Strategy Guide: Malkavian deck

There are many ways to play this deck, but here are some general tips you should bear in mind.

YOUR OVERALL STRATEGY

Early game

Gain control of the highest capacity vampire in your uncontrolled region with superior Dominate ◈, so that they can play superior Govern the Unaligned to add 3 blood to a younger vampire in your uncontrolled region. With this blood addition and your transfers, you can quickly gain control of many vampires at a lower pool cost.

Midgame

Once you have three vampires in play, start bleeding your prey and/or redirecting bleeds to them to destroy their pool:

Bleed actions: Bleed with basic Govern the Unaligned, or with your vampires' default bleed actions. Once your prey has declined to block, play a bleed action modifier (Bonding, Conditioning, or Foreshadowing Destruction) to increase the bleed amount.

Bleed redirection: When you are being bled, play a reaction card (Deflection or Telepathic Misdirection) to redirect the bleed to your prey.

Late game

When there are three Methuselahs left (including you), keep bleeding and redirecting your predator's bleed actions to your prey until you oust them both in order.

STRATEGY TIPS

Get key actions through

Action order: Have your vampires take the least important actions first and the most important ones last.

Stealth: This deck has many stealth cards, so if a minion attempts to block you, play action modifiers that increase your stealth.

Prevent bleed redirection: You do not usually want your prey (if playing the Tremere ♂ or the Ventrue ✕ deck) to redirect your bleed actions to another Methuselah. You can approach this situation twofold:

▪ **Before you bleed:** Play basic Revelations with your youngest vampire with Auspex ◉ to look at your prey's hand and discard either a Deflection or a Telepathic Misdirection card from it.

▪ **After being redirected:** Once a bleed action has been redirected by your prey with either a Deflection or a Telepathic Misdirection reaction card, and the target Methuselah has declined to block, play superior Spying Mission to reduce your bleed to 0.

Blood management

As your vampires play cards and/or get involved in combat, they will lose blood. Without enough blood, they will not be able to play some of your minion cards (for example, Conditioning and Deflection). Your deck contains several cards you can use to increase the blood amount on your vampires (that is, Asylum Hunting Ground, Life in the City and Blood Doll). Make sure each vampire you control has a Blood Doll on, so that you can use it to move blood from your pool to them.

How to defend yourself

Bleed defence: Play the Deflection or Telepathic Misdirection reaction card to redirect a bleed to your prey for any of these reasons:

▪ The bleed is at stealth (you may need to attempt to block trick so that your predator can play stealth). This will put more pressure on your prey.

▪ You are being bled by a minion you do not want to block (because they are dangerous in combat).

Combat defence: Try to avoid combat with Nosferatu ⚴ and Tremere ♂. Your only combat card is Swallowed by the Night, which grants a maneuver that will be useful when you are at 0 blood, or when in combat with a Nosferatu who cannot press to continue combat (for example, with an Underbridge Stray in play).

What to block: Political actions that make you burn pool, or bleed actions you cannot redirect. Do not block a Nosferatu ⚴ or a Tremere ♂, unless you absolutely have to (for example, when they are attempting an action granting them permanent intercept, such as Raven Spy, Bowl of Convergence, or Sport Bike).

Pool gain: Your pool gain mainly comes from ousting your prey.

Hand management

If your hand is clogged with stealth action modifiers or reaction cards, use a discard phase action and/or The Barrens to discard a card you do not need. In addition you can use Dreams of the Sphinx to increase your hand size by 2 until the end of the turn.

MALKAVIAN DECKLIST

Crypt (12 cards)

2 Alexander Silverson
2 Andi Liu
1 Ashley
1 Colette
2 Donny Kowalczyk
1 Dr. Stephen Norton
1 Gelasia Fotiou
1 Meaghan
1 Sully

Library (77 cards)

1 Asylum Hunting Ground
1 Barrens, The
4 Blood Doll
4 Bonding
4 Cloak the Gathering
4 Conditioning
5 Deflection
1 Dreams of the Sphinx
1 Elder Library
4 Eyes of Argus
4 Faceless Night
2 Foreshadowing Destruction
12 Govern the Unaligned
2 Life in the City
4 Lost in Crowds
5 On the Qui Vive
4 Revelations
4 Spying Mission
4 Swallowed by the Night
5 Telepathic Misdirection
1 Wider View

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TURN SEQUENCE

1. Unlock Phase: Unlock all your cards. If you have the Edge, you may gain 1 pool.

2. Master Phase: Take a master phase action, usually to play a master card.

3. Minion Phase:

▪**On your turn:** Perform actions ⬡ (see COURSE OF AN ACTION) and modify them with action modifiers ◫. In combat, play combat cards ◨.

▪**Out of turn:** Attempt to block, play reaction ◨ and combat cards ◨.

4. Influence Phase: At the start of this phase, you normally gain 4 transfers:

▪Spend 1 transfer to move 1 of your pool counters to a vampire in your uncontrolled region.

▪Spend 2 transfers to move 1 blood from a vampire in your uncontrolled region to your pool.

▪Spend 4 transfers and burn 1 pool to move a vampire from your crypt to your uncontrolled region.

5. Discard Phase: Use a discard phase action to discard a card from your hand (replace it).

COURSE OF AN ACTION

1. Announce the action: Play the action card (if any). Announce its cost, targets and effects, and then replace the card.

2. Resolve any block attempts

▪**Who can attempt to block:**

▪Directed action: The target Methuselahs.

▪Undirected action: Your prey first, and your predator afterwards.

▪**Stealth and intercept:** The acting minion can get stealth, if needed. The blocking minion can get intercept, if needed.

3. Resolve the action

▪**Successful action:** Pay its cost and apply its effects (see ACTION TYPES AND EFFECTS).

▪**Blocked action:** The action card is burned, the blocking minion is locked, and combat occurs (see COMBAT STEPS).

ACTION TYPES AND EFFECTS

Bleed: Directed action against your prey that any ready minion can perform to have the target Methuselah burns X pool, where X is the bleed amount. If the bleed amount is 1 or more, then you gain the Edge.

Hunt: Undirected +1 stealth action that any ready vampire can perform to gain X blood from the blood bank, where X is the hunt amount.

Equip ⬀: Undirected +1 stealth action that any ready minion can perform to:

▪place the equipment on themselves (if from your hand).

▪move any equipment cards from another minion you control to themselves.

Employ retainer ⬊: Undirected +1 stealth action that any ready minion can perform to place the retainer on themselves.

Recruit ally ⬒: Undirected +1 stealth action that any ready minion can perform to put a non-vampire minion in play.

Political action ⬓: Undirected +1 stealth action that any ready vampire can perform to call a referendum (see REFERENDUM STEPS).

Leave torpor: Undirected +1 stealth action that any vampire in torpor can perform to move themselves to the ready region.

Rescue a vampire from torpor: Action that any ready vampire can perform to move a vampire in torpor controlled by a given Methuselah to that Methuselah's ready region.

▪Undirected +1 stealth action if you control both vampires.

▪Directed action if you do not control the target vampire. Action cost: 2 blood that can be paid by the acting vampire, or the rescued vampire, or can be split between them.

Diablerise a vampire in torpor: Action that any ready vampire can perform to burn a vampire in torpor.

▪Undirected +1 stealth action if you control both vampires.

▪Directed action if you do not control the target vampire.

REFERENDUM STEPS

1. Choose the terms: If the terms involve any choices, make such choices now.

2. Polling: Methuselahs can gain votes from these sources:

▪**Political action card:** 1 vote. Each Methuselah can only use one political action card for a vote.

▪**The Edge:** The Methuselah with the Edge can burn it to gain 1 vote.

▪**Titled vampires:** primogen (1 vote), prince (2 votes), justicar (3 votes).

▪**Other cards.**

3. Resolve the referendum: If there are more votes for the referendum than against, it passes and the effects of the terms take place.

COMBAT STEPS

The acting Methuselah plays cards first during each step. Once they are finished, the opportunity to play cards passes to the defending Methuselah.

1. Before range. Play cards that say "before range is chosen".

2. Determine range. Use maneuvers to change the range to close or long.

3. Before strikes are chosen. Play cards that say "before strikes are chosen".

4. Strike.

a. Choose strike. Each minion announces their strike.

b. Resolve strike. Strikes take effect simultaneously (see STRIKE EFFECTS).

5. Damage resolution. Prevent or mend damage.

6. Press. Use presses to continue or to end combat.

7. End of round. Play cards that say "at the end of a round of combat".

STRIKE EFFECTS

Hand strike: inflicts X damage, where X is your minion's strength, at close range only.

Dodge: protects the dodging minion and their possessions (except for retainers) from the effects of the opposing minion's strike, at any range.

Combat ends: is the first strike to resolve and ends combat immediately at any range.

Steal blood: moves blood or life counters from the opponent to the striking minion.