



FORMATS AND VARIANTS

Introduction

This document describes the **two formats** of KeyForge Organized Play, as well as **five main variants** that can be applied to those formats. This document does **not** cover specific tournament procedures or guidelines—that information can be found in the KeyForge Tournament Regulations on **FantasyFlightGames.com/OP/KeyForge**.

KeyForge is a game with heavy emphasis on exploration and discovery. The formats and variants below each offer a different type of experience that players can enjoy while they learn more about their decks and cards.

Typically, each round of a KeyForge tournament is either a **one-game match** with a 35 minute time limit, or a **best-of-three** match with a 90 minute time limit. One-game matches are recommended for tournaments held during weeknights, while best-of-three matches are better suited for weekend tournaments.

The organizer of a tournament determines the format and potential variant of a tournament, and chooses to have either one-game or best-of-three matches. Note that some variants require best-of-three matches. The organizer should announce these details well before each event, preferably by publishing them on an event listing online and on a poster or calendar in the hosting store.

Formats

There are two formats in KeyForge Organized Play: **Archon** format and **Sealed** format. Each tournament utilizes one or the other, and each variant builds upon either one or both formats as a base.



In the **Archon format**, each player **brings a deck** to the tournament. This deck must be an official, unaltered KeyForge Archon Deck that the player either obtained ahead of time or bought at the event itself.



In the **Sealed format**, each player **receives a new deck** at the tournament, usually by purchasing it from the hosting retailer. Players do not open their sealed decks until the official start of the event, and players are encouraged to wait to register the decks to their Master Vault accounts until the end. After opening their decks, players are given a few moments to read through and familiarize themselves with their contents, then the tournament begins.

The standard way to play for both Archon and Sealed formats is referred to as **Solo play**. In a Solo tournament, each player uses the same single deck (that they either brought themselves or received at the event, depending on the format) for the entirety of the tournament.

Variants

Variants are optional, and do not need to be utilized in an event. However, variants are a valuable and fun way to put a different spin on *KeyForge* tournaments and ensure that every experience feels unique.

Note that some variants require best-of-three matches or multiple decks for each player. If none of the variants described in this document fit the theme or constraints of a particular event, then organizers are encouraged to come up with their own variants to better suit their players' needs.

Adaptive



Compatible Format(s): Archon, Sealed

Description:

Each round of this tournament consists of best-of-three matches. For the first game of each match, players use their own decks. For the second game, each player swaps decks with his or her opponent and plays using his or her opponent's deck.

If the third game occurs, players bid chains to use the deck which won both of the previous games. The player who brought the deck starts by bidding 0 chains, and then the players take turns outbidding each other until a player declines to bid higher. The player who bid the highest uses that deck for the third game (with their bid number of chains applied at the start).

Philosophy:

Chains are a balancing mechanic built into the base rules of *KeyForge*. They can be utilized to allow two decks with a large difference in strength to play at roughly even footing. This helps to emphasize the skill of the player over the strength of an individual deck and allows each player the chance to do well with whatever deck they happen to use.

Auction



Compatible Format(s): Sealed

Description:

Like with a normal Sealed event, each player buys and opens a deck before the start of the event. Unlike a normal Sealed event, after all players have opened and registered their decks, each deck is placed on a table. Players are arranged in a random order around the table. The event organizer then randomly selects and calls out a deck. That deck's owner must start by bidding 0 chains. Then, in clockwise order, other players may bid higher than the current bid, or pass on bidding further for that deck. When all players have passed, the highest bidder wins that deck to use for the duration of the tournament and passes bidding on all other decks. Repeat the process for each deck. If a deck is randomly selected and its owner has already won the bid for another deck, the next player in clockwise order must place the initial bid of 0 chains for that deck.

Players start each game in that tournament with chains equal to their highest bid for the deck they are using. At the end of the event, each deck returns to the person who originally purchased and opened it.

Philosophy:

The Sealed format is less appealing to some players because they have little control over the houses or cards they play with. The Auction variant allows players to still have some control over what they use for the tournament. Similar to the Adaptive variant, the bid chains also serve as a balancing mechanic to bring decks in line with each other.

Reversal



Compatible Format(s): Archon

Description:

Each player brings a deck to the tournament which they believe is challenging to win with. Each round of the tournament, opponents temporarily swap decks for that match, and try to win the round with the deck their opponent brought.

Philosophy:

All decks are useful in some way, and this variant provides a fun opportunity for a player to dust off their more challenging decks and give them some use in tournament play.

Survival



Compatible Format(s): Archon, Sealed

Description:

Each player enters the tournament with 2 or 3 decks (number determined by the organizer). The decks are ranked in an order of the player's choosing before the first round. Each player must start with their first deck. Whenever a player loses a round, the deck they played with is "out" and cannot be used for the remainder of the tournament. When a player no longer has decks remaining, they are eliminated from the tournament.

Philosophy:

This variant puts a more unique spin on classic elimination-style tournaments. A sense of excitement and heightened stakes can set in when a player is down to his or her last deck, which can promote more creative and risky strategies as well as a sense of accomplishment when victory is achieved.

Triad



Compatible Format(s): Archon, Sealed

Description:

Each player has 3 decks that they can use throughout the tournament. Each round, each player chooses one of their opponent's decks to "bench," making that deck unusable for that match.

Each round consists of a best-of-three match. When a player wins a game, they must switch to their other deck for the rest of the match. This means that a player must win a game with each of their non-benched decks to win the match.

Philosophy:

This variant gives players several deck options at their disposal, as well as the chance to practice evaluating their decks on the fly. Players have the opportunity to experience different decks in a short time period, compare their performances, and further develop their playstyles. In addition, players can practice their ability to anticipate the threat level of an opponent's deck when choosing which deck to bench.

Note: this variant is best suited for players who are at least somewhat familiar with *KeyForge* and the different cards that can be encountered in its decks.