

The background features a large, detailed illustration of a pinkish-red cell with various organelles like a nucleus and mitochondria. Scattered throughout the scene are numerous yellow, spherical viruses with prominent spikes. The overall color palette is dominated by these two colors against a light blue, textured background.

VIRULENCE

AN INFECTIOUS CARD GAME

Rulebook

OBJECTIVE

In Virulence, each player is a virus competing to infect a host cell and replicate their own viral components to score points. Each round, players secretly choose one Bidding Card from their hand, place it face down on the table, then simultaneously flip these cards to reveal each player's Bidding Card strength (or virulence).

In order from the highest to the lowest virulence, players then take turns choosing from the available Viral Component Cards, which are each worth a varying number of points.

The player with the most points at the end of the game wins!

COMPONENTS

Starting Bidding Cards (35 Cards)

5 Starting hands, each with Bidding Cards of a virulence 1-6 and one Reassortment Card



Bidding Cards

Reassortment Card

Viral Component Cards (81 Cards)



11 Mutated Bidding Cards (1, 7, 8, 9)



12 Icosahedral Cards

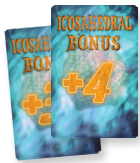


18 Helical Cards

4 Wild Cards



Bonus Cards & Dice (4 Cards)



2 Icosahedral Bonus Cards (+3, +4)

2 Helical Bonus Cards (+5, +7)



4 Six-sided dice



12 Genome Cards (+3, +4, +5 points)

9 Spherical Envelope Cards



9 Vaccine Cards (-1, -2, -3 points)



6 Increased Virulence Cards (+2, +3, +4 to dice roll)



GAME SETUP

If playing a 2 player game, also see **2 Player Variant** on page 9 for modified Setup.

Step 1: Find the 2 Helical and 2 Icosahedral Bonus Cards and shuffle them together. Without looking at the face side, randomly select one of the four Bonus Cards and place it back in the game box. Place the remaining Bonus Cards in a face down stack near the play area and flip the top card face up.

Step 2: Separate the 35 starting Bidding Cards from the rest of the cards. Note: The Mutated Bidding Cards (virulence of 1 with yellow background and 7, 8, 9 with red background), are not part of the starting Bidding Cards.



Starting Bidding Cards have a number from 1-6 and Mutated Bidding Cards have either a 1 or a number from 7-9.

Step 3: Give each player a set of seven Bidding Cards consisting of virulence numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and one Reassortment Card. This makes up a player's hand. Place any unused sets of Bidding Cards back into the box.

Step 4: The remaining cards are the Viral Component Cards. Shuffle them thoroughly and place them face down as a deck in the middle of the play area.

You are now ready to play!



GAMEPLAY

If playing a 2 player game, also see **2 Player Variant** on page 9 for modified Gameplay.

Virulence is played in rounds that repeat until the Viral Component Card deck runs out. Each player should begin the game by holding their seven starting Bidding Cards in their hand, keeping them secret from other players. Players will use these Bidding Cards to bid on the face up Viral Component Cards that are available each round.

Step 1: Reveal Viral Component Cards - To begin the round, draw a number of Viral Component Cards (from the top of the Viral Component deck) equal to the number of players and place these Viral Component Cards face up in the center of the play area. Now, draw 1 additional card and stack it face up on top of the first card UNLESS the first card is a Mutated Bidding Card or a Vaccine. If the first card is a Mutated Bidding Card or a Vaccine, stack the additional card on top of the next face up card in the row that is not a Mutated Bidding Card or a Vaccine. If all cards are Mutated Bidding Cards and/or Vaccines, stack the additional card on the first card anyway.



The additional card is stacked on the 1st card.

The additional card is stacked on the 2nd card.

Step 2: Play a Bidding Card - Each player selects one Bidding Card from their hand and places it face down in front of them. After each player has placed a Bidding Card face down, all players simultaneously flip their card face up to reveal their selection.

Step 3: Choose a Viral Component Card(s) - In order from highest to lowest virulence (the number in the upper left corner of their Bidding Card), each player chooses either one of the solo Viral Component Cards OR the two stacked Viral Component Cards from the play area and places it face up in front of them. (A player may not take only one of the two stacked Viral Component Cards.)

- If any player played a Reassortment Card, they will not choose a Viral Component Card, but will instead immediately pick up their discard pile. (See **The Reassortment Card** for more details)
- If two or more Bidding Cards played have the same virulence, see **Resolving a Bidding Card Tie** before the remaining players choose a Viral Component Card(s).

Step 4: Round Cleanup - Once a player has chosen their Viral Component Card(s), they must place the Bidding Card they played that round face down in their personal discard pile. Once all players have taken their turn, remove any remaining unchosen Viral Component Cards from the game by placing them back into the game box. (This only happens if one or more players play their Reassortment Card.)

Begin the next round by repeating this process from Step 1.

If there are not enough Viral Component Cards left in the Viral Component Card deck equal to fulfill the number needed for that round, the game is over and Scoring begins.

CHOOSING VIRAL COMPONENT CARDS

Within the Viral Component Card deck, there are cards that award either positive or negative points, as well as Mutated Bidding Cards (which score a player no points, but are added to a player's hand to increase its overall strength).

If a player chooses any Viral Component Card other than a Mutated Bidding Card

That player will place their chosen Viral Component Card(s) face up in front of them. Viral Component Cards of like types should be stacked in a way that allows all players to see what each player has. Collected Viral Component Cards remain in front of the player who chose them, and any benefit from those cards remains active throughout the game.

**Stacked
Cards**



**Benefit active
throughout
the game**

If a Player Chooses a Mutated Bidding Card

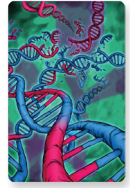
That player must select either one Bidding Card from their discard pile or the card they played that round to remove from the game. They must then place the Mutated Bidding Card just chosen into their discard pile. Since one Bidding Card is removed and the new Mutated Bidding Card is added, all players will always have six numbered Bidding Cards and one Reassortment Card.



THE REASSORTMENT CARD

Play the Reassortment Card to Pass a Round

When a player plays their Reassortment Card in Step 2, they will not choose from the available Viral Component Cards in Step 3 of that round. Instead, they immediately pick up all Bidding Cards from their discard pile (including the Reassortment Card just played) and put them back into their hand for reuse in subsequent rounds.



If the only card remaining in a player's hand is their Reassortment Card

A player is never required to play their Reassortment Card. If only their Reassortment Card remains in their hand, they may show it to the other players, and then immediately put all Bidding Cards from their discard pile back into their hand, without skipping Step 3 of a round.

RESOLVING A BIDDING CARD TIE

If two or more players play Bidding Cards with the same virulence in Step 2, they must break the tie.

Step 1: Each tied player rolls 2 dice.

Step 2: If any tied player has any Increased Virulence Cards in front of them, they add +2, +3, or +4 to their dice roll as indicated on their Increased Virulence Cards. Players with multiple Increased Virulence cards should add all of their cards to their roll.

Step 3: Tied players then choose Viral Component Cards in order from the highest to the lowest sum of their dice roll plus their Increased Virulence Cards.

If there is still a tie, use the same process again to break that subsequent tie.

PLAYER 1

INCREASED VIRULENCE (+3) INCREASED VIRULENCE (+4) TIE

3 + 4 + = 14

PLAYER 2

INCREASED VIRULENCE (+3) TIE

+ 3 = 13

PLAYER 1 WINS THE TIE | **PLAYER 2 LOSES THE TIE**

Note: = 6

VIRAL COMPONENT CARDS



Icosahedral Cards:

Icosahedral Cards score points in sets based upon how many of them a player collects. A complete set of Icosahedral Cards consists of 4 cards (any combination of Icosahedral and Wild Cards). Their point values are indicated on the cards (1/4/9/16). For example, one Icosahedral Card scores 1 point, a stack of two Icosahedral Cards scores 4 points, a stack of three scores 9 points, and a complete set of four scores 16 points. You may not begin a new Icosahedral set until you've completed your current set of four Icosahedral Cards. Any additional Icosahedral Cards will then begin a new set.



+1 PTS



+4 PTS



+9 PTS



+16 PTS

Complete Set

Helical Cards:

Helical Cards score points in sets based upon how many of them a player collects. A complete set of Helical Cards is 6 cards (any combination of Helical and Wild Cards). Their point values are indicated on the cards (1/3/6/10/15/21). For example, one Helical Card scores 1 point, a stack of two Helical Cards scores 3 points, a stack of three scores 6 points, etc, and a complete set of six Helical Cards scores 21 points. You may not begin a new Helical set until you've completed your current set of 6 Helical Cards. Any additional Helical Cards will then begin a new set.



+1 PTS



+3 PTS



+6 PTS



+10 PTS



+15 PTS



+21 PTS

Complete Set



Wild Cards:

Wild Cards score points based on which set they are part of and act as a single card of that set. Wild Cards can be placed alone (to be reallocated on a later turn), but once a Wild Card has been allocated to an Icosahedral or Helical set, it may not be moved again. *Note: You can only place a Wild Card on a set of Icosahedral or Helical cards during your turn in Step 3 of a round.*

Genome Cards:

Genome Cards are scored individually. The point value of each Genome Card is indicated on the card (+3, +4, or +5 points).



Spherical Envelope Cards:

The player with the most Spherical Envelope Cards receives +12 points, the player with the second most receives +6 points, while the player with the least receives -6 points. In a 4 player game, third position scores 0 points. In a 5 player game, third and fourth positions score 0 points.

Note: Having zero Spherical Envelope Cards still includes a player in the point scoring breakdown.

If 2 or more players tie for any of the Spherical Envelope Card positions:

- They add the points together for the tying position and the position(s) below it.
- Then, divide those points as equally as possible rounding up (receiving only whole numbers of points).

PLAYER 1



3 CARDS

PLAYER 2



2 CARDS

PLAYER 3



2 CARDS

PLAYER 4

no
Spherical
Envelope
Cards

0 CARDS

Player 1 receives +12 points. Player 2 and Player 3 tied, so they add 6 + 0 which equals 6 points. They then divide that between the two of them, so Player 2 and Player 3 receive +3 points each. Player 4 receives -6 points.

See **2 Player Variant** for scoring of Spherical Envelope Cards in a 2 player game.

Increased Virulence Cards:

Increased Virulence Cards help players win ties by adding +2, +3, or +4 to a player's dice roll. (See **Resolving a Bidding Card Tie**). Increased Virulence Cards also award a player either 0, +1, or +2 points at the end of the game as indicated on the card.





Vaccine Cards:

Vaccine Cards cause a player to lose points (-1, -2, or -3 points) as indicated on the card. A player(s) may be forced to choose a Vaccine Card if they have the Bidding Card with the lowest virulence when a Vaccine is in the play area.

Mutated Bidding Cards

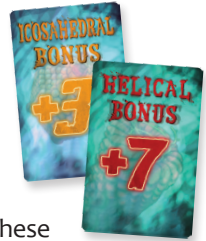
Mutated Bidding Cards with a virulence of 7, 8, and 9 strengthen the power of a player's hand, while those with a virulence of 1 weaken a player's hand. Like Vaccine Cards, a player may be forced to choose a Mutated Bidding Card with a virulence of 1 if they are the last to choose. Mutated Bidding Cards do not score a player points, but they may be used at the end of the game to break a tied score. (See **Choosing Viral Component Cards** for details on how to use Mutated Bidding Cards)



BONUS CARDS

There are four Bonus Cards of two different types: two **Icosahedral** (+3 points and +4 points) and two **Helical** (+5 points and +7 points).

A player may only take a Bonus Card during their turn to choose a Viral Component Card in Step 3. Claiming one of these Bonus Cards is in addition to choosing a Viral Component Card that round.



To claim a Bonus Card, a player must **complete a set** of Icosahedral Cards or Helical Cards while the respective Bonus Card is face up. Therefore, if multiple players complete a set in the same round, the available Bonus Card goes to the player who completed their set first. Once a Bonus Card has been taken, wait to flip up the next Bonus Card until the end of **Step 4 that round**.

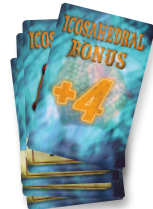
Note: Completing a set before the Bonus Card for that set is revealed does not allow a player to take that Bonus Card. If a player forgets to take a Bonus Card on the turn they complete their set, they forfeit the option to take the Bonus Card for that set.



**Active
Bonus
Card**



**Player
Completes
a Set**



**Player
Claims
Bonus
Card**

ENDING THE GAME

When there are no longer enough Viral Component cards in the Viral Component Card deck to fulfill the number needed for that round, the game is over. Players should then calculate their score.

SCORING

To calculate a player's score, first identify how many Spherical Envelope Cards each player has, and identify how many points each player has gained or lost as a result. Then, simply add up all the points scored from those Spherical Envelope Cards, Icosahedral sets, Helical sets, any Bonus Cards for those sets, Genome Cards, Increased Virulence Cards, and then subtract points lost from Vaccine Cards.

The player with the most points wins!



+16 FOR SET
+3 FOR BONUS

+3 **+3** **+4**

+6 FOR STACK

+1 **= 36**
POINTS

To Break an Ending Score Tie:

If two or more players have the same ending score, those players should add up the virulence numbers from all six of their Bidding Cards in their hand at the end of the game. The player with the highest total virulence number wins the tie! If there's still a tie, the person who was sick most recently wins!

2 PLAYER VARIANT GAMEPLAY

The 2 Player Variant differs slightly from normal gameplay.

Modifications to Setup:

After completing regular Setup, create an additional hand of Bidding Cards with virulence of 1, 1, 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9. Shuffle these cards and place them face down as a deck to the side of the play area. This makes up the dummy's bidding deck.



Dummy Bidding Deck

Modifications to Gameplay:

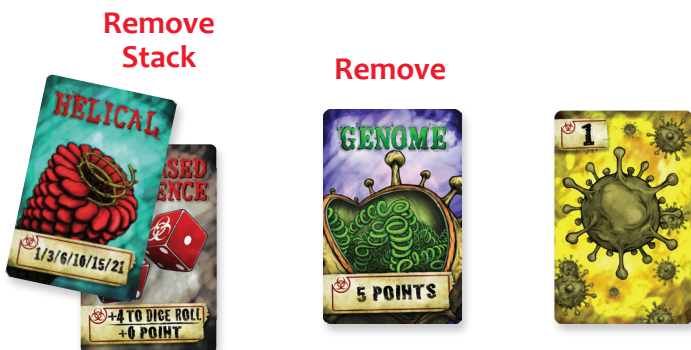
Step 1: Draw and place Viral Component Cards in the center of the play area as if playing a 3 Player Game.



Step 2: The two players will still select one Bidding Card from their hand like normal, place it face down in front of them and simultaneously flip to reveal their virulence. After the two players have revealed their Bidding Cards, flip the top card from the dummy bidding deck face up.

Step 3: Players choose Viral Component Cards in order from highest to lowest Bidding Card like normal, with the following exception:

When it's the dummy player's turn to choose, remove from selection **ALL** remaining Viral Component Cards from that round except Vaccines and Mutated Bidding Cards with a virulence of 1 (including from the stack of two). Place any Spherical Envelope Cards in front of the dummy player for End Game Scoring.



Note: If both of the two stacked Viral Component Cards are Vaccines and/or Mutated Bidding Cards with a virulence of 1, the player with the lowest virulence must take them both.

For example, if the dummy player played a Bidding Card with the highest virulence and a Vaccine or Mutated Bidding Card with a virulence of 1 remains, the player with the **lowest** virulence must choose it. If two or more Vaccine or Mutated Bidding Cards with a virulence of 1 remain, the player with the higher virulence must choose first, then the player with the lowest virulence must choose next.



If the dummy player played a Bidding Card with the second highest virulence, and one or more Vaccine or Mutated Bidding Cards with a virulence of 1 remain, the player with the lowest virulence must choose one.

Step 4: Each player must place their Bidding Card in their discard pile like normal. Then, place the Bidding Card played by the dummy player that round into its own discard pile. When the dummy bidding deck has only one unplayed Bidding Card remaining, immediately shuffle the dummy discard pile back into its Bidding Card deck before the next round.

Resolving a Bidding Card Tie with the Dummy Hand

If the dummy player is involved in a tie, it always has a dice roll of 9. In all other respects, ties are resolved like normal.

Modifications to Scoring

In a 2 player game, scoring Spherical Envelope Cards works the same as in a 3 player game, with the three players being the two real players plus the dummy player.

CREDITS

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