



## DCI Banned and Restricted List Announcement

Announcement Date: March 1, 1999

Effective Date: April 1, 1999

### Standard Constructed:

Dream Halls is banned  
 Earthcraft is banned  
 Fluctuator is banned  
 Lotus Petal is banned  
 Recurring Nightmare is banned  
 Time Spiral is banned

### Extended Constructed:

No changes

### Urza Block Constructed:

Time Spiral is banned  
 Windfall is banned

### Classic-Restricted (Type 1.5) Constructed:

Candelabra of Tawnos is UNBANNED  
 Copy Artifact is UNBANNED  
 Maze of Ith is UNBANNED  
 Mishra's Workshop is UNBANNED  
 Time Spiral is banned

### Classic (Type 1) Constructed:

Maze of Ith is UNRESTRICTED  
 Time Spiral is restricted

### Errata:

Effective March 1, 1999, the following errata have been issued for the "free" creatures (Cloud of Faeries, Great Whale, Palinchron, and Peregrine Drake): "When [this creature] comes into play, if you played it from your hand, untap up to [the appropriate number] lands." Also, Priest of Gix has the following errata: "When Priest of Gix comes into play, if you played it from your hand, add [three black mana] to your mana pool." (This should be treated as if there were actual mana symbols in the text box.)

In explaining the implications of the errata, Bill Rose (**Magic** lead designer) had this to say: "With this template it's obvious you don't get to untap lands (or in the case of Priest of Gix, add mana to your mana pool) when you put the creature directly into play with an ability such as

Recurring Nightmare's or Sneak Attack's. Remember that 'played' is not the same as 'put into play.'"

## Explanation of Banned and Restricted List

### General Philosophy

Why does this quarter's Banned and Restricted List have more cards banned in the Standard environment than any previous list? Simply put, the current Standard environment is dominated by deck archetypes that are not good for the health of the game. Too many "combination" decks are winning much too often and much too quickly. These decks detract from the interactive element of the **Magic** game that makes tournament play both interesting and enjoyable.

Combination decks have always existed in **Magic** play. Although they have their place, the game suffers and players become frustrated when they start to dominate the environment. **Magic** R&D's philosophy is that combination decks should not be able to win too quickly or too efficiently. For example, Channel/Black Lotus/Fireball was not an acceptable combination, and was therefore remedied.

When the current problem cards were designed, the Standard environment was considerably different from what it is today. A dominant deck type at that time was the slow blue-white control deck. The speed of the *Tempest* environment was a direct and deliberate response to this slow environment, and introduced a number of cards that were "faster" than their predecessors.

Additionally, a number of new combination cards were released as a part of the *Urza's Saga* card set. Because combination decks hadn't been a problem for years, these new combination cards did not receive the attention they deserved during the set's development. Once combined with the fast cards of the *Tempest* environment, these combinations came into play much more quickly than expected, resulting in frustrated players in the current Standard environment. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this has caused players.

### Standard

Dream Halls: **Magic** R&D has been concerned with this card for quite a while because it essentially allows players to ignore a spell's casting cost. In general this may be acceptable, but when combined with card drawing, it becomes problematic.

Earthcraft: This was a key card in many of the combination decks that generated infinite mana. The "cost" of tapping a creature proved insufficient when that creature could easily be untapped or recast over and over again.

Fluctuator: There was more debate over this card than any other card on the list. In the end, Fluctuator was banned for the same reason that Recurring Nightmare was banned. With the top tier of combination decks eliminated, the Fluctuator deck would move to the forefront.

Lotus Petal: This card enables many combination decks to get their combinations into play much earlier than they otherwise would. It serves only to speed up the environment. Furthermore, it enables combination decks to use multiple colors for free. Banning Lotus Petal allows certain combination cards to remain in the environment that may otherwise have been banned (such as Yawgmoth's Will).

Recurring Nightmare: This was a difficult decision. Although the errata to the "free" creatures helps, the power of Recurring Nightmare deck archetypes would still be too strong, especially when combined with Survival of the Fittest (another card that was considered). Even though this deck is clearly not as fast as Time Spiral decks, R&D feels that once Time Spiral is banned, the Recurring Nightmare deck would become dominant.

Time Spiral: This was the key card in too many combination decks. Its power to yield seven new cards for essentially no mana was unbalancing. In development, R&D thought that six mana would be enough of a drawback, but that turned out not to be the case.

### **Extended**

The Extended environment was left untouched because the deck balance appears to be normal. No deck type is dominating the current Extended environment.

### **Urza Block**

Time Spiral: *See* Standard.

Windfall: This card yields too many cards for too low a cost. In a deck that can empty its hand quickly, this card is unbalancing.

### **Classic Restricted**

All banned or restricted cards in the Classic format are banned in the Classic-Restricted format.

### **Classic**

Time Spiral: The combination of its effect and the fact that it's "free" made this card too powerful.

Maze of Ith: This card is not broken in today's environment, and therefore is unrestricted.

Wizards of the Coast is offering a redemption program for certain cards affected by this announcement. [Click here](#) for details.

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