

"In the Beginning..."

Mark Rosewater, R&D senior designer
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Welcome to **MagictheGathering.com**. I guess I should start by answering the big question on everyone's mind. What is **MagictheGathering.com**? The simplest answer is that it's the newest web site dedicated to **Magic**. But, as you will shortly see, it's not your average web site.



For starters, the site is produced by Wizards of the Coast. Obviously, we have access to material that no other site does. And we are planning to share much of that material with you. Other sites print rumors. We will be printing facts straight from the source.

Also, we have access to exclusive "behind the scenes" information. Curious as to how **Magic** is made? We will give peeks into every aspect of **Magic** creation from card design to development to art to names and flavor text. If you want to know how we do it, **MagictheGathering.com** will be the definitive word on the entire **Magic**-making process.



But wait, there's more. The site has collected some top-notch writers (I'll mention them in a few paragraphs) to explore numerous aspects of playing **Magic**. From creative deck building to **Magic** history to multi-player madness, we will explore many facets of what makes **Magic** such an enjoyable game.



MagictheGathering.com will also provide a place for all of you to have a voice. Upset by something we've done (or haven't done)? Concerned about some aspect of the game? Or simply want to pass along a few kind words? This site will give you a chance to give your opinion directly to the people that matter.

Last, but far from least, **MagictheGathering.com** is going to create ways to allow all of you to shift from a passive role to an active one in the **Magic** process. For example, before the end of this month, I will explain how the readers of **MagictheGathering.com** will design a **Magic** card to be published in an upcoming set.



To pull this all together, we managed to get Aaron Forsythe as our editor. Aaron is one of a handful of players to find success both on the Pro Tour and online. Running a daily web site is a daunting task, but Aaron has leapt in with great enthusiasm. If you have any issues concerning the site, feel free to drop Aaron a line at editor@wizards.com.

But enough of the overview, let's get to the specifics. What can all of you expect each day when you turn to our site?

DAILY FEATURES

(published once each weekday)

Magic Arcana

This feature will peer into the future and the past. Each day we will tell you or show you something you've never heard or seen before. News of an upcoming set, original sketches, alternative packaging, playtest cards, uncropped artwork, style guide images, etc. "Magic Arcana" will go where no **Magic** site has gone before.



What does *Torment's* packaging look like?



Ask Wizards

Is there something about **Magic** or Wizards of the Coast you'd like to know? Send a question to ask@wizards.com. Once each day we will pick a question sent in by a reader and have it answered by the most appropriate Wizards employee. Anything's fair game, so start sending those questions in.

Who is the design team for 2002's fall expansion?

"The 2002 fall expansion, code-named 'Manny', was designed by Mike Elliott and Mike Donais. Mike Elliott is one of **Magic**'s most prolific designers. He has designed cards for every set since *Mirage* and was lead designer for the following sets: *Stronghold*, *Urza's Saga*, *Urza's Legacy*, *Mercadian Masques*, *Nemesis*, and *Planeshift*. This is Mike Donais' second design. He was also on the *Odyssey* design team."

- Aaron Forsythe

COLUMNS

Monday – [Making Magic](#) by Mark Rosewater

The week starts off with my column on **Magic** design. I will give an inside look (much akin to my long-running "Insider Trading" column from the *Duelist*, *Topdeck*, and *Sideboard* magazines) on how Magic cards are created. With numerous surprises and a few new tricks up my sleeve, "Making Magic" should be a fun way to begin each week.

How did Sorrow's Path indirectly create Donate?

"Before I came to Wizards of the Coast, I had a penchant for making offbeat decks. One of my decks was built around killing people with Sorrow's Path, my vote for the worst card (in terms of power) ever made. The card was so bad that the only way I could come up to kill people with it was to give it to them and then tap it with an **Icy Manipulator**. This led to a deck built around winning by giving my opponents things they couldn't deal with, such as **Force of Nature**, **Demonic Hordes**, and, of course, Sorrow's Path. At the time I used **Gauntlets of Chaos** and **Juxtapose** to trade items with my opponent. What I really wanted was a simple spell that just let me give things to my opponent. Years later, I became a **Magic** designer and made that very card."

- Mark Rosewater



Tuesday – [Serious Fun](#) by Anthony Alongi

Anthony Alongi shouldn't need much introduction. Author of the long running 'net column "Casual Fridays" (first on The Dojo and then Starcitygames.com), Anthony is a spokesman for the casual player. Join him each Tuesday in "Serious Fun" as he gives a casual player's insight to what it's like to peer at the Wizards behind the curtain.

Can you play Emperor Magic with eight people?


"Yes and no. Okay, yes.

"You can do everything from just assign one central person as the emperor and play normally, to adjust life totals to make the longer road 'easier,' to the artillery/infantry format where four people can target only each other, and each has a teammate that can shoot into the fray."

- Anthony Alongi

Wednesday – Uncommon Knowledge by Ben Bleiweiss

Ben Bleiweiss may not be a household name, but he is one of the true historians of the game. Each Wednesday, Ben will be examining some facet of **Magic**, looking back through history to discover its origins and evolutions.



What was the first expansion to feature untargetability?

"If we define it as 'cannot be the target of spells or effects,' the first expansion to feature untargetability would be a toss-up between *Legends* and *Fallen Empires*. *Legends'* **Spectral Cloak** was the first card which granted a creature complete untargetability (although back in the day interrupts could still target the creature), while the first untargetable creatures were **Homarid Warrior** and **Deep Spawn** (as activated abilities) from *Fallen Empires*. The first innately untargetable creature was **Autumn Willow** from *Homelands*, and she was followed by the first 'vanilla' untargetable creature, **Deadly Insect** (*Alliances*)."

- Ben Bleiweiss

Thursday – House of Cards by Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar

Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar first came to my attention when he sent a few decks into this year's Auction of the People (an online deck-building contest on Sideboard.com which asked players to build decks around creature types). By a few decks, I mean a deck for every creature type in existence. "House of Cards" will be a venue for Jay to share his love of creative deck building.

*Can you actually build a deck around **Carnival of Souls**?*



Carnival of Food

Main Deck
60 cards

4 Bayou	4 Birds of Paradise	4 Carnival of Souls
2 City of Brass	4 Ivy Elemental	4 Food Chain
9 Forest	4 Multani's Acolyte	8 other spells
4 Llanowar Wastes	4 Simian Grunts	
3 Treetop Village	4 Spiritmonger	
22 lands	2 Verdeloth the Ancient	
	4 Vine Dryad	
	4 Wall of Blossoms	
	30 creatures	

"Use the almighty combo of **Carnival of Souls** and **Food Chain** to build a mountain of bodies culminating in a gigantic **Ivy Elemental** or **Verdeloth**, or just use both to give you access to surprise creatures. Will an opposing **Pernicious Deed** or **Counterspell** stop you dead? Sure, but imagine your opponent's face if you get away with it..."

- Jay Moldenhauer-Salazar

Friday – Latest Developments by Randy Buehler

The week starts in design and ends in development. Each Friday, R&D member Randy Buehler will guide you all through the ins and outs of **Magic** development in "Latest Developments."

*Why does **Cognivore** cost eight mana?*

"Everyone has had the experience of sitting across from that annoying blue mage with a grip full of counterspells. All those permission spells are instants, and so are the card-drawing spells that blue mages tend to use to refill their hands. Ever count how many instants actually wind up in a control player's graveyard? Well, I did when we tried out **Cognivore** at 6 mana. **Cognivore** would routinely come down with a power and toughness over 10. More often than you'd think, **Cognivore** would attack once... for the kill... for 20 damage. Blue just isn't supposed to be the color of fat creatures, so we decided we needed to charge a lot of mana for a creature that has such good synergy with such an obvious strategy. It was still really good at seven mana, and even at eight mana it still saw play in the Future Future League as the kill card in blue-white control."

- Randy Buehler



WEEKLY FEATURES

Lexicon

Each week, we will define several **Magic**-related words, and **Magic** creative text writer Rei Nakazawa will help with the ones we just plain made up.

*How did **Masticore** get its name?*



"'Masticore' is based off of two words. It looks like a *manticore*, a mythological creature with the head/body of a lion and the tail of a scorpion, which has appeared on **Magic** cards in the past. But the name is also based off the word *masticate*, meaning 'to eat,' which is incidentally what the Masticore is doing in the art: eating that metal object."

- Rei Nakazawa

COMING SOON...

Expect to see these items debut within the next few weeks!

Card of the Day

Every day we will post a **Magic** card with an interesting factoid or two. This feature will be chock full of "inside" scoops.

Which original Circle of Protection was illustrated by computer?

Circle of Protection: Black. The artist for the card bailed at the last moment, so the original Magic art director, Jesper Myrfors, quickly whipped up an illustration on the computer. In the confusion of this last minute rush, Circle of Protection: Black was inadvertently left out of *Alpha*.



Poll of the Week

Each week, we'll give you all a chance to tell us what you think about a particular topic. And we'll keep you up to date on how your comments affect actual design and development.

*What color do **Magic** players believe most needs R&D's help?*

I guess we'll have to wait and see...

SPECIAL FEATURES

Orb of Insight

My mom has a saying I've always admired: "You don't prove by telling, you prove by doing." It's all nice and good to tell all of you how we plan to be different. Now it's time to show you. I introduce the "Orb of Insight." This little "artifact" is a tool for all of you to learn all you can about *Torment*.

Here's how it works: You enter any word, and the Orb will tell you how many times that word appears in *Torment*. It counts all text on the cards with the exception of flavor text. What can you figure out with this little tool? To be honest, I'm not sure. But I plan have fun watching all of you learn what you can.

How many times does the word "protection" exist in Torment?

The Orb says: 11.

And believe me, the Orb is right.

Let me end this little intro by welcoming all of you once again to **MagictheGathering.com**. We have a whole bag of surprises for you in the upcoming year. Make sure to tune in each weekday and see what we do.

Sincerely,

Mark Rosewater

*Mark Rosewater is Head **Magic** Designer. What this fancy title means is that he's in charge of **Magic** design. This gets him a lot of mail (which he actually reads). When not alternatively destroying and saving **Magic**, he likes to spend time with his family, do stereotypically geeky things (play games, read comics, watch a lot of science fiction, etc.) and write about himself in third person.*



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