse Stores - 35
- Golden Lion - 50
- Green Man - 3
- John Snow - 18
- King's Arms - 2
- Leicester Arms - 32
- Lyric - 49
- Molly Moggs - 38
- Montagu Pyke - 31
- Nellie Dean - 14
- Old Coffee House - 24
- Pillars of Hercules - 23
- Queen's Head - 41
- Red Lion (Gt Windmill St.) - 42
- Red Lion (Kingly Street) - 17
- Royal George - 15
- Shakespeare's Head - 7
- Shaston Arms - 13
- Ship - 20
- Spice of Life - 51
- St James Tavern - 49
- Star - 6
- Star & Garter - 16
- Sun & Thirteen Cantons - 27
- Three Greyhounds - 40
- Toucan - 10
- White Horse (Newburgh St.) - 12
- White Horse (Rupert Street) - 43



VARIATIONS

The trouble with most board games is that they can get a bit repetitive. With *Monopoly* you're forever walking down the same old streets, and in *Cluedo*... well, you just *know* that someone's going to end up dead – the only *real* mystery is where, who'll do the killing, and what the murder weapon is going to be. Our little board game, on the other hand, is like Soho itself: capricious, teeming with possibility, a place where everyone can play by their own rules. Here's a few you might like to try.

1. **Be more obstructive!** Having 12 obstructions is a fairly arbitrary choice, so feel free to experiment – the more you have, the more fiendish the game becomes. Or increase the number of obstructions as the game progresses...
2. **Remove the obstructions more/less regularly!** You could change them automatically at the end of each round without throwing a dice, or...
3. **Move the writers round a bit more!** If you think *Soho!* would be better if the writers were more flighty, you could try using the blue dice to randomly move a writer to the uppermost pub on the big pile at the end of each round, e.g. 1-6 results in no movement, 7 means move Toby, 8 means move Sophie...
4. **Make the Obstruction cards more accurate!** Simply take the "Cambridge" card, cross out the name "Michael Creed", and replace it with the name "Martin Creed", which is what I meant to write in the first place.
5. **Have more friends!** As with most things, fun increases with size, and there's no real limit to the number of players, other than that we've only given you tokens for six. But you can improvise, e.g. use stacks of coins.
6. **The world's greatest drinking game!** Every time you visit a pub, you have to down a drink. It's a genuine Soho pub crawl in your own front room! If you like, you can just forget about the whole dice and counters thing...
7. **Home decoration!** If this was a gift and you really hate board games, you could still put the board in a nice frame from IKEA and hang it up somewhere. We actually think it's a little reminiscent of Piet Mondrian's *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, only with green instead of yellow, and more pigeons.

Soho! was a production of *Smoke: a London Peculiar* – see www.smokelondon.co.uk for more details. The drawings are by Alex Farebrother-Naylor, who also designed the font used on the board. *Soho!* was printed by Lancing Press. Thanks to John Dyer.