

MAGIC

The Gathering[®]



RULEBOOK

INTRODUCTION

You're here because you want to learn the **Magic: The Gathering**[®] game, the world's premier trading card game. It was the first game of its kind, and it's still the best and the biggest.

In the **Magic**[®] game, you play the role of a duelist—a powerful wizard who fights other duelists for glory, knowledge, and conquest. Your deck of cards represents all the weapons in your arsenal. It contains the spells you know and the creatures you can summon to fight for you.

Trading card games like the **Magic: The Gathering** TCG combine collectable cards with a strategy game. You don't know what cards you'll get in a **Magic** booster pack or tournament pack. You just start a collection and trade with other players to get the cards you want.

The best part about a trading card game is that it's always changing. You design and build your own unique decks, and each **Magic** game you play is different. New **Magic** expansions are released a few times a year, and each new expansion brings new ways to stupefy and defeat your opponents.

This isn't a typical rulebook. You don't need to read it from front to back. The "Learning to Play" section on pages 2–3 tells you how to start playing the **Magic** game right away. If you forget how something works or come up with a question you can't answer, look it up here.

(Words and phrases in green are things you can look up in the glossary. The glossary starts on page 28.)

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LEARNING TO PLAY

The **Magic: The Gathering** game is really one game that can be played in two different ways. You can play using physical cards against an opponent in the same room as you, or you can play using virtual cards online against an opponent anywhere in the world. The rules of the game are exactly the same either way you play.

The easiest way to learn the **Magic** rules is from a friend who already knows how to play. But someone has to be the first to learn, right?

Learning with physical cards:

Grab a friend. Use the silver and gold decks and the play guides in this box to learn the basics. Then play a few games on your own.



Once you know the basics, open the booster included in the box. It contains new types of cards for you to add to your decks. An insert in the booster pack will tell you more about how these cards work.



If you would prefer to learn to play the **Magic** game on your computer, get the CD-ROM that came with your core game, install it, and choose **Play Tutorial I** on the main menu. You'll learn the rules while you play games against the computer.



If you have any questions, look them up in this rulebook. If you can't find the answers you're looking for, contact us. Our phone number and email address are inside the back cover of this rulebook.



Learning with *Magic Online*:

If you would like to learn to play *Magic Online* on your computer, you should get the CD-ROM that came with your core game, install it, and choose "*Launch Magic® Online*" on the main menu. You'll learn the rules as you play games against the computer.



You can also find out how to download a complete version of *Magic Online* at www.wizards.com/MagicOnline. The Wizards of the Coast® website has lots of information to get you started.

When you're ready to play against other beginning players, sign up for a *Magic Online* account. After you log on to *Magic Online*, start exploring and playing practice games.

If you have any questions about the **Magic** game, look them up in the in-game help or in this rulebook. If you can't find the answers you're looking for, contact us. Our phone number and email address are inside the back cover of this rulebook.

IMPORTANT!
Don't try to read through this rulebook
until you've played a few games.



SECTION 1: THE BASICS

MATERIALS

To play a **Magic** game with physical cards, you'll need a **Magic** deck, a friend with a deck, and something to keep track of your life total.

To play **Magic Online**, you'll need a **Magic Online** account and a **Magic** deck. (You don't need to sign up for an account to learn to play, though.)

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Reduce your opponent's life total to 0 before your opponent does the same to you! You also win if your opponent has to draw a card when none are left in his or her library.

HOW TO START THE GAME

You start the game with 20 life.

Roll dice (or flip a coin) to see which player gets to choose who goes first. Whoever goes first skips the first draw step (that player doesn't get to draw a card). If you've just played a game, the loser of that game decides who goes first.

Shuffle your deck. Then you draw the top seven cards. If you don't like your starting hand, you can mulligan. When you mulligan, your hand is shuffled into your library and you draw a new hand of one less card. You can do this as many times as you want, but you draw one less card each time.

Once both players are satisfied with their starting hands, the game starts.

PARTS OF A MAGIC CARD

Name. A card's name appears in the upper left corner. When a card's name appears in its text box, it refers to only that copy of the card, not others in play.

Mana Cost. Each symbol in the upper right corner is part of the cost to play that spell. If the mana cost reads **1** , you pay one white mana (from a Plains, for example) plus one mana of any kind to play it.



Type Line. This tells you whether the card is an artifact, creature, enchantment, instant, land, or sorcery. If it's a creature, its creature type (such as Goblin or Soldier) appears next to the word "Creature." If it's the kind of enchantment that attaches to another card, it will read "Enchantment — Aura," and the kind of permanent it can attach to is listed in the text box. See page 7 for more details on each card type.

Expansion Symbol. This symbol tells you which **Magic** expansion the card is from. (For example, the *Ninth Edition* expansion symbol is ) The color of the symbol tells you the card's rarity: black for common cards, silver for uncommons, and gold for rares.

Text Box. This is where a card's abilities appear. Flavor text might also appear here; it's the text in italics (*italic text looks like this*) that tells you something about the **Magic** world. Flavor text has no effect on game play. Some abilities have italic reminder text to help you remember what they do.

Collector Number. The collector number makes it easier to organize your cards. For example, "12/350" means that the card is the 12th of 350 different cards.

Power and Toughness. Each creature card has a special box with its power and toughness. You use these numbers to figure out which creature wins in combat.



KEY TERMS AND SYMBOLS

Mana. Think of mana as **Magic** money—it's what you use to pay most costs. Lands (and some other cards) make mana, which goes into your mana pool. Your mana pool is where mana is stored until you spend it.

Like money in your wallet, mana left in your mana pool will "burn a hole in your pocket." At the end of each phase, you lose 1 life for each unused mana in your mana pool, and the mana disappears. This is called mana burn.

Each mana can either be one of the five **Magic** colors or colorless. When a cost requires colored mana, you'll see colored mana symbols (* for white, ♠ for blue, ♣ for black, ♡ for red, ♠ for green). When any kind of mana can be used to pay the cost, you'll see a symbol with a number in it (like 2).

Permanent. Artifacts, creatures, and enchantments are put into play when they resolve. Lands also stay in play once you play them. These cards are called permanents because they stick around unless something removes them from play. (Instants and sorceries go to your graveyard when they resolve.)

Tapping. Tapping is the **Magic** game's way of showing that a card has been used. To tap a card, turn it sideways. At the beginning of each of your turns, you untap your tapped cards so you can use them again.

The symbol "⌘" means "tap this card." It usually appears in an activation cost.



Target. When a spell or ability contains the word "target," you choose what the spell or ability will affect when you play it. For example, Crossbow Infantry's ability reads, "⌘: Crossbow Infantry deals 1 damage to target attacking or blocking creature." When you play this ability, you choose an attacking or blocking creature for the Infantry to deal 1 damage to.

CARD TYPES

There are six types of **Magic** cards:

Artifact

Artifacts are colorless permanents that represent magical objects. You can play artifacts only during *your* main phases when the stack is empty. (You'll learn about phases and the stack later.)

A card with "Artifact — Equipment" on its type line represents a weapon, armor, or other item your creatures can use. Once an Equipment is in play, you can pay to attach it to a creature you control or to move it from one of your creatures to another.



Creature

Creatures are permanents that can attack and block. You can play creatures only during *your* main phases when the stack is empty.

Creature cards have numbers in a box in their lower right corners. The number to the left of the slash is the creature's power. That's how much damage the creature deals in combat. The number to the right of the slash is the creature's toughness. That's how much damage it takes to destroy the creature.



A creature can't attack, and you can't play any of its abilities that have  in the cost, unless the creature has been in play under your control since the beginning of your turn. (You can still use it to block—if it's untapped—and play its other abilities.)

Artifact creatures can attack and block just like other creatures. An artifact creature can be affected by anything that affects artifacts *and* anything that affects creatures.



Enchantment

Enchantments are permanents that represent magical resources. You can play enchantments only during *your* main phases when the stack is empty.

Most enchantments sit in play by themselves, just like artifacts and creatures. But Aura enchantments (with the type line "Enchantment — Aura") are different. They can be in play only if they're attached to other permanents.



When you play an Aura, it targets the thing that will be enchanted. That means you'll have to decide what the Aura will be attached to as you play it. The Aura will say in its text box what it can be attached to ("enchant creature," "enchant land," etc.).

If a permanent with an Aura attached to it leaves play, the Aura is put into its owner's graveyard. It doesn't just float around with nothing to enchant.

Instant

Instants are spells that you can play any time you have priority, even during your opponent's turn or in response to another spell. (You'll learn about priority later.) Instant spells don't stay in play. They go to their owners' graveyards after they resolve.



Land

Lands are different from other cards because they never count as spells. That means they can't be countered, and playing a land doesn't use the stack.

Most lands are permanents that have **mana abilities** (abilities that make mana). You'll usually use lands to pay for spells and abilities. You can play only one land each turn and only during one of *your* main phases when the stack is empty.

Each basic land has a mana ability that makes one mana of a particular color. Here are the basic lands:



Each has a symbol in its text box that tells you what type of mana you get when you tap it. Any other land is a nonbasic land.



Sorcery

Sorceries are spells that you can play only during *your* main phases when the stack is empty. Sorcery spells don't stay in play. They go into their owners' graveyards when they resolve.



ZONES

Zone is the **Magic** word for an area of play. Cards can be in one of six different zones:

Library. This is the deck of cards you use to play the game—your draw pile. No one can look at the cards in your library, but you can know how many cards are in each player's library. It's kept face down, and the cards stay in the order they were in at the beginning of the game.

Hand. This is where cards go when you draw them, just as in most other card games. No one except you can look at the cards in your hand. During your cleanup step, if you have more than seven cards, you have to discard until you have seven.

In Play. This is the area in front of you where you put your permanents. You can arrange your permanents however you want (we recommend putting lands closest to you), but your opponent must be able to see all of them and tell whether they're tapped.

Graveyard. This is your discard pile. Your instant and sorcery spells go to your graveyard when they resolve. Your cards go to your graveyard when they're discarded, destroyed, sacrificed, or put there by an effect. Cards in your graveyard are always face up and anyone can look at them at any time.

The Stack. This is where spells and abilities go after you play them. They wait there to resolve until both players are done playing stuff. Then the spells and abilities on the stack resolve from top to bottom (the last one played is on top). All players use the same stack. See page 13 for more about the stack.

Removed from the Game. This is an area off to the side where your cards go when a spell or ability removes them from the game. Cards removed from the game are normally face up.



SECTION 2: SPELLS, ABILITIES, AND EFFECTS

THE GOLDEN RULE

Whenever a card's text contradicts a game rule, the card wins. For example, you get only one combat phase each turn, but Relentless Assault says, "After this main phase, there is an additional combat phase followed by an additional main phase." For a turn, it overrides the rule that you get only one combat phase per turn.

WHAT'S A SPELL?

A card is a spell from the time it's played until it resolves. When the spell resolves, it goes to its owner's graveyard (if it's an instant or sorcery) or is put into play (if it's anything else). Even creature cards are spells while they're being played. For example, when you play Spined Wurm, you're actually playing a Spined Wurm spell. When the spell resolves, it puts the Spined Wurm creature into play (the spell becomes a permanent).

There's one exception: land cards are never spells. They're simply put into play.

WHAT'S AN ABILITY?

An ability is like a spell printed on a permanent. Many abilities have costs, and you play and resolve most of them just like spells. Once you play an ability, it doesn't matter what happens to its source. If you play Crossbow Infantry's ability and then the Infantry is destroyed, the ability will resolve anyway.

There are three types of abilities:

Activated ability. You play an activated ability by paying its cost. All activated abilities have a colon (":") in them. The part before the colon is the activation cost. The part after the colon is the effect you get when you pay the activation cost. For example, "**T**: Draw a card" means if you tap the permanent with the ability, you draw a card.

Creature — Human Wizard

T: Draw a card.

*"Sit down and read. Educate for the coming conflicts."
—Mary Harris "Mother" Jones*

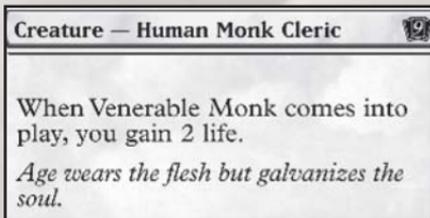
You can usually play activated abilities with  in their costs only once a turn because you can't tap a permanent if it's tapped already. You can play an activated ability without  in its cost as many times as you can pay the cost.

You can play an activated ability any time you could play an instant (whenever you have priority). It goes on the stack and waits to resolve just like an instant.

You can only play the activated abilities of permanents you control.

Triggered ability. An ability that starts with the word "when," "whenever," or "at" is a **triggered ability**. You don't play a triggered ability. It just goes on the stack automatically right after its trigger event occurs.

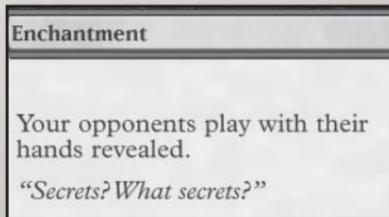
For example, Venerable Monk reads, "When Venerable Monk comes into play, you gain 2 life." The trigger event is the Monk coming into play. When that happens, the Monk's ability goes on the stack. When it resolves, you'll gain 2 life (if you were the one who played the Monk).



You can't choose to ignore or delay a triggered ability. If the trigger event occurs more than once, the ability goes on the stack once for each time the trigger event occurs.

Static ability. You don't play and resolve static abilities like the other two ability types. When a permanent with a static ability comes into play, the ability's effect simply "turns on." It stays on as long as the permanent stays in play. (Static abilities create continuous effects.)

Most enchantments have static abilities. For example, Telepathy reads, "Your opponents play with their hands revealed." Once Telepathy is in play, you don't have to pay a cost to have your opponent reveal his or her hand. Your opponent's hand is just kept face up on the table until Telepathy leaves play.



HOW DO I PLAY A SPELL OR ACTIVATED ABILITY?

You can play spells and abilities only when

- it's your main phase,
- nothing is on the stack,
- and you have priority.

Instants and activated abilities are the exception. You can play them on your opponent's turn and when another spell or ability is on the stack waiting to resolve. You can play them whenever you have priority.

When do you get priority? The active player (the player whose turn it is) gets priority at the beginning of each step and each main phase—except for the untap step and the cleanup step. (See *Section 3: Turn Structure* for more on phases and steps.)

When you get priority, you can play a spell or ability or pass. If you pass, your opponent gets priority. Also, after a spell or ability resolves, the active player gets priority again. When that player passes, the opponent gets priority again. This goes back and forth until both players pass in a row. (This isn't really as complicated as it sounds. Just remember that you get the first chance to do things on your turn.)

To play a spell or ability, follow these steps:

1. Tell your opponent what spell or ability you're playing. If it's a spell, show the card to your opponent.
2. If the spell or ability uses the word "target," choose the target(s). If the spell or ability's text starts with "Choose one —," make the choice. If the spell is an Aura enchantment, choose the permanent you want to attach it to.
3. For a spell, pay the mana cost. For an activated ability, pay the activation cost. If the spell or ability has X in its cost, you choose the value of X and then pay that amount of mana.
4. That's it! You've played the spell or ability and it goes on the stack. See "The Stack" and "How Do Spells and Abilities Resolve?" below to find out what happens to the spell or ability after you play it.



HOW DO I PLAY A TRIGGERED ABILITY?

You don't play triggered abilities. A triggered ability waits for its trigger event to happen. When it does, the ability goes on the stack automatically as soon as any player gets priority.

The player who controlled the permanent with the triggered ability makes the choices and picks the target(s) when the ability goes on the stack. Once the ability is on the stack, the player who would've gotten priority gets it back.

What happens if more than one ability triggers at the same time? The active player's abilities are put on the stack, in whatever order that player chooses. Then the opponent's abilities are put on the stack, in whatever order the opponent chooses.

THE STACK

The stack is where spells and abilities wait to resolve after they've been played. They stay on the stack in the order they were added to it.

How does it work? A player with priority plays a spell or ability, and it goes on the stack. That player can add more spells or abilities to the top of the stack or pass. If the player passes, the opponent gets priority and may add spells or abilities to the top of the stack or pass. Priority goes back and forth this way until both players pass in a row.

When both players pass, the spell or ability *on the top of the stack*—the one played last—resolves. After each spell or ability resolves, the active player gets priority again.

Here's an example. You control Glory Seeker, a 2/2 creature. Your opponent plays Shock to deal 2 damage to it. Shock goes on the stack. You respond to the Shock with Giant Growth, which gives the Glory Seeker +3/+3 until the end of the turn. Giant Growth goes on the stack, *on top of Shock*. That means Giant Growth resolves first, making the Glory Seeker 5/5 until the end of the turn. Then Shock resolves, but it doesn't deal enough damage to destroy the pumped-up Glory Seeker.



Here are some things that *don't* go on the stack:

- If an ability produces mana, it doesn't go on the stack. You get the mana immediately.
- Static abilities don't go on the stack. They "turn on" as soon as the permanent with the ability comes into play.
- When you play a land, you just put it into play. Land cards aren't spells, so they don't go on the stack.

HOW DO SPELLS AND ABILITIES RESOLVE?

1. Each of the spell or ability's targets is checked to see if it's still a legal target. (If the spell or ability has no targets, skip this part.) A target isn't legal if it has left play. It also isn't legal if it doesn't match the requirements of the spell or ability anymore. If *none* of the spell or ability's targets are legal when it tries to resolve, it's countered. Otherwise, any illegal targets are just ignored when the spell or ability resolves.
2. The spell or ability's effect happens. Do what the spell or ability says in the order it's written. (Replacement effects may change what you do.) If the text tells you to make any choices other than targets and "Choose one —", you make those choices.
3. For an ability, that's it. For a spell, the card is put into play (for artifact, creature, and enchantment spells) or into its owner's graveyard (for instant and sorcery spells) after its effect is carried out.

WHAT'S AN EFFECT?

When a spell or ability resolves, it has an effect. There are four basic kinds of effects:

One-shot effect

One-shot effects do something once, such as deal damage or destroy a creature. For example, Tidings reads, "Draw four cards." When it resolves, its effect is done.

Continuous effect

Continuous effects do something for some length of time.

A continuous effect from a spell, an activated ability, or a triggered ability lasts as long as the effect says it does. For example, Giant Growth reads, "Target creature gets +3/+3 until end of turn." Its effect lasts from the time the spell resolves until the end of the turn.

A continuous effect from a static ability lasts as long as the permanent with the static ability is in play. For example, Unholy Strength reads, "Enchanted creature gets +2/+1." Its effect on the enchanted creature lasts as long as it's attached to that creature.

Replacement effect

Replacement effects wait for something to happen and then change it somehow. They "replace" one effect with a different one. A replacement effect always uses the word "instead."

For example, Furnace of Rath reads, "If a source would deal damage to a creature or player, it deals double that damage to that creature or player instead." It waits for damage to be dealt to a creature or player, and then changes it so that twice that much damage is dealt.

Prevention effect

Prevention effects wait for something (usually damage) to happen and then keep it from happening. They always use the word "prevent."

Prevention effects work like shields. Once the spell or ability that makes the effect resolves, the effect hangs around waiting for damage to be dealt. Then it stops some or all of it.

For example, Holy Day reads, "Prevent all combat damage that would be dealt this turn." You can play Holy Day long before combat, and its effect will hang around for the rest of the turn. Then if creatures try to deal combat damage that turn, Holy Day prevents it.

Prevention "shields" stick around until they're used up. For example, Master Healer reads, "☞: Prevent the next 4 damage that would be dealt to target creature or player this turn." The ability creates an effect that stops up to 4 damage during the turn. If 1 damage is prevented, it can still prevent 3 more.



SECTION 3: TURN STRUCTURE

Each turn has five phases. Each phase occurs even if nothing happens during it. At the end of each phase, you take mana burn if there's mana left in your mana pool.

1. BEGINNING PHASE

This phase has three steps:

a. Untap step

During your untap step, untap all your tapped cards. No one can play spells or abilities during this step.

b. Upkeep step

Abilities that trigger at the beginning of your upkeep go on the stack. Players can play instants and activated abilities during this step.

c. Draw step

The first thing you do during your draw step is draw a card. Then players can play instants and activated abilities.

2. MAIN PHASE

You can play every type of spell and ability during this phase of your turn, but your opponent can play only instants and activated abilities. You can play a land during this phase, but remember that you can play only one land each turn.

3. COMBAT PHASE

This phase has five steps:

a. Beginning of combat step

Players can play instants and activated abilities during this step, but they usually don't.

b. Declare attackers step

You decide which of your creatures will attack. (You can decide not to attack at all.) When you declare that a creature is attacking, it becomes tapped. Creatures with **defender**, creatures that are already tapped, and creatures you haven't controlled since the beginning of the turn can't attack.



Remember that your creatures can attack only your opponent. You can't have them attack particular creatures.

Once you're done declaring attackers, players can play instants and activated abilities.

c. Declare blockers step

Your opponent decides which of his or her creatures will block your attacking creatures. Each blocking creature can block only one attacking creature, but your opponent can have two or more creatures gang up and block an attacking creature. Tapped creatures can't block.

Once your opponent is done declaring blockers, players can play instants and activated abilities.

d. Combat damage step

This is when creatures actually deal their damage in combat.

- Unblocked attackers deal damage equal to their power to the defending player.
- Blocked attackers deal their damage to the creatures blocking them. If more than one creature blocks one of your attackers, you decide how to divide the attacker's damage among the blockers.
- Blockers deal their damage to the creatures they're blocking. If a creature has become tapped since it was declared as a blocker, it still deals damage normally.

If an attacking creature was blocked at the declare blockers step, it doesn't deal any damage to the defending player. This is true even if all the blockers have left play.

Once you decide how combat damage will be dealt, the damage goes on the stack. After that, the damage is "locked in." It will be dealt even if some of the creatures leave play.

Players may then play instants and activated abilities. Once these have all resolved, combat damage is actually dealt. If a creature tries to deal damage to a creature no longer in play, it can't and the damage isn't dealt.



e. End of combat step

Players can play instants and activated abilities during this step, but they usually have no reason to.

4. MAIN PHASE (AGAIN)

Your second main phase is just like your first main phase. You can play every type of spell and ability, but your opponent can play only instants and activated abilities. Also, you can play a land during this phase if you didn't during your first main phase.

5. END PHASE

This phase has two steps:

a. End of turn step

Players can play instants and activated abilities during this step.

b. Cleanup step

If you have more than seven cards in your hand, choose and discard cards until you have only seven. Next, all damage on creatures is removed and all "until end of turn" effects end.

No one can play spells or abilities during this step unless an ability triggers during the step. That rarely happens.



SECTION 4:

CREATURE ABILITIES

Some creatures have abilities that aren't fully explained on the cards. Most of these have reminder text that gives you a brief description of the ability's effect. Here are full explanations of the most common creature abilities:

Defender

Creatures with defender can't attack. They make excellent blockers and usually have high toughness.

Fear

A creature with fear can't be blocked except by artifact creatures and/or black creatures. Fear only matters when the creature with the ability is attacking.

First strike

Creatures with first strike deal their combat damage before creatures without it. When you reach the combat damage step, check to see if one or more creatures that are attacking or blocking have first strike. If so, an extra combat damage step is created just for them. The extra combat damage step works just like a normal one, except that creatures without first strike don't get to deal their combat damage.

When the first-strike combat damage step is over, you go through the normal combat damage step for the rest of the creatures—if they survived. (Some creatures even have an ability called double strike that allows them to deal damage *twice*—once during the first-strike combat damage step and once during the normal combat damage step.)

Flying

A creature with flying can't be blocked by creatures without flying. Flying creatures can block other creatures with flying. They can also "swoop down" and block creatures without flying.



Haste

Creatures with **haste** can attack the turn they come under your control. You can also play their activated abilities with **♣** in the cost. In other words, a creature with haste can do the stuff it's normally not allowed to do during the turn it comes into play.



Landwalk

Landwalk is the name for a group of abilities that includes plainswalk, islandwalk, swampwalk, mountainwalk, and forestwalk. A creature with landwalk is unblockable if the defending player controls at least one land of the specified type.

Landwalk abilities don't cancel each other out. For example, let's say your creature with forestwalk attacks a player who controls a Forest. That player can't block your forestwalker at all—not even with another forestwalker.

Protection

Protection is an ability that protects a permanent from certain kinds of spells and abilities.

A creature with protection will always have "protection from _____." What's in the blank is what the creature is protected from. It might be protection from red, for example, or protection from white. Protection does several different things for the creature:

- All damage from sources of the color it's protected from is prevented.
- It can't be enchanted by Auras of the color it's protected from.
- It can't be blocked by creatures of the color it's protected from.
- It can't be the target of spells or abilities of the color it's protected from.

Protection isn't always tied to a color. For example, a creature could have "protection from artifacts" or "protection from Goblins."



Regeneration

Regeneration helps keep creatures from being destroyed. Regeneration effects work like shields. Once the regeneration spell or ability resolves, the effect hangs around waiting for the creature to be destroyed. If the creature would be destroyed, the effect saves the creature. (Regeneration is a replacement effect.)

When a creature regenerates, it remains in play. So do any Auras, Equipment and counters on it. Three things do happen if a creature uses its regeneration shield:

- The creature becomes tapped.
- If it's in combat, it's removed from combat.
- All damage is removed from it.



Trample

Trample is a creature ability that lets the creature's extra damage be assigned to the defending player when it's blocked.

When a creature with trample is blocked, you have to deal at least enough of its combat damage to the creatures blocking it to destroy all those creatures. But you can assign any of its damage that's left over to the defending player.

Vigilance

Creatures with vigilance don't tap to attack. If you choose to attack with a creature that has vigilance, since that creature doesn't become tapped, you can use it as a blocker on your opponent's next turn.



SECTION 5: THE FIVE MAGIC COLORS

Each of the five colors in the **Magic** game specializes in certain kinds of spells and abilities. It's up to you whether to master one color or all five.

WHITE

The sprawling plains, populated by soldiers, clerics, and angels, provide white mana. In the **Magic** world, white is the color of law, order, and structure. It can stop an attacking creature in its tracks by making it see the error of its ways. White magic heals and protects creatures. Mages that use white mana prefer to send an army of smaller creatures into battle, but sometimes a single, awesome champion is necessary to teach the enemy a lesson.



BLUE

Islands provide blue mana, the color of the deep sea and the endless sky. The strength of blue magic lies in trickery and manipulation. Blue mages work behind the scenes, scheming and stealing secrets, controlling their environments completely before making a move. Blue spells and abilities focus on "borrowing" opponents' cards and drawing the right card at the right time. With the power of blue, call wizards and weird beasts of the air and oceans to serve you.



BLACK

Black mana comes from dank swamps, where things fester and rot. Death, disease, selfishness, power at any cost—these are the twisted values of the darkness. Black magic is powerful and easy to wield, but it comes with a high price. Its spells and abilities can warp the mind, poison the land, and turn creatures into nothing. Dark minions, undead creatures, and unspeakable horrors are native to the swamp, and they're as self-serving and treacherous as the mages who command them.



RED

Red mana comes from the mountains and the fiery heart of the world itself. Red magic is filled with fire, frenzy, and storms of rock and lava. Its creatures are warlike and dangerous, ranging from mighty dragons to hordes of rampaging goblins. Mages who master red magic have no patience for talk or subtlety. They act quickly and recklessly. Red mages can channel their wild emotions to crush the ground you walk on or to wield flame like a living weapon.



GREEN

The teeming forests overflow with green mana, which represents the pulse of nature. Green magic is about growth, life, and brute force. Green mages understand that the world obeys the law of the jungle—everything is either predator or prey. Some green creatures are rich, living sources of mana, but no other color can boast creatures as powerful. Green creatures are the biggest and mightiest around, from towering nature elementals to carnivorous worms.



SECTION 6: LEAGUES AND TOURNAMENTS

Competing against other players can be one of the most exciting aspects of the **Magic: The Gathering** game. The large and comprehensive **Magic** organized play system gives you many options for proving your skills. Before making that first leap into organized play, you'll want to be more familiar with a few basic rules and the types of events you can play in.

In most events, you and your opponent play a series of games—called a match—to determine the winner. Most matches are best two out of three, so the first player to win two games wins the match.

Leagues are a relatively casual way to play while still competing against other players. You can find an Arena™ League at a store near you or click on the **Leagues** room in *Magic Online*. Leagues don't have hard-and-fast pairing rules, and you can play as many matches as you want.

Tournaments are the most popular form of competition. Tournaments last multiple rounds, but they usually end in one day. Tournament matches have a time limit, which is generally around an hour. Pairings—who you play against each round—are determined by the tournament organizer. Most tournaments use one of two pairing structures: single elimination or Swiss draw.

Single elimination, or a "knockout" structure, is the simplest way to pair players in a tournament. After you lose a match, you're eliminated from the tournament. A single-elimination tournament has just enough rounds to determine the winner, who must be undefeated.

Swiss draw allows players to continue playing even after they lose a match. That means it's possible to win the tournament even if you have a match loss or two. Players with similar records are always paired against each other. After the Swiss rounds, the Top 8 players usually advance to a single-elimination playoff.





Single-elimination structure

FORMATS

Format refers to the types of decks you're allowed to play—and when you're supposed to build your deck. In Constructed formats, you bring your own deck made from whatever **Magic** cards you own. In Limited formats, everyone starts out with the same number of unopened booster packs or tournament packs and has to build a deck from just those cards.

Constructed

When you enter a Constructed event, you have to build your deck in advance. (You can't change decks after entering an event.) You build a Constructed deck using any of the cards you own, but most formats let you use only cards from certain sets.

A Constructed deck has at least sixty cards in it, and it can't have more than four copies of any cards except basic lands. You can use a fifteen-card sideboard in Constructed play. After the first game of a match, you can swap cards in your sideboard for cards in your deck. That way, you can make your deck better against your opponent's deck.



The most common Constructed formats are Standard and Block Constructed.

Standard. The Standard format is the most popular format in the world.

It uses only the most recent core set and the two most recent blocks.

This format changes as new card sets are released. You can check

MagicTheGathering.com or call your local tournament organizer for up-to-date information.

Block Constructed. A Block Constructed format uses cards from only one block—a large expansion and its two small expansions (when they're released). For example, Kamigawa™ Block Constructed decks use only cards from the Kamigawa block, which includes the *Champions of Kamigawa*™, *Betrayers of Kamigawa*™, and *Saviors of Kamigawa*™ expansions.

Limited

When you enter a Limited event, building your deck is part of the competition. You have to build a deck using only the cards you get during the event, and you get to keep all those cards.

There's usually a time limit for building your deck. **A Limited deck has to have at least forty cards.** You can play as many copies of any card as you have received. In Limited play, all the cards that aren't in your deck are in your sideboard. You can change your deck after the first game of a match, but you have to return your deck to its original build at the beginning of each match.

The most common Limited formats are Sealed Deck and Booster Draft.

Sealed Deck. Sealed Deck is the easiest format for beginning players to play. You just open your cards and build the best deck you can out of them. In most Sealed Deck events, you get a tournament pack and two booster packs.





Booster Draft. Booster Draft is more complicated than Sealed Deck. A booster draft usually has eight players. Each player at the table starts with three unopened booster packs. Instead of just opening your cards and building a deck, you and the other players at the table have to draft the cards for your decks.

At the start of a Booster Draft, each player opens a pack and picks the card he or she wants from it. (You can't see the cards that the other players draft.) Then each player passes the rest of the pack to his or her left. You pick up the pack that was passed to you, select a card, and pass the rest to your left. This process continues until all the cards have been drafted.

Next, each player opens a second pack, but this time, you pass the pack to your right. After all those cards are drafted, you open the third pack and pass to the left again. At the end of the draft, each player has forty-five cards—plus extra basic lands from the organizer—to build a deck with.



SECTION 7: GLOSSARY

1, 2, 3, and so on

These are costs you can pay with any type of mana. For example, **2** in a cost means you can pay two mana of any type, including colorless mana (☉ and ☿, ♠ and ♣, and so on).

Some cards make colorless mana. For example, a land might have an ability that adds **1** (one colorless mana) to your mana pool. You can't use colorless mana to pay for colored mana costs.

* White mana

One white mana. Tapping a Plains makes *.

♠ Blue mana

One blue mana. Tapping an Island makes ♠.

♣ Black mana

One black mana. Tapping a Swamp makes ♣.

☉ Red mana

One red mana. Tapping a Mountain makes ☉.

♣ Green mana

One green mana. Tapping a Forest makes ♣.

☿ Tap

This symbol means "tap this card." It appears in activation costs. You can't pay a ☿ cost if the card is already tapped. Also, remember that you can't pay a creature's ☿ cost the turn it comes under your control.

See also Activated ability, Haste.



★/★

Some creatures' power and toughness are set by their abilities. For example, Nightmare's power and toughness are each equal to the number of Swamps you control. If you control one Swamp when you play Nightmare, it will be 1/1.

If you play a second Swamp later on, it will be 2/2.

Ability

Text in a card's text box that does stuff in the game. (Flavor text and reminder text don't count.) Abilities only work while the permanent they're on is in play. There are three types of abilities: activated abilities, static abilities, and triggered abilities.

Once an ability is played, it will resolve unless it's countered. It doesn't matter what happens to the source of the ability once the ability goes on the stack.

See also Activated ability, Static ability, Triggered ability.

Activated ability

An ability you play by paying its activation cost. All activated abilities have a colon (":") in them. The part before the colon is the activation cost. The part after the colon is the ability you get when you pay the activation cost. For example, "2 ♣ ♣ : Draw a card" means if you pay 2 ♣ ♣, you can draw a card.

You can play an activated ability any time you could play an instant (whenever you have priority). It goes on the stack and waits to resolve. You can play only the activated abilities of permanents you control.

See also Activation cost, Tap.

Activation cost

The stuff before the colon (":") in an activated ability. If an activation cost includes ♣, you can pay it only if the permanent with the ability is untapped. That means you can usually pay it only once each turn. If the activation cost doesn't include ♣, you can pay it as many times as you want. You'll get the ability each time.

See also Activated ability, Tap.

Active player

The player whose turn it is. The active player always gets priority first.

See also Priority.

Affinity

A card mechanic in the *Mirrodin*TM block. A spell with affinity for something costs 1 less to play for each of that something you control. Affinity can't reduce how much colored mana you have to pay for a spell, though, and it can't reduce the cost to play a spell below zero.

All

When a spell or ability says it affects "all" of something, it really means "all." For example, Wrath of God reads, "Destroy all creatures." That means it destroys every creature in play—even the ones you control.



Artifact

A colorless permanent that represents a magical object. The best thing about artifacts is that you can pay for them with any type of mana, so you can put them in any deck.

In your hand, library, and graveyard, they're just artifact cards. While you're playing them, they're artifact spells. Once they're in play, they're artifacts.

You can play an artifact spell only during one of your main phases when the stack is empty.

See also Artifact creature, Equipment.

Artifact creature

A colorless permanent that represents an artificial creature. Every artifact creature has power and toughness, which you can find in a box on the lower right corner of the card. Artifact creatures are affected by everything that affects artifacts and everything that affects creatures. They can attack and block just like normal creatures.

See also Artifact, Creature.

As though

When you see "as though" on a card, it means the card acts as though it has something it doesn't. For example, Giant Spider reads, "Giant Spider can block as though it had flying." The Spider doesn't really have flying, but it can block creatures that do.

At

When you see this word in an ability (for example, "at the beginning of your draw step"), it means the ability is a triggered ability.

See also Triggered ability, Trigger event.

At random

This phrase means neither player gets to choose. For example, a spell might tell you to discard a card at random.

Attack

How your creatures deal damage to your opponent. Creatures can attack only your opponent. They can't attack other creatures.

During each of your turns, you get one combat phase. That's your chance to attack. You decide which creatures to attack with. Only untapped creatures can attack. Once you've decided, your attackers become tapped and attack your opponent. Your opponent then gets a chance to block them and to play instants and activated abilities.

See also Attacking creature, Blocking creature, Combat.

Attacker

See Attacking creature.

Attacking creature

A creature that's attacking.

Creatures become attacking creatures when you declare them as attackers during your declare attackers step. That's when they become tapped. (Already-tapped creatures can't attack.)

A creature is attacking from the time it's declared as an attacker until the end of combat unless it's removed from combat by an effect (such as regeneration). There's no such thing as an attacking creature outside of the combat phase.

Aura

A special type of enchantment that can be attached to a permanent. An Aura's rules text begins with the word *enchant*—"Enchant creature," "Enchant land," and so on. The second word tells you what kind of permanent the Aura can attach to.

When you play an Aura, you choose one of the right kind of permanent to put it on. (The spell targets the permanent. Once the Aura is in play, it doesn't target it anymore.)

When the Aura resolves, it's put on the permanent you chose. It stays there until it's destroyed or the permanent it's on leaves play. You can't decide to move it onto a different permanent later. If the permanent leaves play, the Aura card is put into your graveyard.

See also Enchantment, Leaves play, Permanent, Subtype.

Basic land

There are five types of basic lands:

Plains make ☀.

Islands make 🌊.

Swamps make 🌿.

Mountains make 🏔.

Forests make 🌲.

Lands other than these five are called nonbasic lands.

Even though a basic land has only a big mana symbol in its text box, it has an activated ability that makes one mana of the appropriate color just because of its land type. For example, if a land somehow becomes a Swamp, you could tap it to make 🌿.

See also Land, Nonbasic land, Subtype.

Beginning of combat step

The first step of the combat phase. Usually nothing happens during this step, but players can play instants and activated abilities if they want to.

See also Combat phase.



Beginning phase

The first phase of each turn. The beginning phase contains the untap step, upkeep step, and draw step. Don't confuse the beginning phase with the beginning of combat step.

See also Draw step, Untap step, Upkeep step.

Block

To stop attacking creatures from damaging you by intercepting them with creatures you control.

When your opponent attacks you, each of your untapped creatures can block one attacking creature. You can have two or more of your untapped creatures gang up and block a single attacking creature.

If an attacker is blocked, it will deal its damage to the creature blocking it instead of to you.

See also Blocking creature, Combat.

Blocked creature

An attacking creature blocked by at least one creature.

Once a creature is blocked, it stays blocked for the rest of the combat phase—even if all the creatures blocking it leave play. In other words, once a creature is blocked, there's no way for it to deal damage to the defending player (unless the attacking creature has trample).

See also Attacking creature, Combat damage, Trample.

Blocker

See Blocking creature.

Blocking creature

A creature assigned to block an attacking creature.

When a creature blocks an attacker, the attacker deals its damage to the blocker instead of to the defending player. Once a creature blocks, it stays a blocking creature for the rest of combat. There's no such thing as a blocking creature outside of the combat phase.

See also Combat damage.

Booster, booster pack

A pack of fifteen randomly assorted **Magic** cards. When you're ready to add more cards to your collection, this is what you'll get.

Building a deck

When you first start playing, building a deck from scratch can seem hard. Try this: Pick your two favorite colors. Let's use red and green for this example. Get 12 Mountains and 12 Forests. Then get 10 red creatures and 10 green creatures. Add 12 red or green instants or sorceries. Then round out the deck with 2 artifacts and 2 enchantments. Shuffle and play!

After you play with your sixty-card deck for a while, you can start to customize it. Take out cards you don't feel are working well and add new cards you want to try. As long as your deck has at least sixty cards and doesn't include more than four copies of any one card except for basic lands, you can change it however you want.

It's a good idea to use only one or two colors and put about twenty-four lands in a sixty-card deck. That way you'll draw enough lands to play your other cards. The best part about trading card games is being able to play with whatever cards you want, so start experimenting!

For more deck ideas and advice, check out our website at MagicTheGathering.com.
See also Theme deck.

Bushido

A creature ability in the Kamigawa block. A creature with bushido gets a bonus whenever it blocks or becomes blocked. For example, a creature with bushido 1 gets +1/+1 until end of turn whenever it blocks or becomes blocked, but a creature with bushido 5 gets +5/+5! If a creature has multiple instances of bushido, each triggers separately.

Card

One of those cardboard rectangles in your physical deck or its virtual equivalent in *Magic Online*. (A creature token isn't considered to be a card.)

See also Card type.

Card type

Every card has at least one of six types: artifact, creature, enchantment, instant, land, or sorcery. A card's type is printed under its illustration. Some cards, like artifact creatures, have more than one type.

Some cards also have subtypes, such as "Goblin" and "Warrior" in "Creature — Goblin Warrior."

See also Subtype.

Choose one —

When you see the phrase "Choose one —" on a card, you have to choose one option on the card when you play it. You can't change your mind and choose something else later on, even if your first choice doesn't work out.

Cleanup step

The second (and last) step of the end phase. The following things happen during the cleanup step:

- If it's your turn, you discard cards until you don't have more than seven in your hand.
- All damage on creatures goes away.
- Effects that last "until end of turn" end.

Players can't play spells or abilities during this step unless a triggered ability triggers.



Collector number

Two small numbers at the bottom of a physical **Magic** card that make cards easier to organize. The first number is the card's position in the set. The second number is the total number of cards in the set.

Colon

When you see a colon (":") in an ability, that means it's an activated ability. The colon separates the activation cost from the effect you get when you pay the cost.

See also Activated ability, Activation cost.

Color

The five **Magic** colors are white, blue, black, red, and green. If a spell or ability tells you to choose a color, you must choose one of the five.

A card's color is set by its mana cost. For example, if a card costs **1** , it's blue. Because artifacts have no colored mana in their costs, they're colorless. (Colorless is not a color.) Lands are also colorless.

Colorless

Artifacts and lands are colorless. Colorless is not a color. If something tells you to choose a color, you can't choose colorless.

See also Color.

Combat

In general, combat means attacking, blocking, and all the stuff that happens during a combat phase.

See also Attack, Block, Combat phase.

Combat damage

Damage dealt by creatures during the combat damage step. Damage from creatures' abilities doesn't count as combat damage. For example, when you play Crossbow Infantry's ability, it deals 1 damage. But when it attacks, it deals 1 combat damage (because its power is 1).

Combat damage step

The fourth step of the combat phase. This is when attacking and blocking creatures actually deal their damage.

- Unblocked creatures deal damage to the defending player.
- Blocked creatures deal damage to the creatures blocking them.
- Blocking creatures deal damage to the creatures that they're blocking.

If an attacker is blocked by more than one creature, its controller decides how to divide up its damage among the blockers.

Once players figure out how their creatures' damage will be dealt, combat damage for all creatures goes on the stack. After that, it doesn't matter what happens to

the creatures. A creature's damage on the stack will be dealt even if the creature leaves play.

After combat damage goes on the stack, players can play instants and activated abilities.

See also Combat phase.

Combat phase

The third phase of each turn. This is when attacking and blocking happens. The combat phase has five steps (you can look up each one in this glossary):

- a. Beginning of combat step
- b. Declare attackers step
- c. Declare blockers step
- d. Combat damage step
- e. End of combat step

Usually nothing happens in the first and last steps. The combat phase happens even if the active player decides not to attack. After the combat phase, the active player gets another main phase.

Comes into play

When certain types of spells resolve, they come into play as permanents. These types are artifacts, creatures, and enchantments. Lands also come into play as permanents.

A lot of triggered abilities start with "When [something] comes into play, . . ." This ability would only trigger if the permanent actually comes into play. If the spell is countered, the ability doesn't trigger at all. Also, if you steal a permanent your opponent controls, the ability doesn't count as coming into play.

Some cards say they come into play tapped. These cards don't enter play untapped and then become tapped—they're already tapped by the time they're in play.

See also Triggered ability.

Common

See Rarity.

Concede

If you know you're going to lose a game, you can concede at any time. (Conceding is the fancy word for giving up.) When you concede, you lose the game.

See also Winning the game.



Continuous effect

An effect that lasts for some duration. These are different from one-shot effects, which just happen once.

You can tell how long a continuous effect will last by reading the spell or ability it came from. For example, it might say, "until end of turn." If the continuous effect comes from a static ability, it lasts as long as the permanent with the ability is in play.

See also Static ability.

Control

You control spells you play and permanents that came into play on your side. You also control abilities on permanents you control.

Only you can make decisions for things you control. If you control a permanent, only you can play its abilities. Even if you put an enchantment on your opponent's creature, you control the enchantment and its abilities. For example, let's say you enchant your opponent's creature with Spirit Link ("Whenever enchanted creature deals combat damage, you gain that much life"). Your opponent doesn't gain life from the Spirit Link—you do.

Some spells and abilities let you gain control of a permanent. Most of the time, this means the card will move from your opponent's side to yours. But for Auras or Equipment attached to other cards, the controller changes but it doesn't move. Let's say you gain control of your opponent's Spirit Link. Now you'll gain the life—but the Aura still stays on the same creature.

Control only matters for spells while they're being played or for permanents in play.

See also Controller. *Compare* Owner.

Controller

The player who played the spell or ability. For a permanent, the controller is the player who played it (unless another spell or ability changes who controls it).

See also Control. *Compare* Owner.

Converted mana cost

The total amount of mana in a mana cost, regardless of color. For example, a card with a mana cost of 3   has a converted mana cost of 5. A card with mana cost   has a converted mana cost of 2.

Compare Mana cost.

Cost

In general, a cost is what you pay to play a spell or an ability.

See Activation cost, Mana cost.

Counter

To cancel out a spell so it has no effect. Remember that spells exist only on the stack. Once they start resolving, it's too late to counter them. Also remember that lands aren't spells. They can't be countered.

"Counter" has another meaning in the **Magic** game. Some spells and abilities tell you to put a counter on a permanent. The counter represents a change to the permanent that lasts for as long as it's in play. A counter usually changes a creature's power and toughness. You can use anything you want as counters: coins, beads, whatever.

Creature

A type of permanent that represents a person, animal, or monster that will fight for you. Creatures can attack your opponents and block attacking creatures. Every creature has power and toughness, which you can find in a box in the lower right corner of the card. Many creatures also have abilities.

Creatures exist only while they're in play. In your hand, library, and graveyard, they're just creature cards. While you're playing them, they're creature spells. Once they're in play, they're creatures.

You can play a creature spell only during one of your main phases when the stack is empty.

Creature token

Some spells and abilities can create creatures. These are represented by tokens. You can use anything you want as a token, but you should use something that can be tapped.

Tokens are considered creatures in every way, except that when one of your token creatures leaves play, it vanishes from the game completely. Creature tokens are affected by all the rules, spells, and abilities that affect creatures, but they're not "cards" (even if you use cards as tokens).

Creature type

This tells you what kind of creature a creature is, such as Goblin, Elf, or Warrior. You can find a creature's type in the middle of the card after "Creature — ." If a creature has more than one word after the dash, the creature has all of those creature types.

Some spells and abilities affect all creatures with a certain type. For example, Goblin King reads, "Other Goblins get +1/+1 and have mountainwalk." All other creatures in play with the Goblin creature type get the bonus.

Artifact isn't a creature type, but many artifact creatures do have creature types.

Damage

This is what knocks down players' life totals and destroys creatures. Attacking and blocking creatures deal damage. Some spells and abilities can also deal damage.

Damage can be dealt only to creatures or players. If a creature is dealt damage equal to or greater than its toughness in one turn, it's destroyed. If a player is dealt damage, it's subtracted from the player's life total.

Damage is different from losing life. For example, Soul Feast reads, "Target player loses 4 life and you gain 4 life." That loss of life isn't damage, so it can't be prevented.

Damage prevention

See Prevention effect.



Deck

At least forty cards of your choice, well shuffled. After you learn to play and start building your own **Magic** decks, your decks should have at least sixty cards of your choice. Once you start a **Magic** game, your deck becomes your library.

Some tournament formats have additional rules about how you build your deck. See *Section 6: Leagues and Tournaments* for more information.

See also Building a deck, Library.

Declare attackers step

The second step of the combat phase. The first thing you do during your declare attackers step is decide whether you want to attack. If you do, you decide which of your creatures you want to attack with (only untapped creatures you've controlled since the beginning of your turn can attack). Then those creatures become tapped and become attacking creatures.

Remember that your creatures can attack only your opponent, not other creatures.

Once you're done declaring attackers, players can play instants and activated abilities.

See also Combat phase.

Declare blockers step

The third step of the combat phase. The first thing you do during your declare blockers step is decide whether you want to block the creatures attacking you. Then you decide which attackers you want to block and which of your creatures will block them (only untapped creatures can block). Remember, blocking creatures don't become tapped when they block.

Your creatures can block only one attacker each, but more than one of your creatures can gang up on an attacker.

Once you're done declaring blockers, players can play instants and activated abilities.

See also Combat phase.

Defender

A creature ability that keeps the creature from attacking. Creatures with defender make good blockers, though.

Defending player

The player being attacked.

Destroy

To remove a permanent from play and put it into its owner's graveyard. (Instants and sorceries can't be destroyed because they're not permanents.)

Creatures are destroyed when they've taken damage equal to or greater than their toughness. Also, lots of spells and abilities can destroy permanents without dealing damage.

If a creature is about to be destroyed, you can use spells and abilities to regenerate it and keep it in play.

Remember that destroying a permanent is different from discarding a card. You can only discard cards from your hand, not cards in play.

See also Regeneration. *Compare* Discard.

Discard

To take a card from your hand and put it into your graveyard.

If a spell or ability makes you discard cards, you get to choose which cards to discard—unless the spell or ability says another player chooses the cards or you have to discard "at random."

See also At random.

Double strike

A creature ability that makes the creature deal combat damage twice. A creature with double strike deals its combat damage during both the first-strike damage step and the regular combat damage step.

See also First strike, Combat damage step.

Draw

To take the top card of your library and put it into your hand.

You draw one card during each of your turns, at the start of your draw step. If a spell or ability lets you draw cards, it doesn't affect your normal draw for the turn.

Putting cards into your hand counts as drawing them only if the spell or ability says "draw." For example, Diabolic Tutor says, "Search your library for a card and put that card into your hand. Then shuffle your library." Even though you're adding a card to your hand, it doesn't count as a draw, because the spell doesn't use the word "draw."

The other **Magic** meaning of "draw" is a game that ends with no winner. For example, if an ability like Bloodfire Colossus's (☛, Sacrifice Bloodfire Colossus: Bloodfire Colossus deals 6 damage to each creature and each player) deals enough damage so that both players lose, the game is a draw.

See also Draw step.

Draw step

The last step of the beginning phase. The first thing you do during your draw step is draw a card. Then players can play instants and activated abilities.

See also Draw.

Effect

What a spell or ability does when it resolves.

There are several types of effects: one-shot effects, continuous effects, prevention effects, and replacement effects (you can look up each one in this glossary).

See also Ability, Spell.



Enchanted

When an ability says "enchanted creature" (or "enchanted artifact," "enchanted land," and so on), it means "the creature the Aura is attached to."

For example, Regeneration reads, "♣: Regenerate enchanted creature." You can regenerate only the creature that the Regeneration is on. You can't use the ability on other creatures.

See also Aura, Enchantment.

Enchantment

Enchantments are permanents that represent magical resources. You can play enchantments only during your main phases when the stack is empty.

Most enchantments sit in play by themselves, just like artifacts and creatures. But Aura enchantments (with the type line "Enchantment — Aura") are different. They can be in play only if they're attached to other permanents.

When you play an Aura, it targets the thing that will be enchanted. That means you'll have to decide what the Aura will be attached to as you play it. The Aura will say in its text box what it can be attached to ("enchant creature," "enchant land," and so on).

If a permanent with an Aura attached to it leaves play, the Aura is put into its owner's graveyard. It doesn't just float around with nothing to enchant.

See also Aura, Enchanted.

End of combat step

The last step of the combat phase. Usually nothing happens during this step. Effects that last "until end of combat" end during this step, and players can play instants and activated abilities.

See also Combat phase.

End of turn step

The first step of the end phase. Usually nothing happens during this step. Abilities that trigger "at end of turn" trigger during this step, and players can play instants and activated abilities. New end of turn abilities will not trigger if this step has started. They will trigger the next time an end of turn step begins.

See also End phase.

End phase

The last phase of each turn. The end phase has two steps: the end of turn step and the cleanup step.

See also Cleanup step, End of turn step.

Entwine

A card mechanic in the *Mirrodin* block. When you play a spell that says "Choose one —", you normally choose just one of the spell's possible effects. But when you play a spell with entwine, you can get both effects by paying the spell's entwine cost.

Epic

A spell mechanic in the *Saviors of Kamigawa* set. Once a spell with epic resolves, the spell's controller can't play any more spells for the rest of the game. However, that player gets a free copy of the epic spell at the beginning of each of his or her upkeep steps.

Equipment

A type of artifact that represents a weapon, armor, or other items that your creatures can use. When you play an Equipment card, it comes into play like any other artifact. Once it's in play, you can pay its equip cost to attach it to a creature you control. The Equipment then has some effect on that creature. If the equipped creature leaves play, the Equipment "drops to the ground" and stays in play, waiting for you to attach it to another creature.

- You can play an equip ability any time you could play a sorcery.
- You can move an Equipment you control from one creature to another by paying its equip cost, but you can't choose to unattach it.
- Gaining control of an equipped creature doesn't give you control of the Equipment on it. The Equipment remains attached to the creature, but only the Equipment's controller can play its equip ability.

See also Artifact

Evasion ability

This is what **Magic** players call any ability that makes a creature harder to block. Flying is the most common kind of evasion ability.

Expansion symbol

The symbol on the right of the card under the art. The expansion symbol tells you which **Magic** set the card is from. The *Ninth Edition* expansion symbol is .

Expansion symbols appear in three colors: black for common cards, silver for uncommons, and gold for rares. (Cards printed before mid-1998 only have black expansion symbols.)

See also Rarity.

Fear

A creature ability that makes the creature harder to block. A creature with fear can be blocked only by artifact creatures and/or black creatures.

First strike

A creature ability that makes a creature deal its combat damage before other creatures.

When one or more creatures with first strike are attacking or blocking, they get a separate combat damage step right before the normal one. Then, during the normal combat damage step, the rest of the creatures (the ones that survived) get to deal their combat damage.

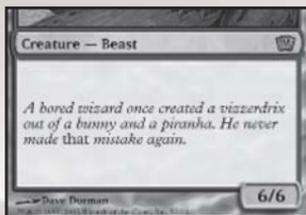
See also Combat damage step. *Compare* Double strike.



Flavor text

Italic text (*italic text looks like this*) in a card's text box that's just for fun.

Flavor text sets a tone or describes part of the magical world of the card. If the text is in parentheses, it's just there to remind you about a rule—it's not flavor text. Flavor text has no effect on how the card is played.



Flying

A creature ability that makes the creature harder to block. A creature without flying can't block a creature with flying, but a creature with flying can block both creatures with flying and creatures without flying.

Forestwalk

A creature ability that makes the creature unblockable as long as the defending player controls a Forest.

See also Landwalk.

Golden Rule

When a **Magic** card contradicts the rulebook, the card wins. For example, the rules say you get one combat phase during each of your turns. But *Relentless Assault* reads, "After this main phase, there is an additional combat phase followed by an additional main phase." *Relentless Assault* changes the rules for the turn you play it. One of the things that makes the **Magic** game fun to play is that there are individual cards that let you break almost every rule.

Graveyard

Your discard pile. This is where cards go when they're discarded, destroyed, sacrificed, or put there by an effect. Each player has his or her own graveyard. Cards in graveyards are always face up. You're allowed to look through your opponent's graveyard.

Hand

The cards you've drawn but haven't played yet. Only you can look at the cards in your hand. Your maximum hand size is seven cards. During your cleanup step, if you have more than seven, you have to discard until you have seven.

See also Cleanup step.

Haste

A creature ability that lets you attack with a creature on the turn it comes under your control. Haste also lets you pay activation costs with ♣ in them during the turn the creature comes under your control.

Just like any other ability, haste works for your opponent if he or she gains control of the creature with the ability.

See also Activation cost.



Heroes

A nickname for a card mechanic in the Kamigawa block. These "heroes" are easily recognizable by their unique card frame. The top half of each hero card shows the card's normal name, type, and stats. The text box contains an ability that causes the creature to "flip" if certain conditions are met. An additional set of information appears upside down on the card—this gets used once the creature is flipped.

- When you flip a creature, you turn it upside down and play with the other half of the card.
- Flipping a hero is a one-way process—it can't be flipped back.
- Any Equipment or Auras attached to a hero remain attached after it has flipped (if the flipped permanent is something they can be attached to).
- Heroes are normally not legendary, but their flipped versions are.

See also Aura, Equipment, Legendary

Imprint

A card mechanic in the *Mirrodin* block. Permanents with the imprint ability can remove other cards from the game and then use the imprinted cards' characteristics to power their other abilities.

In play

A card or token in play is a permanent. Only artifacts, creatures, enchantments, and lands can be in play. Cards in your library, graveyard, and hand aren't in play.

See also Permanent.

Indestructible

Indestructible permanents can't be destroyed by damage or by spells that say "destroy"—they just ignore the destruction. Indestructible permanents can still be sacrificed, countered, returned to their owner's hand, and removed from the game.

Instant

A type of spell that can be played almost anytime. When an instant resolves, it has an effect on the game, and then goes to its owner's graveyard like a sorcery. Unlike a sorcery, you can play instants whenever you have priority, even during your opponent's turn. You can also play them in response to other spells, and because of the way the stack works, the instant will resolve before the spell played before it.

See also Priority, Stack.

Instead

When you see this word, you know the spell or ability makes a replacement effect.

See also Replacement effect.



Islandwalk

A creature ability that makes the creature unblockable as long as the defending player controls an Island.

See also Landwalk.

Land

A type of permanent that represents your realm. Lands usually have an ability that makes mana, the magical energy you use to play spells. There are five basic lands: Plains, Island, Swamp, Mountain, and Forest. Any land other than these five is a nonbasic land.

You can play only one land card each turn and only during one of your main phases when the stack is empty. Lands aren't spells, so they can't be countered.

See also Basic land, Mana ability, Nonbasic land.

Landwalk

A set of creature abilities that make creatures unblockable as long as the defending player controls a land of the right type. "Landwalk" includes plainwalk, islandwalk, swampwalk, mountainwalk, and forestwalk.

Landwalk abilities don't cancel each other out. For example, let's say your creature with forestwalk attacks a player who controls a Forest. That player can't block your forestwalker at all—not even with another forestwalker.

Leaves play

If a card says "leaves play," it doesn't matter where the permanent leaving play ends up. It might return to a player's hand from play, go to a graveyard from play, or go to some other zone.

Also, if a card leaves play and later returns to play, it's like a brand-new card. It doesn't "remember" anything from the last time it was in play.

Legal target

A valid choice for a spell or ability. Sometimes spells and abilities can target only cards that meet some special conditions. For example, Dark Banishing reads, "Destroy target nonblack creature." Only creatures that aren't black are legal targets.

Spells and abilities check to make sure their targets are legal when they're played, and they check again when they resolve. If a target isn't legal at either time, the spell or ability can't affect it. And if none of the spell or ability's targets are legal when it tries to resolve, it's countered.

Let's say you play Dark Banishing on a green creature, but the creature becomes black before the spell resolves. Dark Banishing will be countered because none of its targets (it has only one) are legal.

See also Target, Counter.



Legendary

A permanent supertype with special rules. You won't come across any legendary permanents in the *Ninth Edition* set, but you will in other **Magic** sets. A supertype, like basic or legendary, appears as the first thing on a card's type line, as in "Legendary Creature — Human Wizard."

If a permanent is legendary, there can be only one of that permanent in play at a time. If another permanent with the same name comes into play, both are put into their owner's graveyards (they can't be regenerated).

Library

Your draw pile. At the beginning of a **Magic** game, your deck is shuffled and put face down. It's your library for the game.

Each player has his or her own library. Players can't change the order of cards in their libraries, and they can't look at the cards in their libraries (unless a spell or ability tells them to).

See also Draw.

Life, life total

Each player begins the game with 20 life. When you're dealt damage by effects or unblocked creatures, you subtract the damage from your life total. If your life total drops to 0 or less, you lose the game. If something causes both players' life totals to drop to 0 or less at the same time, the game is a draw.

See also Losing life, Paying life, Winning the game.

LIFO

This is a term Magic players use to describe how the stack works. It stands for "last in, first out." It means the last spell or ability played will be the first to resolve.

See also Stack.

Losing life

Losing life is different from being dealt damage. For example, Soul Feast reads, "Target player loses 4 life and you gain 4 life." That loss of life isn't damage, so effects that prevent damage can't stop it.

Compare Damage, Paying life.

Losing the game

See Winning the game.

Main phase

You get two main phases during each of your turns: one before your combat phase and another one after it. Your main phase is the only time you can play artifacts, creatures, enchantments, and sorceries, and you can play a land if you haven't already played one that turn. You can also play instants and activated abilities.



Mana

The magical energy you use to play spells and some abilities. Most mana comes from tapping lands. There are five colors of mana: ♣ (white), ♠ (blue), ♣ (black), ♠ (red), and ♣ (green). There's also colorless mana.

See also Mana ability, Mana burn, Mana cost, Mana pool.

Mana ability

Any ability that adds mana to your mana pool. Mana abilities can be activated abilities or triggered abilities. They don't go on the stack when you play them—you simply get the mana immediately.

See also Mana, Mana pool.

Mana burn

Mana doesn't stay in your mana pool forever. At the end of each phase, you lose any mana you haven't spent, and you lose 1 life for each mana lost this way. (It's not damage, so it can't be prevented.) This is called mana burn. So don't tap your lands for mana you can't spend!

See also Mana, Mana pool.

Mana cost

The mana you must pay to play a spell. A card's mana cost is in its upper right corner.

Each symbol in the mana cost tells you what kind of mana you have to pay. For example, ♠ means "one red mana," and 2 means "two mana of any kind." Mana costs for nonartifact spells include at least one mana of a specific color.

The mana symbols in a card's mana cost also determine its color. If a card has ♠ in its mana cost, for example, the card is red.

Don't confuse mana cost and converted mana cost. Converted mana cost is the total amount of mana in a mana cost, regardless of color.

See also Converted mana cost, Mana.

Mana pool

The place where your mana is stored until you spend it. When mana gets added to your mana pool, it stays there until you spend it or until the phase ends.

See also Mana, Mana burn.

Modular

A card mechanic in the *Darksteel*[™] set. An artifact creature with "modular X" (where X is whatever number appears on the card) comes into play with X +1/+1 counters on it. When a creature with modular is put into a graveyard, you can put its +1/+1 counters onto any target artifact creature.

Mountainwalk

A creature ability that makes the creature unblockable as long as the defending player controls a Mountain.

See also Landwalk.

Mulligan

At the beginning of a **Magic** game, you draw the top seven cards of your library. That's your starting hand. If you don't like your starting hand of cards (for example, if you don't have any lands to play), you can mulligan.

When you mulligan, your hand is shuffled into your library and you draw a new hand of one fewer cards. (You don't have to show your opponent your hand before you do this.) You can mulligan as many times as you want, but you draw one fewer card each time. When both players like their opening hands, you start playing.

Multicolored card

A card with more than one color of mana in its mana cost. For example, a card with the mana cost $2\text{ ♠} \text{ ♣}$ is both black and red. You won't see any multicolored cards in the *Ninth Edition* set, but you may see them in other **Magic** sets. Most multicolored cards have a gold background.

Name

A card's title, in its upper left corner.

When a card uses its own name in its text box, it means only that copy of the card, not any others with the same name. For example, Oracle's Attendants reads, "♣: All damage that would be dealt to target creature this turn by a source of your choice is dealt to Oracle's Attendants instead." When you play this ability, the damage goes only to the Attendants with the ability you played, not to any Oracle's Attendants you choose.

Non-

When a spell or ability's text refers to a "nonland card" or a "nonblack creature," and so on, it means "a card that's not a land," "a creature that's not black," and so on.

Nonbasic land

Any land other than a Plains, Island, Swamp, Mountain, or Forest. You can't put more than four copies of any one nonbasic land card into a deck.

See also Basic land, Land.

Ninjutsu

A creature ability in the *Betrayers of Kamigawa* set. After one of your creatures attacks and is not blocked, you can reveal a card with ninjutsu from your hand, pay its ninjutsu cost, and return the unblocked creature to your hand. Then you put the ninjutsu creature into play tapped and already attacking.



Offering

A creature ability in the *Betrayers of Kamigawa* set. You may play a creature with offering any time you could play an instant by sacrificing a creature of the right type. If you do, the cost to play it is reduced by the sacrificed creature's mana cost. Mana cost includes color.

One-shot effect

An effect that applies to the game only once. For example, Tidings reads, "Draw four cards." When it resolves, its effect is done.

One-shot effects differ from continuous effects, which last for some amount of time.

Compare Continuous effect.

Opponent

A person you're playing against. If a card says "an opponent," it means one of its controller's opponents.

Owner

The person who started the game with the card in his or her deck. Even if your opponent has control of one of your permanents, you're still its owner. (If you loaned your friend a deck, he or she will be the "owner" of all the cards in it during the game.)

Compare Controller.

Pass

To choose to do nothing when you have priority. Spells and abilities on the stack don't resolve until both players pass back to back.

See also Priority, Stack.

Paying a cost

Once you pay a mana cost or an activation cost, there's no way to get back what you paid, even if the spell or ability is countered.

You can't pay a cost unless you can pay all of it. For example, if an activated ability tells you to discard a card and you have no cards in your hand, you can't even try to pay it.

Remember that you can't pay a creature's activation cost that includes **☞** unless you've controlled the creature since the beginning of your turn.

If an effect does something to a permanent that resembles paying a cost of its ability, it doesn't count as paying the cost. For example, Icy Manipulator reads, "**1**, **☞**: Tap target artifact, creature, or land." Royal Assassin's ability reads, "**☞**: Destroy target tapped creature." If you use Icy Manipulator to tap the Royal Assassin, it won't cause the Assassin to destroy a tapped creature.

See also Activation cost, Mana cost.

Paying life

Sometimes a spell or ability will ask you to pay life as part of its cost. You can't pay more life than you have. Paying life isn't damage, so it can't be prevented.

See also Life, Losing life.

Permanent

A card or creature token in play. Permanents can be artifacts, creatures, enchantments, or lands. Once a permanent is in play, it stays there until it's destroyed, sacrificed, or removed somehow. You can't remove a permanent from play just because you want to, even if you control it.

Except for lands, permanents are almost always spells while they're being played. For example, you play a creature spell, and when it resolves, it becomes a creature.

Unless they say otherwise, spells and abilities only affect permanents. For example, Evacuation reads, "Return all creatures to their owners' hands." That means all creatures in play, not creature cards in graveyards or anywhere else.

Remember that if a permanent leaves play and then comes into play again later, it doesn't "remember" anything about the last time it was in play.

See also In play, Leaves play.

Permanent type

The permanent types are artifact, creature, enchantment, and land.

Permanents can have more than one type. For example, Natural Affinity reads, "Until end of turn, all lands are 2/2 creatures that are still lands." The turn Natural Affinity is played, lands are affected by anything that affects creatures and anything that affects lands.

Phase

A section of a turn. The five phases of each turn are

1. Beginning phase
2. Main phase
3. Combat phase
4. Main phase (again)
5. End phase

Some phases are divided into steps (see *Section 3: Turn Structure* for more details).

At the end of each phase, mana in players' mana pools drains away (and mana burn occurs).

See also Mana burn, Stack.

Plainswalk

A creature ability that makes the creature unblockable as long as the defending player controls a Plains.

See also Landwalk.



Play

For a land, to use your once-a-turn option to put a land into play from your hand. You can play a land only once each turn during one of your main phases when nothing's on the stack. Lands don't go on the stack when you play them.

For a spell, to put the spell on the stack. Different kinds of spells can be played at different times, but the things you have to do to play a spell are always the same: announce it, choose its targets, and pay its mana cost.

For an activated ability, to put the ability on the stack by paying its activation cost. You play an activated ability just like you play a spell: announce it, choose its targets, and pay its activation cost.

See also Activated ability, Land, Spell. *Compare* In play, Put into play.

Player

Either you or your opponent. If a spell or ability lets you choose a player, you can choose yourself. (You can't choose yourself if it says "opponent.") If you're playing a multiplayer game (a game with more than two players), everyone in the game is a player, including your teammates.

Playing a spell or ability

Follow these steps to play a spell or activated ability:

- Tell your opponent what spell or ability you're playing. If it's a spell, take the card from your hand and show it to your opponent.
- If the spell or ability contains the word "target," choose the target (or targets) for it. If the spell or ability's text says "Choose one —", make the choice.
- For a spell, pay the mana cost. For an activated ability, pay the activation cost. If the spell or ability has \otimes in its cost, you choose the value of X and then pay that amount of mana.

After that, the spell or activated ability goes on the stack and waits to resolve.

You don't play triggered abilities. When they trigger, they just automatically go on the stack—even if you don't want them to. You don't play static abilities, either. They're just "on" as long as the permanent with the ability is in play.

See also Triggered ability, Stack, Static ability.

Power

The number to the left of the slash in the box in the lower right corner of creature cards. Power represents how much damage a creature can deal in combat. Only creatures have power. A creature with 0 power or less deals no damage in combat.

See also Toughness.

Prevent

When you see this word in the text of a spell or ability, you know it's a prevention effect.

See Prevention effect.

Prevention effect

An effect that stops damage from being dealt. A prevention effect works like a shield. Once the prevention spell or ability resolves, the effect hangs around waiting for the next time damage will be dealt and then stops the damage. (Prevention effects are a kind of replacement effect.)

For example, Holy Day reads, "Prevent all combat damage that would be dealt this turn." You can play Holy Day long before combat, and its effect will hang around for the whole turn. Then, if creatures try to deal combat damage during that turn, Holy Day prevents it.

See also Replacement effect.

Priority

You can play a spell or ability only when you have priority. At the beginning of most phases and steps, the active player gets priority. When you have priority, you may play a spell or ability, or pass. If you pass, your opponent gets priority. Also, after a spell or ability resolves, the active player gets priority. When that player passes, the opponent gets priority.

See also Stack, Active player.

Protection

An ability that protects permanents from certain kinds of spells and abilities.

A creature with protection will always have "protection from _____." What's in the blank is what the creature is protected from. It might be "protection from red," for example, or "protection from white."

Protection does a few different things for the creature:

- All damage from sources of the color it's protected from is prevented.
- It can't be enchanted by Auras of the color it's protected from.
- It can't be blocked by creatures of the color it's protected from.
- It can't be the target of spells or abilities of the color it's protected from.

Protection isn't always tied to a color. For example, a creature could have "protection from artifacts" or "protection from Goblins."

Put into play

To bring something into the game. When a spell or ability tells you to put something into play, it's not the same as playing it. You just put it into play without paying its costs.

For example, Rampant Growth reads, "Search your library for a basic land card and put that card into play tapped." You know you can play only one land each turn. But if you play a land and then play Rampant Growth, you'll get to put a second land into play. That doesn't count as "playing" a land, so you get around the one-per-turn rule.

Rare

See Rarity.



Rarity

How likely it is you'll get a particular card. There are three levels of rarity for **Magic** cards: common, uncommon, and rare. Common cards are the easiest to get. Rares are much harder to find.

See also Expansion symbol.

Regeneration

A creature ability that keeps the creature from being destroyed. Regeneration effects work like shields. Once the regeneration spell or ability resolves, the effect hangs around waiting for the creature to be destroyed. If the creature would be destroyed, the effect saves the creature. (Regeneration is a replacement effect.)

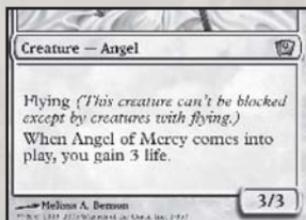
When a creature regenerates, it stays in play. So do any Auras, Equipment, and counters on it. Also, three things happen:

- The creature becomes tapped.
- If the creature's in combat, it's removed from combat.
- All damage is removed from the creature.

See also Replacement effect, Remove from combat.

Reminder text

Text in italics (*italic text looks like this*) in the text box that reminds you of a rule. Reminder text isn't meant to tell you all the rules, just remind you of how the card or mechanic works. If you're still not sure how something works, look it up in this rulebook.



Remove from combat

If a creature is removed from combat, it's not attacking or blocking anymore. If it blocked a creature before it was removed, the attacking creature stays blocked, so no damage would get through to the defending player. And if its combat damage went on the stack before it was removed, that damage will still be dealt.

Remove from the game

When you remove a card from the game, it's put aside for the rest of the game. When the game ends, the card goes back into your deck. Removing a card from the game is different from putting a card in a graveyard.

Replacement effect

A kind of effect that waits for a particular event and then replaces that event with a different one.

For example, Furnace of Rath reads, "If a source would deal damage to a creature or player, it deals double that damage to that creature or player instead." The effect replaces damage that would be dealt with twice that much damage.

See also Instead, Prevention effect.

Resolve

When you play a spell or ability, nothing happens right away. It just goes on the stack. When the stack deals with it, that's when its effect happens—it resolves. If a spell or ability is countered or if none of its targets are legal when it tries to resolve, it doesn't resolve at all.

See also Counter, Stack, Target.

Respond, in response

To play an instant or activated ability right after another spell or ability is played. Spells and abilities on the stack resolve from the top down. So if you respond to a spell or ability with an instant or activated ability, yours will resolve before the ones played before it.

See also Stack.

Reveal

When you reveal a card, it's shown to all the players in the game.

Rulebook

What you're reading right now. This rulebook isn't meant for reading straight through. It's just where you can look things up.

If you want to be a **Magic** rules expert, get the **Magic** Comprehensive Rules from the rules section of our website at **MagicTheGathering.com**. Be warned—the Comprehensive Rules are *very* technical.

Sacrifice

To choose one of your own permanents in play and put it into your graveyard. You can sacrifice only your own permanents. Sacrificing a permanent is different from destroying it, so you can't regenerate a sacrificed creature. You can sacrifice a permanent only if a spell or ability tells you to.

Don't confuse sacrificing with discarding. You can only discard cards in your hand.

Compare Destroy, Discard.

Scry

A card mechanic in the *Fifth Dawn*[™] set. When you play an instant or sorcery with "scry 2," you get to look at the top two cards of your library and then decide where you want to put them. You can put both cards on either the top or bottom of your library in any order, or you can put one card on the top and one on the bottom.

Shuffle

To randomize the order of cards in your deck. At the beginning of every **Magic** game, your deck is shuffled. Also, some cards will tell you to shuffle your library as part of their effects (usually because the card lets you look through your library).



Sorcery

A spell that does something once and then goes to its owner's graveyard. You can play a sorcery only during your main phase when nothing's on the stack.

See also Priority, Stack.

Soulshift

A creature ability in the Kamigawa block. When a creature you control with the soulshift ability is put into a graveyard from play, you may return another, less-expensive Spirit creature card from your graveyard to your hand.

Source

Where combat damage or an effect came from. Once combat damage or an effect has gone on the stack, removing its source doesn't stop the combat damage or effect from resolving. For example, if a creature leaves play after its combat damage has gone on the stack, the damage will be dealt anyway.

See also Stack.

Spell

All types of cards except lands are spells while you're playing them. For example, Glory Seeker is a creature card. While you're playing it, it's a creature spell. When it resolves, it becomes a creature.

Instant and sorcery spells go to their owners' graveyards when they resolve. All other types of spells become permanents when they resolve.

See also Stack. Compare Permanent.

Splice onto Arcane

A card mechanic in the Kamigawa block. Some instant and sorcery cards in the Kamigawa block have the Arcane subtype. They don't do anything special on their own, but they can interact with other cards. The "splice onto Arcane" ability allows you to pay a cost to add the text of the splice card in your hand onto another Arcane spell that you play, giving you a bigger, more powerful spell.

- You can splice multiple cards in your hand onto the same Arcane spell. If you do, reveal all of those cards at once. You choose the order in which the spliced effects occur and then you pay all the splice costs.
- You can't splice a single card in your hand onto the same spell more than once.
- Spliced cards never leave your hand—you simply reveal them—so later you can play them normally or splice them onto another spell.
- The Arcane spell gains only the text of the spliced card. It doesn't gain other characteristics like color or type.

Stack

When you first learn how to play, you just play a **Magic** card and it takes effect. But part of what makes the **Magic** game a good game is that you can play instants and activated abilities, even during your opponent's turn. The stack is what makes this possible.

You know you can play spells and abilities only when you have priority. When you play something, it goes on top of the stack and waits to resolve. Triggered abilities also go on the stack when they trigger. When both players are done playing spells and abilities, the stuff on the stack resolves *top to bottom*. And each time a spell or ability on the stack resolves, players get priority to add more stuff to the stack.

Here's an example. You control *Glory Seeker*, a 2/2 creature. Your opponent plays *Shock* to deal 2 damage to it. The *Shock* goes on the stack. You respond to the *Shock* with *Giant Growth*, which gives the *Glory Seeker* +3/+3 until the end of the turn. *Giant Growth* goes on the stack, *on top of Shock*. That means the *Giant Growth* resolves first, making the *Glory Seeker* 5/5 until the end of the turn. Then the *Shock* resolves, but it doesn't deal enough damage to destroy the pumped-up *Glory Seeker*.

What happens if the *Giant Growth* is played first? The *Shock* goes on the stack on top of it, so it resolves first. It deals 2 damage to the *Glory Seeker*—enough to destroy it! When the *Giant Growth* tries to resolve, its target is no longer in play, so it's countered.

See also Ability, Priority, Spell.

Static ability

A type of ability that's "on" for as long as the permanent with the ability is in play. For example, *Telepathy* reads, "Your opponents play with their hands revealed."

Static abilities aren't played and they don't trigger. They never go on the stack. They just start affecting the game when the permanent with the ability enters play. Static abilities almost always make continuous effects.

See also Continuous effect.

Step

Most phases of the turn are divided into steps. Specific things happen during some steps. For example, you untap your permanents during your untap step. You draw a card during your draw step. In most steps, something happens, and then players get priority to play spells and abilities.

You can look up each step in this glossary. See *Section 3: Turn Structure* for more details on the phases and steps in a turn.

See also Phase.



Subtype

All types of cards can have subtypes. Subtypes come after the long dash on the type line. Subtypes of creatures are also called creature types, subtypes of lands are called land types, and so on. A card can have multiple subtypes or none at all. For example, a "Creature — Elf Warrior" has the subtypes Elf and Warrior, but a card with just "Land" on its type line doesn't have a subtype.

Most subtypes don't do anything on their own, but a few subtypes have special rules:

- Equipment is a type of artifact that can be attached to one of your creatures. You can move an Equipment from one creature to another, and it stays in play if the equipped creature leaves play.
- Aura is a type of enchantment that comes into play attached to another permanent. When the enchanted permanent leaves play, the Aura is put into its owner's graveyard.
- Plains, Island, Swamp, Mountain, and Forest are the five basic land types. A land with one of these land types can tap for mana of the appropriate color even if the ability isn't listed on the card. For example, a land that's been changed into a Mountain by an effect automatically has the ability "☞ : Add ☞ to your mana pool."

See also Aura, Basic land, Creature type, Equipment, Type.

Sunburst

A card mechanic in the *Fifth Dawn* set. An artifact creature with sunburst comes into play with a +1/+1 counter on it for each color of mana used to pay its cost. Noncreature artifacts with sunburst get charge counters instead of +1/+1 counters.

Swampwalk

A creature ability that makes the creature unblockable as long as the defending player controls a Swamp.

See also Landwalk.

Tap

To turn a card sideways. When a permanent is tapped, it usually means it's been used for the turn. Once a card becomes tapped, you can't tap it again until it's been untapped.

Creatures tap to attack. You tap lands to get mana from them. Many permanents have activated abilities with ☞ in their costs. (☞ means "tap this permanent.")

Sometimes an effect will tap a permanent. If this happens, you don't get the effect you'd get if you chose to tap your permanent yourself.

See also Activated ability, Paying a cost.

Target

When you see the word "target" on a spell or ability, you have to choose one or more things for the spell or ability to affect. Most of the time, you'll be able to choose only certain kinds of things, such as "target red permanent" or "target creature or player."

You choose the targets for a spell or ability when you play it. You can't change your mind later. When the spell or ability resolves, it checks the targets to make sure they're still legal. If none of the targets are legal, the spell or ability is countered.

See also Legal target, Resolve.

Text box

The square on the bottom half of the card. The text box contains abilities, flavor text, and reminder text (text that reminds you about a rule). Remember that words in italics (*italic text looks like this*) don't affect the way the card works.

See also Flavor text, Reminder text.

Theme deck

A ready-to-play deck that uses cards from a particular set (or sets). You can play theme decks against each other right out of the box. The *Ninth Edition* set has five theme decks, one for each color. Each of the expert-level expansions has theme decks, too. When you're just starting to play, modifying **Magic** theme decks is a good way to start designing your own decks.

Token

See Creature token.

Toughness

The number to the right of the slash in the box in the lower right corner of creature cards. Toughness represents how much damage it takes (in one turn) to destroy the creature. Only creatures have toughness.

See also Power.

Tournament pack

A pack of seventy-five **Magic** cards. A tournament pack has thirty basic land cards—six of each type—and forty-five randomly assorted cards. In most Sealed Deck tournaments, you build your deck using a tournament pack and two booster packs. The *Ninth Edition* set doesn't have tournament packs, but large **Magic** expansions do.

Trample

A creature ability that lets the creature's extra damage be assigned to the defending player when it's blocked.

When a creature with trample is blocked, you have to deal at least enough of its combat damage to the creatures blocking it to destroy all those creatures. But you can assign the remaining damage to the defending player.

See also Combat damage.



Trigger event

The first part of a triggered ability. The trigger event tells you when the ability triggers and goes on the stack. For example, a trigger event might read, "Whenever a creature comes into play, . . ." or "At the beginning of combat, . . ."

See also Triggered ability.

Triggered ability

A type of ability that automatically goes on the stack when some specific thing happens. You don't play a triggered ability—it just goes on the stack when its trigger event occurs.

For example, Venerable Monk reads, "When Venerable Monk comes into play, you gain 2 life." The trigger event is the Monk coming into play. When that happens, the Monk's ability goes on the stack. When it resolves, you'll gain 2 life.

Triggered abilities always contain "when," "whenever," or "at" (as in "at the beginning of combat"). You can't decide to ignore or delay a triggered ability. Once it goes on the stack, it will resolve.

See also Trigger event, Comes into play.



Turn

Each turn is divided into phases, and most phases have steps. Here are all the phases and steps in order:

1. **Beginning phase**
 - a. Untap step
 - b. Upkeep step
 - c. Draw step
2. **Main phase**
3. **Combat phase**
 - a. Beginning of combat step
 - b. Declare attackers step
 - c. Declare blockers step
 - d. Combat damage step
 - e. End of combat step
4. **Main phase (again)**
5. **End phase**
 - a. End of turn step
 - b. Cleanup step

You can look up each of these steps in this glossary.

Type

Most things in the **Magic** game come in types. There are six types of cards, four types of permanents, three types of abilities, five types of basic lands, and lots of different creature types.

See also Card type, Creature type, Permanent type.

Unblockable

When a creature is unblockable, it's impossible for the defending player to block it with a creature.

Unblocked

A creature can be an unblocked creature only if it's attacking and the defending player has decided not to block it.

Uncommon

See Rarity.

Untap

To turn a tapped card upright. All your permanents are untapped at the beginning of each of your turns during your untap step. Also, some effects can untap permanents.

Untapping permanents lets you use them again.

See also Untap step.

Untap step

The first step of your beginning phase, when all of your permanents are untapped to show that they're recharged. No one can play any spells or abilities during this step.

See also Untap.

Upkeep step

The second step of the beginning phase. The upkeep step happens right after the untap step. Abilities that trigger during upkeep go on the stack, and players can play instants and activated abilities.

Once both players are done playing spells and abilities, you move on to the draw step.

Vigilance

A creature ability that lets the creature attack without tapping. Since creatures with vigilance don't tap to attack, they're always available as blockers.



When, whenever

If you see "when" or "whenever" in an ability, you know it's a triggered ability. The part of the sentence that starts with "when" or "whenever" is the trigger event. That's what will cause the ability to trigger and go on the stack.

See also Trigger event, Triggered ability.

Winning the game

There are two ways to win a game:

- Reduce your opponent's life total to 0 (or less).
- Wait until your opponent has to draw a card, but can't.

You can also win if your opponent concedes. If an effect reduces both players' life totals to 0 life at the same time, the game is a draw—nobody wins. The same thing is true if both players have to draw a card and can't.

X

When you see X in a mana cost or an activation cost, you get to choose the number.

For example, *Blaze* is a sorcery that costs X . Its text reads, "Blaze deals X damage to target creature or player." When you play *Blaze*, you choose what number X is. If you pick four, for example, *Blaze* deals 4 damage and costs 4 . If you pick one, *Blaze* deals 1 damage and costs 1 .

You

The word "you" on a **Magic** card always refers to the card's current controller.

See also Control, Controller.

Zone

Each area of play in a **Magic** game is called a zone. A card can be in any one of these zones: library, graveyard, hand, in play, stack, and removed from the game.



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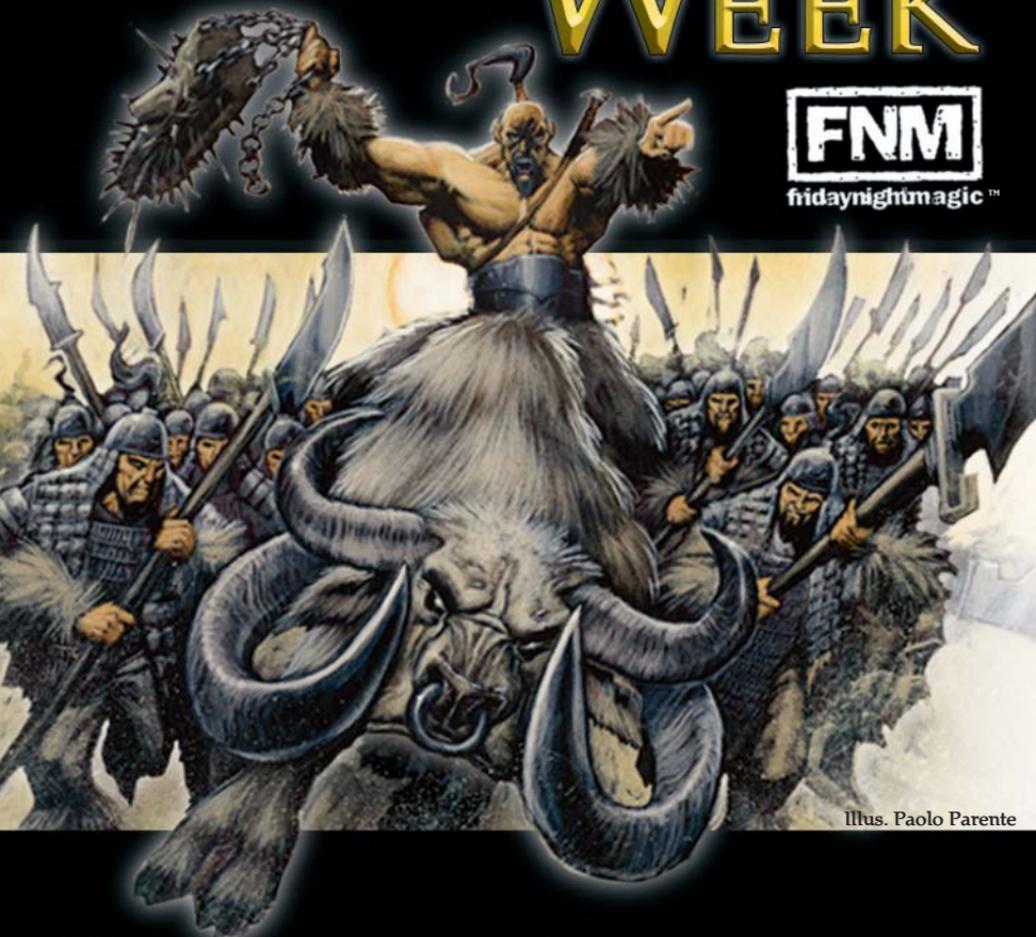
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