

The Wine

Haphazardly save the realms!



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Story

On the outskirts of Asgard, there lay an old tavern. Built of wood and stone, one side of the roof leaned closer to the ground than the other in a sort of misshaped triangular shape. The roof was thatched, and occasionally leaked during the rains. The front door - a heavy mahogany door reinforced with iron - sat off center of the front façade, opposite of the also off center ridge in the roof. Upon the top third of the door, very much in the center of it, lay a depiction of the Nidhog eating its own tail around a mug. A sign in a much more weathered wood hung from an iron rod and hooks to the right of the door, depicting the words: "The Drunken Nidhog."

While run down by Asgardian standards, the tavern was still quite large, and sat a hundred hardy men easily. The inside of the tavern was open and rather airy, and decorated with all manor of beast heads, horns, and weaponry. The outer tables were small and tucked into the corners and eaves; while the middle of the room was taken over by great long tables, usually full with bar maids on their tops. The tavern served everything from Midgardian delights to food fit for Odin himself.

No other tavern came close to their mead, either.

Times fell hard in the years approaching Ragnarok for the Drunken Nidhog, and the crowd grew thinner with each passing winter. Being on the outskirts of the realm gave some the impression it would go first when the end of days came. The old and wise fled further into Asgard proper, to be closer to the capitol and took their stories and mead mugs with them. The coming end of days did not deter the young and wild residents of Asgard, however. These were those who thought they could fight Ragnarok with their bare hands and win.

One such day, some twenty winters shy of Ragnarok, a pair of Asgardians came into the Drunken Nidhog. One was tall and lanky, clearly built for speed and the daggers hanging at his waist, with blonde hair and green eyes. His companion was sturdy and thick around the neck and middle, shrugging off the large tower shield and hammer from his back as though it was nothing. He was darker in skin and hair, with gold tinged brown eyes.

The pair took a seat at one of the long tables and ordered a round. They talked of the Nine Realms and the politics within Asgard, as well as a wench or two. Clearly good friends, they slapped each other on the shoulders and back, roaring laughing falling from their mouths.

Talk soon turned to that of the coming end of days.

"Becha this next round I could save more'a the Realms than ya," said the blond one around a swallow of mead.

"Odin's beard yer a liar! Ya couldn't save yer own skin much less the Realms!" replied his companion with an incredulous stare.

"Yah? Ya wanna bet on that? Ya'll be thankin' me for savin' yer arse when the time comes!" The blonde roared with laughter, grinning like the drunken fool he was. His companion, who held his mead better than the other, contemplated the bet for a moment with a swirl of his mug.

"O'er a game o'the Nine. Ya win; I pay fer ya until yer done drinkin', and concede the argument. I win, ya pick up this tab and the next, and declare me savior o'the Nine Realms to e'eryone," said the hammer wielding man. His companion slammed down his mug, splashing himself with mead, and gave a holler of sound.

"Deal! Hope yer purse es big enough!" The brunette waved a barmaid to their table and asked for a set up of the Nine, a card game that had recently become popular within Asgard. The game simulated Ragnarok in a fashion, and allowed players to fight to save the Realms.

The pair took a few moments to decide on their decks and set up the game.

"A'right. Lessee who can save the Realms betta!"

With that, the game began...

Gameplay Introduction

The Nine is a strategy card game played by two players, each of whom has a customized deck of cards (information on deck building included later in the book).

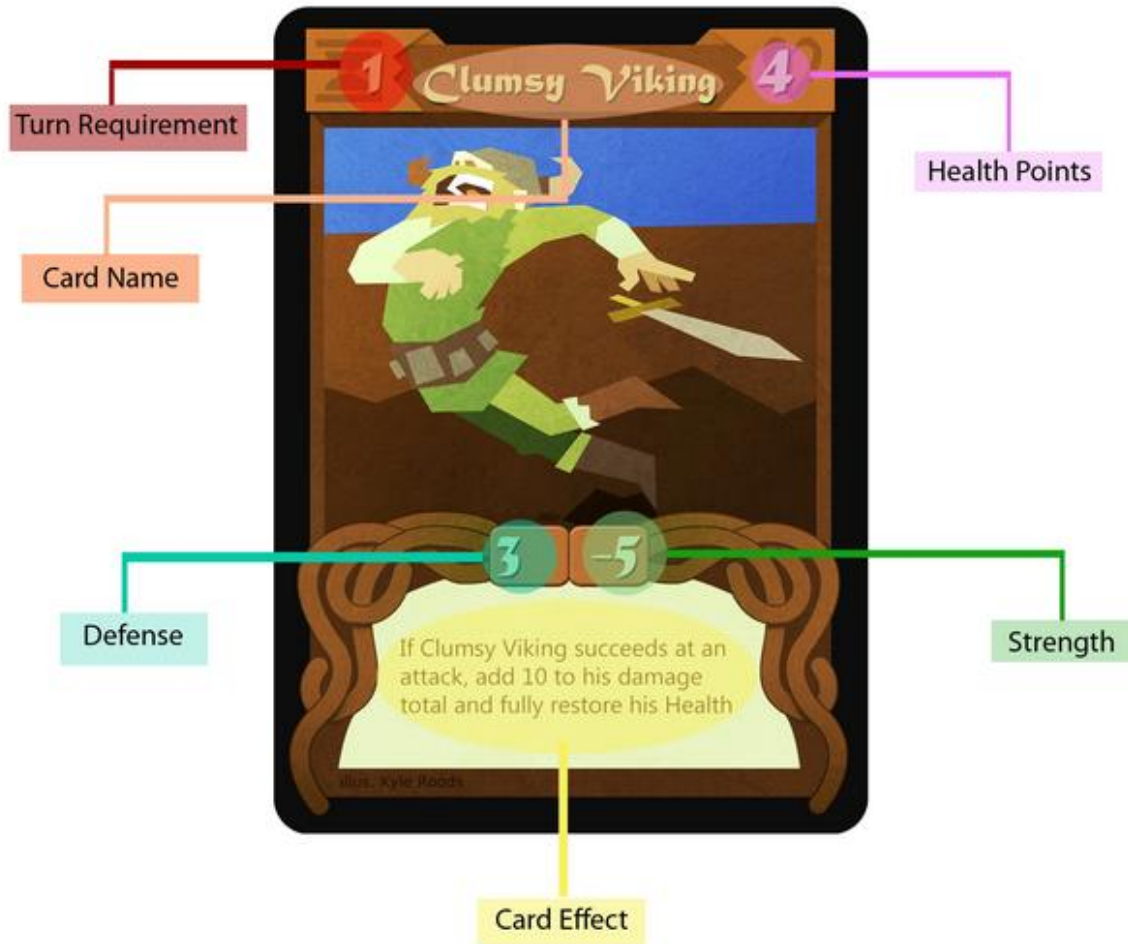
Over the course of the game, each player will take turns playing cards and allocating combatants while under the pressure of a strict time limit. Each player starts at 40 Health. When you reduce your opponent to 0 Health by attacking with Warriors, you are victorious!

Additionally, neutral cards exist on the playfield named Ragnarok Rising (RR) cards. By bidding their Warriors' lives, players can claim RR cards. Each RR card possesses a Glory point total. If both players have survived at the end of 20 turns, the game ends and the player claimed the collection of RR cards with the highest Glory total wins!

Card Types

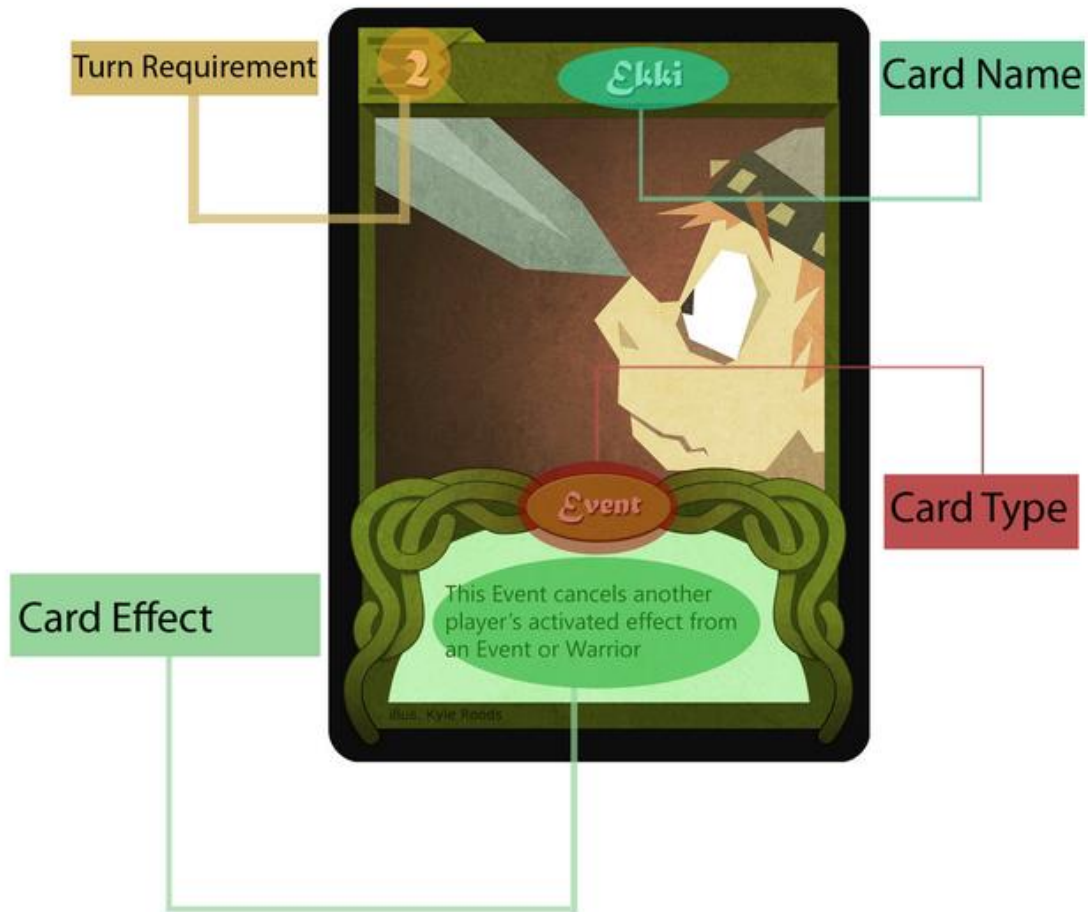
In the Nine, there are three types of cards: Warriors, Events, and RR cards.

Warrior Cards



Warrior cards are used to attack or defend. Every Warrior card has a varying Turn Requirement, Maximum Health Point, Strength Modifier, Defense Modifier, and Card Effect. Importantly, Warrior Cards can be used to gain Glory Points through sacrifice when bidding on Ragnarok Rising Cards. The higher the Health of a Warrior, the more it contributes toward claiming a RR card! When Warrior cards are defeated in Combat or sacrificed for Glory Points, the cards are sent to the designated Valhalla area.

Event Cards

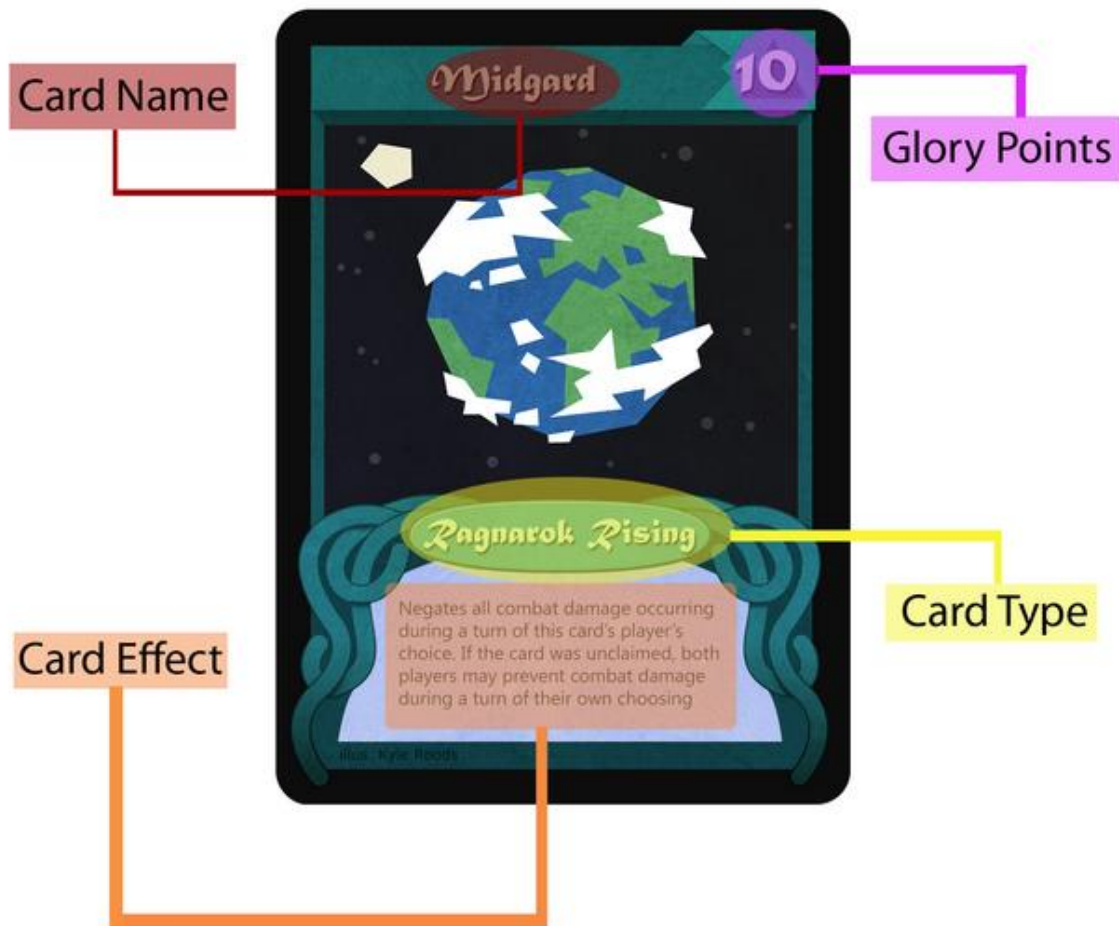


Event cards may be played at any time during a round as long as both playing requirements are met:

1. The amount of green tokens in the End of Days Pool must match or exceed the Events Card's Turn Requirement.
2. No other Event Card has been played by the same player since the start of the round.

Event cards have many different uses and outcomes. Some Event Cards may be used to counter the effects of an opponent's Event Card. The same play requirements as mentioned previously apply to an Event Card counter move. Spent Event Cards may also be placed in the designated Valhalla area.

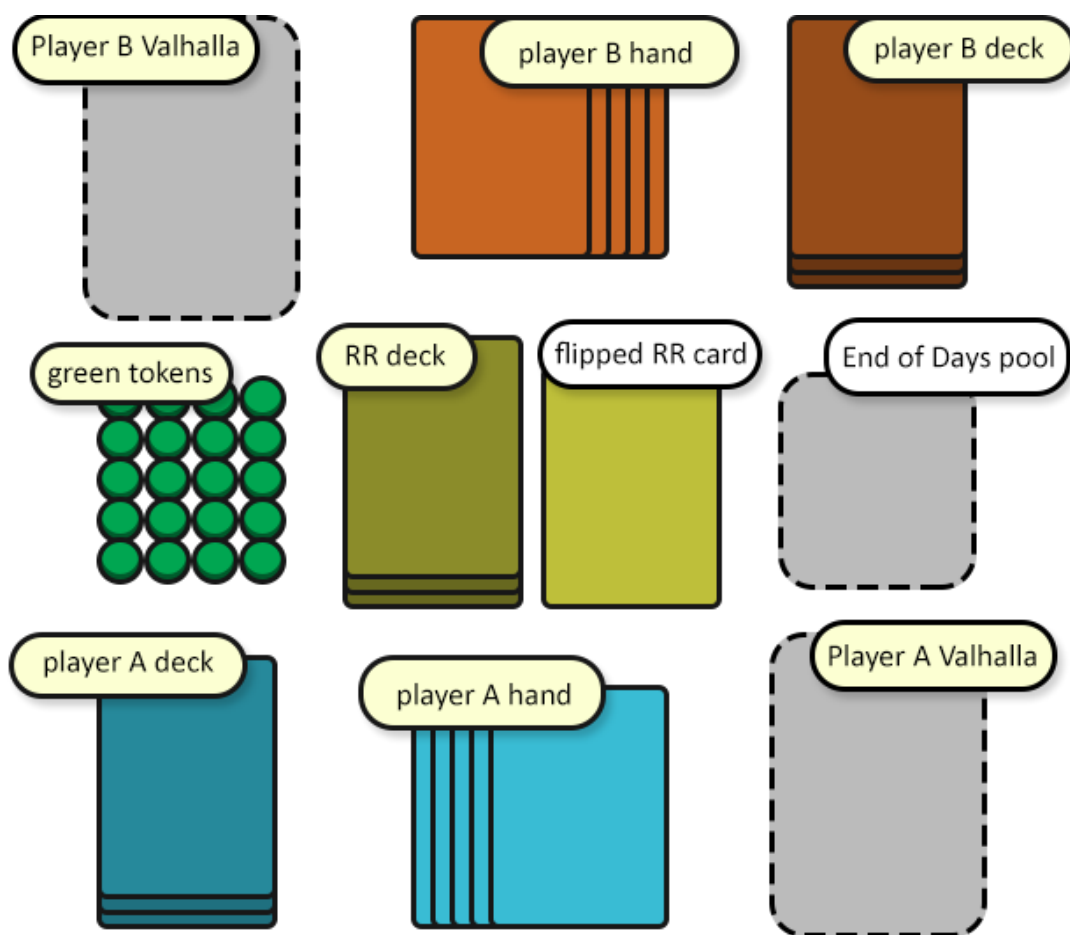
Ragnarok Rising Cards



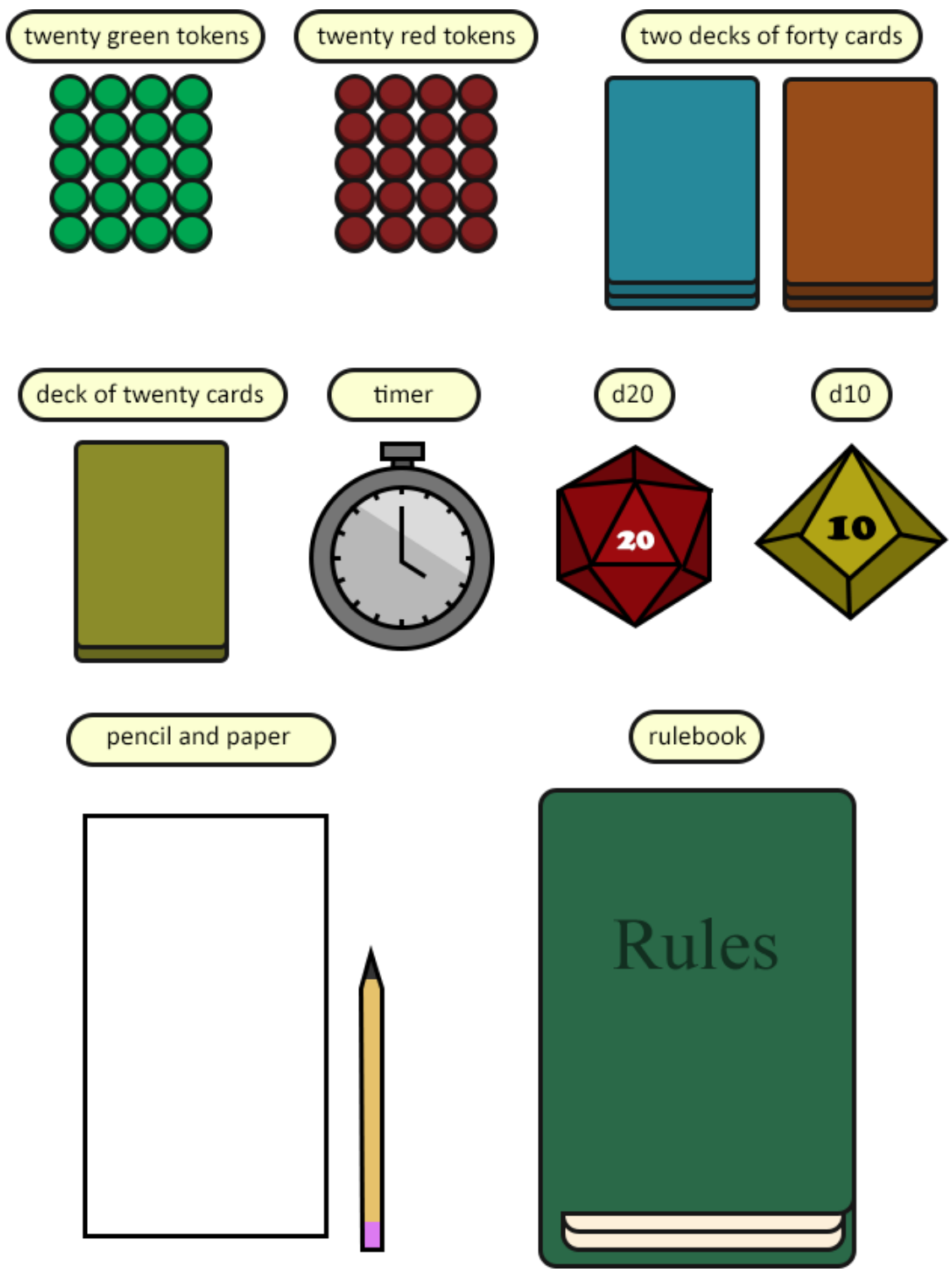
Ragnarok Rising cards have many different effects and are neutral, so their effects may affect both players throughout the game. However, players can claim RR cards. The cost/value of a RR card is indicated by its Glory total. After the Combat Phase, players may sacrifice Warrior health for Glory Points to bid on the current Ragnarok Rising Card for that round. A Warrior's Health at the time (minus sustained damage) equates to how many Glory Points it's worth. Ragnarok Rising Cards that are not acquired by either player will affect both players. Once a player acquires a Ragnarok Rising Card, its Glory points will be added to the player's total.

Playfield

Each player will hold his or her hand in front of them, & out of the opposing player's vision. To the left will be their individual decks, where they will draw cards from each turn. To the right is each player's Valhalla, where cards are discarded throughout the game. In between the two players is where the Ragnarok Rising deck, End of Days pool, and Green Tokens are kept. This way, both players are able to easily access them, as both will be using them for the duration of the game. A typical table setting should look like this:



Game Pieces



Green Tokens: Green tokens are intended as a way to keep track of the turns that have passed. Each game of *The Nine* is limited to twenty turns (rounds). During each Initiative phase,

Player One will move a green token to the End of Days pool to mark the turn number.

Red Tokens: Red tokens are used to track a Warrior's Shame. When a Warrior fails to damage another Warrior or player, that Warrior becomes Shamed. As long as a Warrior has Shame counters on it, that Warrior cannot attack.

Two decks of forty cards: These are custom decks built by each player. Each deck will have 20 Warriors and 20 Events.

One deck of twenty cards: This deck will contain all 20 RR cards and will act as the Ragnarok Rising deck.

Timer: The timer is used to track time. There are potentially three timed sections for each player each turn: the Player phase, allocating attacking Warriors, and allocating defending Warriors. In the Player phase, players have 20 seconds to determine their actions. In the Combat phase, players have 10 seconds to allocate attack and defense actions.

D20: The d20's function in *The Nine* is to determine which player will take the first or second turn. During the beginning of each round, both players will throw the d20. Whichever player rolls the higher number will decide which player plays first. With experience, players will be able to better determine and weigh the pros and cons of going first or second.

D10: The d10 is used to determine the amount of damage that a Warrior can deal or defend during combat. The d10 is rolled and the Warrior's Strength or Defense is added to the number shown on the roll. The final number is the total amount of damage that an attacker can deal or defender can stop. Additionally, several cards require players to roll the d10 for various effects.

Pencil and paper: The pencil and paper is used to track Player health and individual Warrior health

Rulebook: If there are any disputes over rules or questions regarding the game, refer to the rulebook!

Game Zones

Valhalla: Both players will have their own designated area to act as Valhalla. Defeated or sacrificed warriors are placed in Valhalla for the duration of the game.

End of Days pool: This is where players will place green tokens. The amount of green tokens in the pool is equal to the round.

Player Deck: Players draw from their own decks created before the match. If a player runs out of cards in their deck, it will remain empty until the end of the game.

Player's Hand: These are the playable cards that the player currently holds in his/her hand. There is no limit to the amount of cards a player may hold.

Ragnarok Rising Deck: This deck of cards sits in the middle of the players after being shuffled. The top card only, is revealed at the start of each new round.

Rules and Goals

During the "Setup" phase, both players need to agree that all necessary components are present, which include: two custom forty-card decks, one custom twenty-card deck, one (1) d20, one (1) d10, twenty red tokens, twenty green tokens, & a stopwatch. To begin play, both players roll a d20; whoever has the highest roll will determine who goes first in the beginning round. After this decision is made, both players must shuffle their respective forty-card decks (the player taking the second turn of the first round also shuffles the "Ragnarok Rising" deck).

Each player places their deck on the left-hand side of the table in a position that is comfortable for drawing cards. The "Ragnarok Rising" deck is to be placed equidistant from both players & centered between both player decks. Central positioning of the "Ragnarok Rising" deck allows for both players to reach it with equal value of ease.

After all three decks have been shuffled & placed, each player shall then place twenty green tokens on the side of their own forty-card deck that is furthest from the player. Placing the tokens in such a manner will keep them out of the way of the play area, while still being accessible. After the decks & tokens have been properly placed, each player draws five cards from their deck, and the player going first flips the top card of the "Ragnarok Rising" deck so it is face up.

Additional areas of setup that only need to be designated, and will not have anything in them at the beginning of the game are the "End of Days" pool and "Valhalla".

Each game of *The Nine* is limited to twenty turns (or, rounds); during each Initiative Phase, Player One will move a green token to the "End of Days" pool to mark the turn number.

"Events" are cards that are located within each player's personal deck; these cards have various utility effects, and cannot be used again after their first use.

Players are able to build their decks with the cards included with the game, and must be built to include twenty "Warriors" & twenty "Events".

End Game Conditions

The game ends under either one of two conditions...

Firstly, when a player's health reaches zero, that player dies. Once a player dies, the game is over and the survivor is declared the winner (If an unclaimed "Warrior" kills both players in the same turn, players calculate "Glory" to determine a winner).

Turn Limit Expiration. Once the "End of Days" pool has twenty green tokens in it, players calculate "Glory", which are calculated by counting the "Glory" cost for each "Ragnarok Rising" card that that player has left in their possession; the player with the most "Glory" wins *The Nine*.

Turn Phases

1. Initiative Phase

1. Both Players roll a d20
 - a. Player with the highest role chooses player order for the round
2. The top card of the Ragnarok Rising (RR) deck is revealed
3. One green token is moved to the designated End of Days pool
 - a. If all tokens have been placed into the pool, Point Calculation Phase begins
4. Players add 2 cards to their hand taken from their personal deck

2. Player Phase

1. Each round follows player order chosen by winner of Initiative Phase
 - a. Player's turn begins with the starting of 20 second timer
 - b. A single Shame counter may be removed from shamed warriors at this time
2. Within the 20 second time frame player will choose which 2 cards to play from their hand.
 - a. Cards may only be played when the turn requirement has been met.
3. 1 Warrior card and 1 Event card are played
 - a. Event cards may be played at any point during the round
4. Timer expires, Player has no playable cards, Player chooses card(s) and finishes phase

3. Combat Phase

1. Each round follows player order chosen by winner of Initiative Phase

- a. Player may choose to forfeit attack
2. Player's combat phase begins with the start of 10 second timer
 - a. Player attack is forfeit upon expiration of timer
3. Player chooses which warrior(s) will attack
 - a. Attacks are targeted at opponent's health
 - b. Shamed warriors are not eligible for attacking
4. Player verbally states which warrior(s) will attack and that they are finished choosing
 - a. Timer is stopped
5. Defending player begins combat phase with the start of 10 second timer
 - a. Player may choose to forfeit defense
 - b. Player defense is forfeit upon expiration of timer
6. Player chooses which warriors to defend their health with
 - a. Multiple warriors may defend against a single attacking warrior
 - b. A single defending warrior may not defend against multiple attacking warriors
 - c. Shamed warriors are eligible to defend
7. Defending player will verbally state which warrior(s) are defending which attacking warrior(s) and that they are finished deciding
 - a. Timer is stopped
8. Attacking player rolls d10
 - a. The result of the roll is added to the attacking warrior's strength (see image...) for the attack damage total.
 - b. If no warrior is defending against the attack, round up from half of the attack total and apply the damage directly to the opponent's health.
9. Defending Player rolls d10
 - a. The result is added to the defending warrior's defense for the defense total.
10. When the attack damage total is equal to or less than the defense total the attack is blocked.
 - a. If a warrior is blocked they are shamed. Two red tokens are placed on the warrior to indicate this.
11. When the attack damage total is greater than the defense total the attack is successful.
 - a. The defending warrior takes health damage equal to the difference of the attack damage total and the defense total. (Example- Attack damage total=8, defense total equals 4, defending warrior health damage=4)
12. The defending warrior is defeated when its health reaches zero

- a. When a warrior is slain half of the excess damage to the warrior is rounded up and applied to the opponent's health.
- b. A player is defeated when their health drains to zero.

4. Bid Phase

1. Each round follows player order chosen by winner of Initiative Phase
 - a. Player may choose not to bid
 - b. A second chance to bid is given in the form of a counter bid
2. The upturned Ragnarok Rising (RR) card has a Glory Cost (see image...) The Glory Cost is the minimum bid requirement.
 - a. If a RR card is left unclaimed the effects of the card will effect both players for the remainder of the game
3. Warrior cards can be sacrificed for Glory points to bid on the RR card
 - a. Current warrior health (maximum health minus sustained damage) is equal to the Glory points gained by sacrifice
4. Shamed Warriors are eligible for sacrifice
 - a. Each shame counter is $1/3$ the current warrior health
 - b. Each shame counter is subtracted from the current warrior health (example-warrior 15 health, 2 shame tokens. $15 - [(15/3) + (15/3)] = 5$)
5. RR cards in a player's hand may be sacrificed for Glory point to bid
 - a. The Glory Cost of the sacrificed RR card is equal to the Glory points earned
6. Player with the winning bid gains RR card for their playfield
 - a. All sacrificed cards are lost. This includes the cards sacrificed by the losing bidder

5. Cleanup Phase

1. Sacrificed and defeated warriors are sent to designated space of Valhalla
2. RR cards that are in play, and have repeating effects are triggered in this phase
 - a. RR cards that were left unclaimed, and are also warrior cards attack both players.
 - b. Combat with neutral, unclaimed RR warrior cards is conducted and scored in the same manner as the player to player combat phase
 - c. The neutral, unclaimed RR warrior cards have the ability to end a game by reducing a single or both players health to zero.
 - d. If only one player is killed end game results are met
 - e. If both players are killed the point calculation phase begins

6. Point Calculation Phase

1. The Glory cost of each players claimed RR cards is totaled
 - a. The player with the highest Glory Total is victorious

Building a Deck

A deck in The Nine is comprised of forty cards. These decks should be made up of twenty warriors and twenty event cards. For a list of which cards to choose from and how many of each card is included with The Nine, see the Appendix.

Card Effects

Most cards in The Nine have effects that may contradict with the core rules of the game. When any case, card effects overrule any rule in the game! For example, players are only able to draw two cards each turn. However, if a card tells the player to draw four cards, then they must! Card effects can range from sustained stat bonuses to actively looking at the opponent's hand. Be wary of and abide by them!

Glossary

Bid points: During the Bid phase, players claim RR cards with bid points, a value that equals the sum value of the current Health of every Warrior the player is currently sacrificing.

Claim: To gain control of a RR card.

d10: A ten-sided die.

d20: A twenty-sided die.

Defense: This number is used in conjunction with the d10 in the Combat phase to determine how much damage a Warrior will defend.

End of Days pool: The location of green tokens that have been moved to determine the current turn number.

Glory: A value on each RR card that determines how many bid points a player must accumulate before the card can be claimed. Glory is also a determining value for victory at the end of the game.

Health: A value that determines how much damage a Warrior or player is capable of receiving before they are defeated.

In play: Not in a deck, player's hand, or Valhalla.

Maximum Health: A value by which a Warrior's Health cannot exceed.

Play Area: An area of the playfield in which the components exclusive to the player exist. In other words, the play area is a player's personal space on the playfield.

Playfield: The area in which cards in play exist. The playfield includes the play areas of both players.

RR: Abbreviation of "Ragnarok Rising".

Shame: An affliction that prevents a Warrior from attacking. A red token exists on a Warrior for each turn they will continue to be Shamed for.

Strength: This number is used in conjunction with the d10 in the Combat phase to determine how much damage a Warrior will inflict.

Turn number: A value that equates to the duration, in number of turns, of the game currently being played. The turn number is equal to the number of green tokens in the End of Days pool.

Turn requirement: The number in the upper-left corner of Warrior and Event cards. This number must be equal to or less than the turn number for the card to be played.

Unclaimed: If a RR card is not successfully claimed by the end of the Bid phase of the turn it was flipped over, it is not claimed by either player and becomes unclaimed. The effects of unclaimed RR cards affect both players.

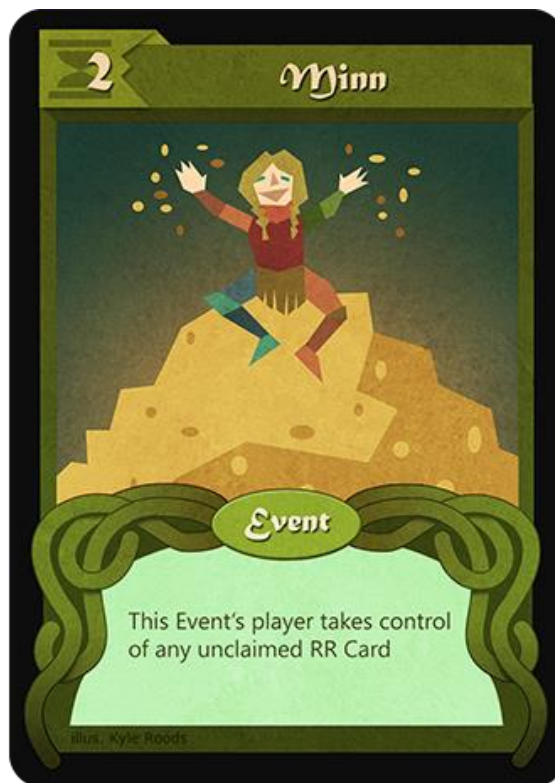
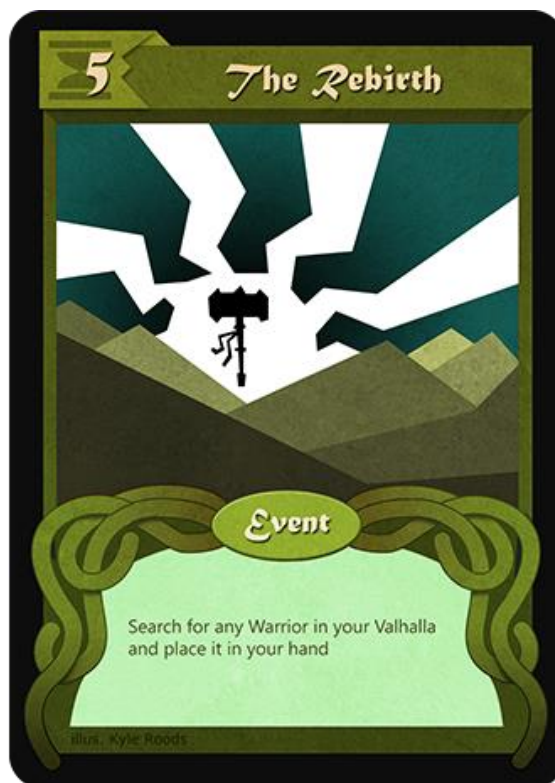
Valhalla: A place that contains cards that do not exist within a player's deck, player's hand, and are no longer in play. Valhalla functions as the discard pile for *The Nine*.

Appendix

In The Nine, there is five of each of the following cards:







There is three of each of the following cards:





There is one of each of the following cards:



These are the 20 RR cards included with the game:









