




STRATEGY GUIDE: TZIMISCE 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. Take actions to get permanent special abilities via revenant, *Homunculus*, *Living Manse*, or to put allies in play (such as *War Ghoul*, *Vozhd of Sofia*, or *Underbridge Stray*).

Mid game

Once you have three vampires in play, start bleeding your prey to destroy their pool.

Attack minions: Have your *War Ghouls* or *Vozhd of Sofia* take actions to enter combat with any vampire controlled by your prey or predator that poses a threat to your strategy

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

Bleed redirection: When you are being dangerously bled, play the *Bait and Switch* or the *Deflection* reaction cards to redirect the bleed to your prey.

Late game

When only three Methuselahs remain, including yourself, deal your final bloods to oust them in order.

Pool burn: Put *Constant Revolution* in play and, if your prey controls no Anarch vampires, put the *Anarch Revolt* master card in play as well.

STRATEGY TIPS

Get key actions through

Action order: Have your vampires take the least important actions first and save the most important ones for last (for example, *War Ghoul*, *Vozhd of Sofia*, *Living Manse*, or a bleed that ousts your prey).

Stealth: This deck has several stealth cards, so if a minion attempts to block you, play action modifiers that increase your stealth. If a key action is successfully blocked, play the superior *Form of Mist* combat card in the resulting combat in order to add +1 stealth to that action and continue it as if unblocked.

Fear: Your combat prowess may dissuade other Methuselahs from blocking your vampires' actions.


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, *Govern the Unaligned* or *Childe of the Revolution*). Your deck contains several cards you can use to increase the blood amount on your vampires (that is, *Papillon*, *Library Hunting Ground*, *Anarch Free Press*). 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.

What to do in combat

You really want the range of each round of combat to be close, because your strikes are only effective at that distance. Inflict as much damage as possible to your opponents, so that they go to torpor empty.

Attrition: Use your combat allies (*Vozhd of Sofia* and *War Ghoul*) to weaken your prey's and/or predator's vampires, so that they are low on blood in the final stages of the game.

Send to torpor: Use either the *Invigorate* action modifier card at Protean  or the *Sculpt the Flesh* combat card at basic to be able to inflict aggravated damage in combat. Send to torpor any vampires controlled by your predator who pose a constant threat to you, or any possible vampire blockers controlled by your prey. Also note that if your prey controls no ready Anarch vampires and you have an *Anarch Revolt* in play, they will burn 1 pool during each of their unlock phases.

How to defend yourself

Bleed defence: Play the *Bait and Switch* or the *Deflection* 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).

Pre-emptive attacks: If a specific vampire controlled by your predator poses a threat to you, play the *Haven Uncovered* master card on them, or use your combat allies (*War Ghoul*, *Vozhd of Sofia*) to enter combat with them, and send them to torpor.

What to block: Given your limited access to intercept (*Organized Resistance*, *One With the Land*, *Revenant*, *Anarch Free Press*), it is highly advisable for you to block key actions only. For example, actions that give permanent intercept to your prey or predator, or political and/or bleed actions that would make you burn too much pool.

How to defend your War Ghouls from being stolen:

It is highly advisable to hold off on recruiting a *War Ghoul* ally until there is a location in play and/or you already control at least one *Underbridge Stray* ally, because that will prevent other Methuselahs from stealing your *War Ghoul* as explained below:

■ **If the War Ghoul is unlocked:** Lock the *War Ghoul* before action resolution to burn it and burn a location in play (preferable controlled by another Methuselah).

■ **If the War Ghoul is locked:** Since the actions to steal an ally are directed at the controller of that ally, you can burn an *Underbridge Stray* you control to unlock the *War Ghoul*. This enables you to burn the *War Ghoul* in the same manner as above, as it is now unlocked.

Hand management

You will rarely have a perfect hand, so remember you can use a discard phase action to discard a card you do not need. In addition, you can use *The Barrens* anytime to discard and draw a new one.

TZIMISCE DECKLIST

Crypt (12 cards)

- 2 Adrino Manauara
- 2 Ángel Guerrero
- 2 Branimira
- 1 Clara Hjortshøj
- 1 Marialena
- 1 Nesian
- 1 Prentiss Derby
- 1 Susie Kano
- 2 Whisper

Library (77 cards)

- 1 Anarch Revolt
- 1 Anarch Free Press, The
- 3 Bait and Switch
- 1 Barrens, The
- 3 Blood Doll
- 4 Cats' Guidance
- 2 Childe of the Revolution
- 1 Constant Revolution
- 3 Deflection
- 3 Earth Control
- 3 Foreshadowing Destruction
- 3 Form of Mist
- 2 Form of the Bat
- 6 Govern the Unaligned
- 1 Haven Uncovered
- 1 Homunculus
- 3 Invigorate
- 1 Library Hunting Ground
- 1 Living Manse
- 4 Monstrous Form
- 4 Obedient Flesh
- 4 On the Qui Vive
- 4 One With the Land
- 3 Organized Resistance
- 1 Papillon
- 2 Piper
- 3 Revenant
- 4 Sculpt the Flesh
- 2 Underbridge Stray
- 1 Vozhd of Sofia
- 2 War Ghoul

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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 burn 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 costing 2 blood 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.
- Diallerise a vampire in torpor:** Action that any ready vampire can perform to burn a vampire in torpor.
- Undirected +1 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.