



Minion

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Minion is an Action–Attack card from Intrigue. It can be played either for + or to draw 4 cards; thus, it works great with Action cards which give + and +Actions. Since Minion itself is such a card, the self-synergy makes an engine consisting of mostly Minions quite powerful in 2-player games where it's feasible to get 6-8 Minions.

Moreover, Minion is one of very few non-terminal attack cards; stuffing your deck with them makes it fairly easy to hit opponents with a moderately powerful discard attack each turn without worrying about terminal collisions as you might with an Attack like Militia or Margrave.

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FAQ

Official FAQ

- Players wishing to respond with e.g. Moat or Diplomat do so before you choose your option.




Info

Cost	
Type(s)	Action - Attack
Kingdom card?	Yes
Set	Intrigue 
Illustrator(s)	Christof Tisch

Card text

+1 Action

Choose one: +; or discard your hand, +4 Cards, and each other

- A player who Moats this neither discards nor draws.

*player with at least 5 cards in hand
discards their hand and draws 4
cards.*

Other Rules clarifications

- You still draw 4 cards if you choose the discard option with no cards left in hand.
- Horse Traders normally doesn't actually block an attack, but in the case of Minion it can.

Strategy Article

Original article (<http://dominionstrategy.com/2010/11/22/intrigue-minion/>) by theory

Minion is one of those game-warping cards, whose presence greatly changes the strategic landscape. Though not necessarily a must-buy, its availability forces players to either buy it or give serious thought to how to respond to it.

Strengths

Minion's primary strength comes from its glorious self-synergy. Like Caravan/Laboratory/Nobles, Minion is a card whose best complement is itself. But Minion one-ups those cards: handsize increasers need to pause every so often to pick up Treasures, but Minion is its own source of cash. When full-on into Minion mode, you should not need to stop buying Minions to get pesky Treasures like Gold that you'll just end up discarding anyway.

Minion works very well with cheap non-terminal actions: e.g., Pawn, Conspirator, Fishing Village. Pawn is especially valuable to the Minion player because it allows a +Buy, something often missing from many high-money engines. The key is to avoid buying cards that will likely be discarded to the Minion anyway: this rules out Treasure as well as most terminal Actions. One—or at most two—is acceptable if it's an important terminal Action, like Mountebank or Goons. (Or a Remodel/Expand, since you'll probably need one to get rid of your initial Chapel/other trashing card.) Any more and it's just a waste, even with +Actions.

Minion's attack is also a good thing. Sometimes it benefits your opponents, but on average, you'd always prefer your opponents to have 4 cards than 5. The exception is Library/Watchtower, and of course, other Minion decks, which respond to Minion quite well.

Weaknesses

Minion is much less effective when you can't get rid of non-Minion cards. Without good trashing options, it's much harder to hit that critical mass of 25% Minion density in your deck. Accordingly, the best way to counter Minions (other than your own Minions) is to load them down with Curses. Swindler is a good choice too, since you are likely to hit a Minion, which are conveniently priced to be Swindled into Duchies (or even better, Dukes).

Handsize-increasing cards like Caravan are a tossup. If your Minion strategy is meant as a hybrid, some Minion/some Treasure, then they aren't very helpful since you'll just find yourself discarding more cards to the Minion. But if your deck is hardcore Minion, then Caravans will just give you more Minions. (Though you definitely shouldn't be buying Laboratory or other 🟡 Actions if more Minions are still available to purchase.)

As part of a hybrid strategy, Minion can work pretty well with Tactician and Library because of its ability to provide “invisible money”. And its discard/attack power is a good defensive response to Goons/Militia and other Minions.

Minion doesn't play well with most combos, however. This is because your hand is so often going to be cut in size that you can't afford the luxury of chaining together complex Action chains without buying them en masse, which of course, defeats the whole purpose of going Minions.

Miscellaneous

Minion players commonly face dilemmas early in the game. Should I discard my hand, drawing 4 and possibly missing out on 5 to get another all-important Minion? Or should I forsake the attack against my opponents? The answer is probably dependent on what kind of deck; if you and your opponents have been Chapeling into a thin, high-density deck, then your discard is likely to both hurt your opponents significantly as well as getting you to 5.

Special note regarding Throne Room and King's Court: if you Throne Room a Minion, planning to both take 2 and discard, you should always discard first. This is because if you discard and draw 4 terrible cards, you have a choice of discarding or taking 2. Taking the 2 first prevents you from being able to make this decision.

On a side note: as powerful as this card is, I can't get over its non-thematicness. What do Minions have to do with discarding and drawing? Wouldn't your Goons and Militia be considered your Minions already? Even the picture doesn't make any sense.

Synergies/Combos

- Other Minions!
- Conspirator, Festival, Market, Grand Market
- Pawn/Fishing Village/Warehouse/Cellar/Hamlet/other cheap non-terminal actions
- Library/Watchtower
- Tactician
- Outpost, as Minion is likely able to salvage an otherwise poor hand
- Opponents' handsize-decreasing attacks
- Opponents with trimmed decks, since the discard-5-draw-4 power will be more likely to hurt
- Opponents with top-decking abilities (Treasury, Alchemist, etc.)







Antisynergies

- Opponents' Curse-giving attacks
- Opponents' Swindlers
- Lack of good trashing to thin your deck
- Handsize increasers (usually)
- Treasure and Treasure-oriented cards, like Mine

- Terminal actions in general
- Borrow lets you avoid the attack effect.

Versions

English versions

Print	Digital	Text	Release	Date
		+1 Action. Choose one: +  ; or discard your hand, +4 Cards, and each other player with at least 5 cards in hand discards his hand and draws 4 cards.	Intrigue 1st Edition	July 2009
		+1 Action. Choose one: +  ; or discard your hand, +4 Cards , and each other player with at least 5 cards in hand discards their hand and draws 4 cards.	Intrigue 2nd Edition	October 2016

Other language versions

Language	Name	Print	Digital	Text	Notes
Chinese	爪牙 (pron. <i>zhǎoyá</i> , lit. <i>lackey</i>)				
Czech	Služebník (lit. <i>servant</i>)				
Dutch	Dienaar (lit. <i>servant</i>)				
Finnish	Kätyri (lit. <i>henchman</i>)				
French	Larbin (lit. <i>stooge</i>)				
German	Lakai (lit. <i>lackey</i>)			<p>+1 Aktion</p> <p>Wähle eins: +2 oder lege alle deine Handkarten ab: +4 Karten.</p> <p>Jeder Mitspieler, der mindestens 5 <u>Karten auf der Hand hat</u>, <u>muss alle (HiG) Handkarten hat, muss alle (ASS)</u> Handkarten ablegen und 4 Karten nachziehen.</p>	Error (HiG + ASS) : other players discards always.
Hungarian	Udvaronc (lit. <i>gentleman-at-arms</i>)				
Italian	Tirapiedi				
Japanese	寵臣 (pron. <i>chōshin</i> , lit. <i>favored retainer</i>)			<p>+1 アクション。次のうち1つを選ぶ: 「+2」: 「あなたと手札が5枚以上の他のプレイヤーは全員、手札をすべて捨て札にし、4枚カードを引く」。</p>	
Korean	하수인 (pron. <i>hasu-in</i>)				
Norwegian	Lensmann (lit. <i>sheriff</i>)				
Polish	Sługus				

				
Russian	Приспешник (pron. <i>prispyeshnik</i> , lit. <i>henchman</i>)			+1 Действие. Выберите одно из двух: либо +2; либо сбросьте вашу руку, +4 Карты, каждый другой игрок с хотя бы пятью картами в руке сбрасывает руку и тянет 4 карты.
Spanish	Esbirro			

Trivia

The portrait in the card art has a passing resemblance to the Duke, which was done by the same artist.

Secret History

The original version of this was a "choose one" card with three messy abilities. It was too messy and also too narrow, and so left. Later on I was looking for an attack to replace another attack that hadn't worked out, and thought of this. Originally the "discard, draw 4" ability only worked on yourself, but it seemed like it would make a cute attack if it hit everybody. The problem was that it was still too narrow - you would not always have a combo that made that exciting enough. The solution, proposed by Chris West, was to have the card be a combo with itself. You can play a couple copies for +2, and then play one to get a fresh hand. For simplicity there is no 3rd ability.

During development I had some games where it was clear that this card was too annoying. The "discard, draw 4" ability had no "5 or more cards" clause. So you would sometimes draw your whole deck... and also make everyone else draw their whole deck. So you'd make everyone else shuffle on each of your turns. As an attack it gets no worse if it just hits everyone else once, and it's way less annoying. We tested both and went with the less annoying version.

—Donald X. Vaccarino, *The Secret History of the Intrigue Cards* (<http://forum.dominionstrategy.com/index.php?topic=116.0>)



Official card art.

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