

Welcome to Varia!

A new genre of card game - fast, interactive, and fun!

Varia is a card-based fighting game that is all about timing. Each turn, you use action cards to plan out how you will attack your opponent or block their assault, then roll dice to determine the winner.

A good strategy will minimize the damage you take and maximize the hurt you put on your opponent. Plan well, and you will walk away victorious. Plan poorly and you may not live to see the next turn.

Varia is a first-person card game. There are no minions that fight for you or walls to hide behind. You are the one raising the shield to block incoming arrows. You are the one casting the fireball spell at your opponent's face. You are the one swinging for the win with your weapon of choice.

With careful planning and a little luck, victory will be yours! May the dice always fall in your favor.

-The Varia Design Team



What You Will Need

To play Varia you and your opponent will need the following:

- A deck of 30 action cards.
- Item cards with a total value of 30 or less.
- A way to track life points and action points (pen and paper will work well).
- At least one six-sided die.
- At least one four-sided die.
- Any token & stack cards you will need (depends on the cards in your deck).

You will use the d6 and d4 to randomize numerical values found on **Varia**'s cards. For example, many cards in **Varia** have a power, a focus, or both. Power is the number found inside of a square shape and can be read as the number plus one d6. Focus is the number found inside of a triangle shape and can be read as the number plus one d4. The power and focus of *Decapitate* below can be read as "10+1d6 Power | 5+1d4 Focus."

That's a lot of stuff! To make things easy, **Varia** has a format called "Out-of-the-Box". **Varia** is sold as pre-constructed class decks. Each class is designed to be relatively balanced against all other classes and contains everything you will need to play the game. So, if you want to get started right away and don't want to build a deck from scratch, simply pick from one of our existing class decks and have your opponent do the same!

Getting Set Up



First, take all token and stack cards and set them aside outside of the game. Next, take your item cards and place them on the table in front of you. This is your "item zone" and is where you will keep your items when you are not using them.

Second, take your deck of 30 <u>action cards</u> and shuffle them. Place the shuffled deck in front of you on the table. This is your <u>deck zone</u>.

Third, set your health point total to 30, and your action point total to 10. You may use whatever method you wish to track these values (pen and paper, glass beads, pieces of popcorn).

Finally, decide who will be the first active player of the game. You may use whatever method you wish in order to decide this. We recommend rolling a six-sided die and having the player with the highest value go first. On a tie, simply roll again.

The Play Area



Varia has seven zones where cards can go. The zones are:

- Deck your draw deck is kept in your deck zone.
- Item your items are kept in your item zone.
- Hand whenever you draw a card, it moves from your deck to your hand.
- Timeline the Timeline is the play area in the center of the table where actions are planned and performed.
- Queue The queue is a special zone to the side of the Timeline where
 actions are held so that they can be performed in the future. When an action
 is planned on the Timeline but is unable to be performed, that action will go
 to the queue.
- Discard at the end of each turn, all non-item actions on the timeline get moved to their owner's discard piles face up. Any player may look at a discard pile at any time.
- Forgotten whenever a non-item action on the timeline gets replaced, it goes to its owner's forgotten pile face down. No player can look at any cards in a forgotten pile unless a game rule directs that player to do so.

Reading A Varia Card



Most cards will follow a similar layout to Decapitate above.

Types of Cards

Varia has different types of cards, each with their own frame style to help you tell them apart. The card types are:

- Actions
- Tokens
- Items
- Stacks

Actions

Actions make up your deck and can be any combination of four different supertypes:

- Physical
- Magical
- Attack
- Block

Actions are the primary way in which you will interact with your opponent. They represent the different spells and combat maneuvers you use in battle.

All actions have the same overall frame layout, and their information is contained in the same place. Physical actions have a frame treatment that is silver and red. Magical actions have a frame treatment that is gold and purple. Attack actions that have a power value will have a spear shape inside of the d6 symbol. Block actions will have a shield shape inside of the d6 symbol. All of this is cosmetic and is done in an effort to help you tell the different types of cards apart at a glance.

If you are ever in doubt, the safest bet is to simply ready the card's type box, as it will have supertypes like "Magical Attack" that clearly identify the card's types.

Tokens

Tokens are temporary game pieces that are created by other cards.

Token actions function just like regular action cards while they are on the <u>Timeline</u> or in the <u>Queue</u>. If a token would move to any other zone other than the Timeline or Queue, the token is removed from the game instead.

Card tokens are not necessary to play **Varia** (you can use pieces of candy or coins if you wish), but they are recommended as they make play easier for all players involved.

You can tell a card is a token by its "T" icon in the bottom center of the card and its inverted frame coloration (dark frame with white text).





Items

Items start the game in play in your item zone and represent the equipment you carry into battle. They are easily identified by their gold value in the bottom center of the card. Items come in two forms:

- · Regular Items
- Usable Items

Regular Items are cards that remain in your item zone for the entirety of the game. They often have effects on them that are always happening. The item card *Two-Faced Terbum* below is always in effect.

Usable Items can be used to perform actions and often have two textboxes. The action that the item can be used to perform is represented within the item itself with a condensed version of either the magical or physical card frame's textbox. This textbox also has a type line above it that indicates the supertypes and subtypes of the action that the idem is able to perform.

For example, the item *Molten Ravager* can be used to make a Magical Attack - Earth Fire! Pick up that axe and swing it at your opponent for some sweet damage.

Below the action-portion's textbox is another textbox tied to the item itself. The rules in this textbox are tied to the item, not the action performed by that item.

For example, The 6th Blade of Miyamune can be used to make a Physical Attack. That physical attack does not come with any extra rules, so The 6th Blade of Miyamune only has an Item textbox. If the action being performed by the item would be disrupted, the item itself would be unaffected. Only the action being performed is disrupted.

Stacks

Stacks are mini-cards that **Varia** uses to track buffs and debuffs over time. Stacks can be permanent (meaning they remain in play until removed) or they can be depleting (meaning they "tick down" when certain conditions are met.

When you open your class deck you will notice that stacks are printed as a single card. These stacks are meant to be physically cut apart to create two mini-cards.

Stacks are called stacks because they, well, stack on top of each other! When you gain multiple stacks with the same name, put them into a single pile on top of each other. Only the top-most stack will affect the game. You could also use a single stack card and a die or counters to keep track of how many versions of a stack that you have.

For example, if you were to gain three stacks of *Enraged*, you would put three copies of the stack one on top of the other in front of you (or one copy with three pieces of candy on it).

Enraged stacks make it so that all actions you perform have "Start of Moment: Engage." Additionally, any physical actions you perform will get an extra power die! Being Enraged makes you aggressive and physically strong. At the end of each moment, you will lose one of your Enraged stacks.

Only the top-most *Enraged* will affect your actions, the other copies will not. Therefore, even though you have three stacks of *Enraged*, your physical actions will only get one extra power die - not three. When the next end of moment rolls around you will only lose the top stack, bringing you down to two.



Playing Varia

Varia consists of shared turns where players alternate between being the active and reactive player. Players participate in different steps of the turn, depending on whether they are active player or reactive player.

The steps of a turn are:

- 1. Start of Turn
- 2. Movement
- 3. Action
- 4. Reaction
- 5 Fast Action
- 6. Fast Reaction
- 7. Resolution
- 8 End of Turn

Step One: Start of Turn

At the start of each turn, both players regain any spent <u>action points</u> back up to a total of ten and <u>draw</u> two cards. On the first turn of the game, players draw six cards instead of two. There is no maximum hand size.

If a player ever tries to draw cards from an empty deck, that player takes their discard pile and their forgotten pile and shuffles them together into a new deck, then gains one stack of *Fatigue* and draws the needed cards.

Step Two: Movement

The active player decides whether they would like to <u>engage</u>, <u>disengage</u>, or not move.

Players that are engaged with one another have a reduced risk of their attacks missing. Being disengaged from your opponent increases the chance that their attacks will miss you, but also increases the chance that your attacks will miss them!

Step Three: Action

The active player gets the opportunity to plan actions. Taking an action from your hand and placing it onto the timeline is referred to as "planning an action".

Actions must be planned sequentially in the order in which they will occur.

Each planned action takes up one <u>moment</u> on the <u>Timeline</u>. For each action planned beyond the first in a turn, an additional moment is created on the timeline. Each turn the Timeline will have a minimum of one moment, but there is no maximum to the number of moments a turn can have. The active player is the only player able to create moments.

For example, if the active player planned three actions and created a threemoment timeline, then the timeline will be set at three moments for the remainder of the turn.

If the active player has any <u>queued</u> actions, they must move all actions in their queue onto the timeline **before** planning any actions from their hand. Doing so will automatically create a number of moments on the timeline equal to the number of queued actions that the active player has.

If the active player plans no actions, a single moment will exist on the timeline for the turn.

Step Four: Reaction

The reactive player now has a chance to plan actions from their hand onto the Timeline. The reactive player's advantage is that they know exactly what their opponent is trying to do. The disadvantage is that they cannot create any additional moments and may only plan cards within the moments created by the active player.

If the active player has any <u>queued</u> actions, they must move actions in their queue onto the timeline until either their queue is empty or all of the moments on the timeline are full. The reactive player must do this **before** planning any actions from their hand.

Step Five: Fast Action

Only actions with the **fast keyword** may be planned in this step. To further help a player identify a **fast** action while it is in their hand, **fast** actions have a lightning bolt-shaped symbol in the top right part of the card.

The active player gets a chance to change their plan by planning actions from their hand as either a <u>combination</u> with actions already on the Timeline or as a <u>replacement</u> for those actions.

Actions that are combined are treated as a single card with a combined name, cost, power, focus, rules, supertypes, subtypes, and attribute requirement.

Attacks and Blocks cannot be combined.

Non-item actions that are replaced go to the forgotten zone face down. Item's that are replaced return to the item area and can be used again.

Step Six: Fast Reaction

Only actions with the **fast** keyword may be planned in this step. This is the reactive player's chance to create combos and replace actions, amending their timeline in order to either answer the changes made by the active player or surprise their opponent with a trick that will provide an edge in the fight.

Steps five and six are then repeated until both players choose to pass without planning any additional actions.

Step Seven: Resolution

Each moment is resolved in Timeline order, starting with moment one. Actions are paid for and performed one moment at a time, damage is dealt and prevented one moment at a time, and all effects in a moment are resolved before effects in later moments on the timeline will triager.

Each moment is essentially treated as a mini-turn, in which the order of operations is:

- Payment
- Start of Moment
- Clash
- · End of Moment

Payment - Players pay the cost of their actions in order to perform them. If an action is unable to be paid for, it is not performed and enters the queue instead. All actions following the unperformed action also enter the queue in order behind the unperformed action.

Start of Moment - Any start of moment triggers will occur. A start of moment trigger can be identified by an hourglass symbol with the top half filled in. If both the active player and the reactive player have start of moment triggers, the active player's will occur first, followed by the reactive player's. If a single player has multiple start of moment triggers, that player picks the order in which their triggered effects will occur.

Clash - Attacks roll their power and focus die and attempt to both land a hit and deal damage. Blocks roll their power and focus die and attempt to both avoid being hit and prevent incoming damage.

End of Moment - Any end of moment triggers will occur. An end of moment trigger can be identified by an hourglass symbol with the bottom half filled in. Just like start of moment triggers, the active player's will resolve first and if multiple triggers occur for a player that player gets to decide the order in which they will resolve.

Finally, if there is another moment to resolve players move on to the next moment and start the resolution process again. If there are no more moments to resolve, move on to Step Eight: End of Turn.

Step Eight: End of Turn

The turn is now over. All actions on the Timeline are moved to the discard pile. Any items on the timeline are moved back to the item area. The reactive player becomes the new active player. The currently active player becomes a reactive player.

With that, a new turn is ready to begin!

Winning & Losing

At the end of each step or sub-step of the turn, if your health points are ever equal to or less than 0, you lose the game.

You win the game if all other players have lost the game.

Health & Action Points

Each player starts the game with a set number of health points. In a standard game, players start with 30 health points. A player cannot regain health points higher than their starting total.

Additionally, each player starts the game with a set number of action points. In a standard game, players start with 10 action points. A player cannot regain action points higher than their starting total.

Action Points are the primary means by which a player pays an action's cost. When part of a cost, action points are represented by a black seven-pointed action icon.

Health points can also be spent as part of an action's cost. When part of a cost, health points are represented by a red blood droplet.





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Drawing, Discarding, & Forgeting

Whenever a card, effect, or game rule says to draw a card, take the top card of your deck and put it into your hand.

In **Varia**, both players draw two cards at the start of every turn. To start the game, players draw six cards instead of two. Drawing the first six cards of the game will not trigger any effects that say "when this is drawn" or "when a card is drawn".

Whenever a card, effect, or game rule says to discard a card, take a card from your hand and place it into the discard pile. Whenever a card, effect, or game rule says to discard a card from a specified zone, take a card from that zone and place it into the discard pile. Whenever a card moves into the discard pile it is considered to be discarded.

Whenever a card, effect, or game rule says to forget a card, take a card from your hand and place it into the forgotten pile face down. Whenever a card, effect, or game rule says to forget a card from a zone, take a card from that zone and place it into the forgotten pile face down. Whenever a card moves into the forgotten pile it is considered to be forgotten.

Engaged & Disengaged

Movement in Varia occurs when a player engages or disengages.

Players can be in one of two states relative to one another - Engaged or Disengaged.

Players that are engaged with one another have reduced risk of their attacks missing. Players that are disengaged from one another have an increased risk of their attacks missing.

There are two ways to move in **Varia** and change your relationship with another player. The active player can move during the movement step, or players can move by playing certain action cards that have triggers on them which cause movement mid-timeline.

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Planning, Targeting, & Performing

When you take an action from your hand and place it onto the Timeline you are considered to be planning that action.

When you take an item from your item area and place it onto the Timeline you are considered to be planning that item's action.

If you are the active player, every action you plan during the action step beyond the first will create an additional moment on the Timeline.

When an action is first put onto the Timeline its owner picks a target for that action. In a single-player game, the target will almost always be your opponent.

When resolving each moment, the first step is for players to pay for and perform their planned actions. In order to perform an action, players must pay that action's cost. It a player fails to do so, the action will not be performed and that action (along with all other actions that are planned to follow it) will enter the queue in the order in which they were planned.

Once an action's cost has been paid, that action is considered to have been performed.

Moments

Moments are a piece of the <u>Timeline</u>. All actions are performed in moments. Each turn has a set number of moments that is determined by the active player's initial plan. Each moment is resolved individually and in the order in which they appear on the Timeline.

There is always at least one moment on the Timeline each turn.

Keywords

Some cards have rules text that contains what are called keywords. A keyword is a shorthand for a rule that appears frequently. When a card has a keyword in its rules box, that is the same as if the card had the full rule that the keyword represents.

For example, **fast** is a keyword that appears on a number of action cards. If a card has the keyword **fast**, that is the same as if the card had the rules "You may plan this action in both the fast action and fast reaction steps. You may plan this action as a combo or a replacement."

The keywords found in Varia are

- Fast (You may plan this action in both the fast action and fast reaction steps.
 You may plan this action as a combo or a replacement.)
- Impaired (For each roll made for this action its owner makes an additional roll and takes the lower result.)
- Improved (For each roll made for this action its owner makes an additional roll and takes the higher result.)
- Ranged (This action cannot miss due to distance.)
- Spellfuse (You may plan this action as a combo with any other magical action in your hand. If you do, treat the two actions as a single action with combined name, cost, rules, power, focus, alignment, and type or types.)

Combos & Replacements

Actions with the fast keyword can be planned as combos or as replacements.

A combo is treated as a single action card with a combined name, cost, rules, power, focus, alignment, and types.

When two actions are combined, their dice are as well. For example, a Transfusion Dregga that is combined with a Bowie Knife would have a power of 2+2d6 and a focus of 2+2d4. The action would be a Transfusion Dregga + Bowie Knife, would cost five action points to perform, and would have the rules "Fast, You regain health points equal to the damage dealt by this action." The combo's types would be Physical Magical Attack - Dexterity Vampiric and would have an attribute requirement of two subtlety.





Planning an action as a replacement causes the action being replaced to move to the forgotten pile face down. The new action then takes it's place on the timeline

Whenever you plan an action as a replacement you may pick a new target for that action. You do not have to use the same target as the action that was replaced.

When an action replaces another action it will take its place on the Timeline. The action that was replaced is forgotten.



A trigger is a rule that goes into effect once certain criteria is met. Until that criterion is met, the rule is not in effect. Some of the triggers in **Varia** are:

- Start of Moment Start of moment rules occur at the start of the moment
 that the action is in. A start of moment trigger is represented by an hourglass
 icon with the top half filled in.
- End of Moment End of moment rules occur at the end of the moment that
 the action is in. An end of moment trigger is represented by an hourglass
 icon with the bottom half filled in.
- On-Hit On-Hit rules occur once it is determined that an attack has hit.

A continuous rule is a rule that is always in effect as long as the card is in play.





Power, Focus, & The Clash

Most actions have a power, a focus, or both.

An action's **power** is the number found inside of a square with either a spear shape (attack) or a shield shape (block). An action's **total power** is its base power plus one d6.

An action's **focus** is the number found inside of a triangle with a targeting reticule. An action's **total focus** is its base focus plus one d4.

Actions planned to oppose each other and will clash. An action that is not opposed by another action is considered to be unopposed.

When two actions clash, their power die and focus die rolls are made and their total power and total focus are compared.

When an attack clashes with a block, if the attack's **total focus** is greater than or equal to the block's **total focus** then the attack will hit. If the attack hits, it will attempt to deal damage to its target equal to the attack's **total power**. The block will prevent damage equal to its **total power**. If the attack's **total power** is greater than the block's **total power**, the attack will deal damage to its target equal to the difference.

For example, if an attack with a **total power** of 6 targets a player who is blocking with a **total power** of 4, then the block will prevent 4 damage and the attack will deal 2 (6 minus 4) damage to its target.

When an attack clashes with an attack, neither attack can <u>miss</u> due to focus. (The attacks can still miss due to distance). If the attacks hit, they will each attempt to deal damage to their targets equal to each attack's total power. The two attacks will prevent each other's damage, with the more powerful attack pushing the remaining damage through to its target.

For example, if an attack with **total power** of 6 targets a player who is attacking back with a **total power** of 4, then both players will prevent 4 damage and one player will deal 2 damage to the other player.

During the clash damage is dealt and prevented first before any **On-Hit** effects are **triggered**.

When a rule or effect changes the power and focus of a card it will be written as \pm /- P \pm - F. The power comes first, followed by the focus.

For example, +3|+0 can be read as plus three power, plus zero focus.



Making A Roll

Whenever a player rolls dice, that player is making a roll. To make a roll, the player gathers up all dice of the same type and rolls them together.

For example, when making a focus roll for the *Transfusion Dregga + Bowie Knife* combo, the player would roll 2d4. If that action somehow gained the <u>impaired</u> keyword, the player would roll 2d4, then roll 2d4 again and take the lower result.

Hit & Miss

Attacks are not guaranteed to hit. There are two ways an attack can miss its target.

Miss Due To Distance - If you are disengaged from your target your attack will miss unless it has a rule that states otherwise (like the keyword ranged, for example).

Miss Due To Focus - During the clash, if your target's block has a total focus that is higher than your attack's total focus, your attack will miss unless it has a rule that states otherwise.

If an attack misses, it will not deal damage but it can still prevent damage.

For example, imagine you are disengaged from your target. You are attacking them but your attack does not have ranged. Your target is attacking you back and their attack does have ranged. If their ranged attack has a total power of 6 and your non-ranged attack has a total power of 4, you will prevent 4 damage and take 2 damage.

In that same scenario, if instead, your non-ranged attack has a total power of 8 and their ranged attack has a total power of 2, you will only prevent 2 damage. You will not deal the remaining 6 damage to your target.



Opposed & Unopposed

If Player A's action is planned to target Player B and Player B's action is planned to target Player A, their actions are considered to be opposed.

Opposed actions will clash with each other when resolving the moment.

When an action is planned in a moment with nothing opposing it, that action is considered to be unopposed. An unopposed attack cannot miss due to focus because there is nothing for it to clash with. An unopposed attack can still miss due to distance

The Queue

When a player is unable to <u>perform</u> an action that is on the <u>timeline</u> because they are unable to pay its cost, that action and all actions planned to follow it will enter the gueue in the exact same order they were planned.

Queued actions will not resolve during the current turn, and will try to resolve in the following turn instead.

Keep in mind that the moments that the actions used to occupy on the timeline still exist after the actions move to the queue, and are resolved accordingly.

For example, if a timeline has three moments, all three of those moments will resolve regardless of whether the actions in them were performed or not. This is important for times when one player cannot perform their action but the other player can, or when stacks that are independent of player actions have triggers that resolve at the start or end of a moment.

At the start of the action and reaction steps, any queued actions must be moved onto the Timeline (if able) before any additional actions can be planned. Moving an action from the queue onto the timeline does not count as planning that action.

Actions cannot be planned directly from the hand into the queue. If you are a reactive player your queued actions cannot create moments.

Creating A Token

Some effects may cause a token action to be created. Creating a token does not count as **planning** an action.

When a token says to create it in the **next available moment**, that means that the token will be created on the timeline in first following moment in which the action that token represents could be legally planned.

For example, when you plan Snake Bite during the action step, if you plan it in moment one, the copy will be created in moment two. If you plan it in moment three, the copy will be planned in moment four, even if moment one was somehow empty.

If a token would be created in a moment that already contains an action, the owner of the token determines whether that token will form a <u>combo</u> or a <u>replacement</u> unless otherwise directed.

For example, if you are able to plan Snake Bite as a fast action in moment one, the copy will be created in moment two even if an action is already in moment two. This is because fast actions are legally able to be planned as combos and replacements for existing actions.

If a token action would try to be created in a moment that does not exist, place it onto the timeline as if a moment did exist for that token. When it comes time to perform that token action, move it to the **queue** instead, along with all other actions that follow it (if any).

For example, if you are the reactive player and the Timeline only has a single moment on it, if you plan *Snake Bite* in moment one, create the token in what *would* be moment two. After resolving moment one but before moving to the End Step, take the *Snake Bite* token and any actions following it and move them to your queue.





Becomes & Treated

When a rule states that a card or a part of a card becomes something else, the part of the card that was changed is completely replaced.

For example, when *Thy Will Be Done* causes an action to become a copy of it, the actions name, rules, cost, types, attribute requirements, power, and focus all become equal to *Thy Will Be Done* and whatever the action was previously is lost. In another example, if a card's subtype would become fire, it would lose its original subtypes and gain the fire subtype.

If a card or part of a card becomes something else temporarily, that card or part of the card would return to its original form once the effect ends. Continuing the *Thy Will Be Done* example from above, at the end of moment the card that became a copy of *Thy Will Be Done* will return to its original form.



When a rule states that a card or a part of a card should be treated as something else, the part of the card that was changed is not completely replaced. Treat is a way for one player to see one thing and another player to see something else, or for one part of the game's rules to see one thing while another part of the game sees something else.

For example, Eyes of the Goddess stacks cause the player who has them to treat actions in all opponent's discard piles as if they are demonic in addition to their other types. The cards affected do not lose their types and furthermore only the player with Eyes of the Goddess stacks will see and interact with those cards as if they had the demonic type. So if the player with Eyes of the Goddess saw a Windshank in their opponent's discard pile they would see that card as having the Air and Demonic types. The owner of the Windshank would only see the Air type. Even if Eyes of the Goddess said "treat actions in all opponent's discard piles as if they are demonic instead" the player with Eyes of the Goddess stacks would see the Windshank as being Demonic only, but the owner of the Windshank would see the action as being Air only.







Disrupted, Ruined, & Repaired

When an action becomes disrupted, it is turned sideways. From that point forward, actions planned against the disrupted action will be treated as if they are unopposed. No further rules or triggers from the disrupted action will occur.

When an item becomes ruined, it is turned sideways. From that point forward, it cannot be used to perform actions and any abilities it had no longer affect the game. Any actions that are planned with the ruined item become disrupted.

When a ruined item becomes repaired, return it to its original orientation. From that point forward, treat that item as you would normally.





Additional Rules

Varia is an ever-expanding game filled with unique cards that bring their own rules to the table. If a card tells you to do something that you could not do normally, do what the card says.

If one card would create a "cannot" rule and another card would create a "can" rule, the "cannot" always beats the "can."

