

Terminus

A game for two players by Kyle Haas - 20 minutes - Ages 13+

Nobody knows when the time wars began. Two temporal empires eternally locked in struggle, an infinite series of meaningless battles, any victory fleeting as breath—until Terminus.

Some call it the weapon to end all wars, others simply call it the end; all agree: Terminus is approaching and it cannot be stopped.

The time has come for your final chance at glory. Will you rise victorious at the end of all things?

OBJECTIVE

The winner is the player with the most victory events of their color visible on The Timeline when the game ends. If tied, whoever played Terminus loses.

SETUP

Players agree who will play which color (red or blue). Set aside the cards Impetus (#1) and Terminus (#18/#0). Place Impetus between both players in horizontal orientation; this card starts The Timeline. Shuffle the remaining 16 cards into a deck and place facedown near The Timeline. Place Terminus faceup near the deck. Each player draws 3 cards, and places those cards faceup in front of themselves in vertical orientation.

GAME PLAY

Players alternate taking turns. The player with the lowest numbered card goes first.

On your turn, perform these 3 steps in order:

1. Play your lowest numbered card to The Timeline.
2. Resolve any special events covered by the card you played.
3. Draw from the deck until you have 3 cards.

Step 1: Play your lowest numbered card to The Timeline.

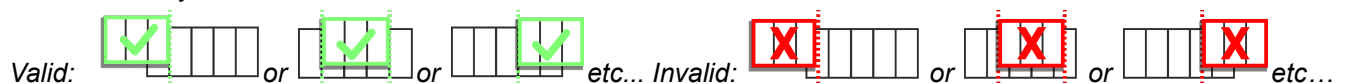
Every card (except Terminus) consists of 3 eras. The Timeline is made up of the eras on played cards.

You control the cards in front of you (of which there may be 3 or less at any moment). You can only play cards you control. After you play a card to The Timeline, you no longer control that card—it has become part of The Timeline.

Cards must be played horizontally to The Timeline, but do not have a fixed left or right side; they may be flipped freely before being placed.

Cards played to The Timeline must either...

- A. ...cover exactly 1, 2, or 3 whole eras on The Timeline







OR

- B. ...be placed directly adjacent to the era at either end of The Timeline.



The different types of eras are:

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  <p>Victory event Left: red Right: blue</p> |  <p>Fixed event Middle: Terminus approaches Right: Impetus</p> |  <p>Special event Left: Grow Middle: Freeze Right: Swap</p> |  <p>Empty</p> |
|---|--|---|---|

Cards you play may cover any eras on The Timeline, with the following 3 exceptions:




1. You may not cover any fixed events (eras with a black background).
2. You may not cover all 3 eras of any card(s) played on your opponent's most recent turn. However, covering 1 or 2 eras of a card played on your opponent's most recent turn is allowed. (Put plainly: *You can't fully cover a card if your opponent just played it.*)
3. When playing a card using the Grow special event, you may not cover *any* eras (see Step 2 below).

Each time a *Terminus approaches* event is played to The Timeline, immediately do the following:

| | |
|----------|---|
| 1st time | Do nothing. |
| 2nd time | Shuffle Terminus (#18/#0) facedown into the deck. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to do this before drawing cards at the end of your turn! • When Terminus is drawn, treat it as having the number 18 (orient it so the 18 is on top). |
| 3rd time | Starting now and for the rest of the game, treat Terminus as having the number 0 (orient it so the 0 is on top). |

Step 2: Resolve any special events covered by the card you played.

If you play a card and it covers any special event eras, immediately resolve any or all of those events, in any order:

| | |
|--|--|
|  Grow | Without covering any eras on The Timeline, play your lowest card (it must be played at either end). |
|  Freeze | Rotate a card you control so that it's horizontal; this card is now <i>frozen</i>. Treat your frozen cards as having any number—including a number below 0 or above 18—when playing a card on your turn. (This permits choice in which cards you play.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terminus (#18/#0) may <i>not</i> be frozen. • As it does when playing a card normally, this rule also permits choice when playing a card using the Grow special event. • Frozen cards, like all other cards, must be played horizontally to The Timeline. |
|  Swap | Swap a card you control with a card your opponent controls. Terminus (#18/#0) may be swapped. A frozen card your opponent controls may only be swapped with a frozen card you control, or with Terminus if you control it. |

Resolving special events is optional. When resolving multiple special events, you must fully resolve an earlier event before resolving its following event(s). You choose the order multiple special events are resolved. It's possible to resolve the same type of special event multiple times in one turn if you cover multiple identical event icons.

Step 3: Draw from the deck until you have 3 cards.

Remember to keep these newly drawn cards vertical. If the deck empties, you won't be able to replenish further, and will have to make due with whatever cards you have left. If you end your turn with no cards *and* the deck is empty, you take no more turns for the rest of the game. If you draw Terminus, orient it so either the 18 or 0 is on top depending on how many Terminus Approaches events have been played (see Step 1 above).

GAME END

The game ends immediately when Terminus is played. Do not resolve any special events covered by Terminus.

Notes and miscellany:

- The only time you resolve special events (Grow, Freeze, and Swap) is when you cover them with a card. Playing a card that has special event eras on it **does not** mean you resolve those special events!
- There is no limit to how high you can stack cards on The Timeline.
- Terminus (#18/#0) adheres to the same placement rules as cards #2 through #17 (see Step 1 above).
- The fronts of cards in the deck are hidden. Unless they were covered this turn, covered eras of cards in The Timeline are hidden. Everything else is public.
- Frozen cards may not be assigned numbers tied with other cards—that is, you may only have a single lowest-numbered card on your turn.

