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# Attack of the Clones

Ben Bleiweiss  
Uncommon Knowledge  
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We'll start off with a few questions, for which the answers will appear later:

1. You have a **Mishra's Factory** in play. You decide to animate it, and then attempt to cast **Copy Artifact** and **Clone**, both to copy the Assembly Worker. Can you do this? What happens at the end of the turn to the copy cards?
2. Your opponent casts **Capsize** with buyback on your mountain. You attempt to **Fork** the **Capsize** onto the same mountain. Does your **Fork** return to your hand upon resolution?
3. You play **Chaos Orb**, and then animate it with a **Xenic Poltergeist**. On top of all this, you then play a **Dance of Many** copying the **Chaos Orb**, and want to use a pillow as the token. Can you flip the pillow onto your opponent's play area in an attempt to destroy all his permanents?

Moving on...

**Torment** began a trend of reprinting classic creatures from **Magic's** storied past in expansions by reintroducing **Sengir Vampire** to a new generation of players. Judgment continued with **Erhnam Djinn**. Now, **Onslaught** "copies" this act with the reappearance of a favored creature that has not seen print since the days of **Revised**. It's my pleasure here at MagicTheGathering.com to reintroduce, for the first time since 1995, the fabulous and formless **Clone**.

## Looking forward, looking back

Just looking at the card, the new artwork by Carl Critchlow pays homage to the original piece by Julie Baroh. This time, the soldier being cloned seems a little more aggressive (or defensive?) towards his imposter.

More importantly, you'll notice that the text on **Clone** has gone from a massive seven lines of microscopic writing to a new, sleek four lines of readable rules. The rules team finally streamlined the complicated copy-card rules far enough that **Clone** could see print without causing massive rules headaches in and of itself, mostly by defining the term "copy" in the rules themselves as opposed to trying to do it on the cards.

Here are the relevant bits of the current copy rules (Full Comp Rules [here](#)):

### 503. Copying Spells and Abilities

**503.1.** A *copy card* is a card that creates or becomes a "copy" of another spell, permanent, or card. (Certain older cards were printed with the phrase "search for a copy." These aren't copy cards; they have received new text in the Oracle™ card reference.)

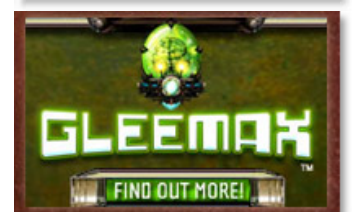
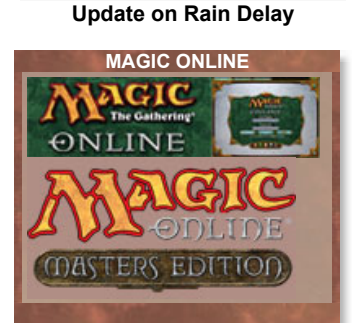
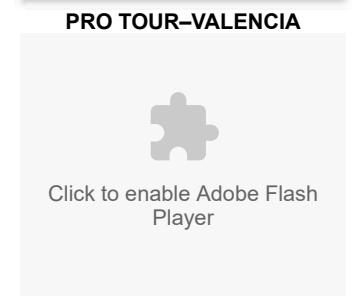
**503.2.** When copying a permanent, the copy acquires the printed values of the name, mana cost, color, type and subtype, expansion symbol, rules text, power, and toughness of the permanent being copied. Also, if the copied permanent was printed as legendary or as an enchant world, this is copied as well. Effects (including type-changing effects) and counters are not copied. (The exception is that copy effects are themselves copied; see rule 503.3.)

**Example:** *Chimeric Staff* is an artifact that reads "X: Chimeric Staff becomes an X/X artifact creature until end of turn." *Clone* is a creature that reads "As Clone comes into play, you may choose a creature in play. If you do, Clone comes into play as a copy of that creature." After a Staff has become a 5/5 artifact creature, a Clone comes into play as a copy of it. The Clone is an artifact, not a 5/5 artifact creature. (The copy has the Staff's ability, however, and will become a creature if that ability is activated.)

...

**503.5.** A copy card that comes into play "as a copy" of another permanent will come into play with any copied abilities of that permanent. If the copy gains any abilities that modify the comes-into-play event (such as "comes into play with" or "as [this] comes into play" abilities), those abilities will take effect. Also, any comes-into-play triggered abilities of the copy will have a chance to trigger.

**Example:** *Skyshrroud Behemoth* reads, "Fading 2 (This creature comes into play with two fade counters on it. At the beginning of your upkeep, remove a fade counter from it. If you can't, sacrifice it.) / Skyshrroud Behemoth



comes into play tapped." A Clone that comes into play as a copy of a Skyshroud Behemoth will also come into play tapped with two fade counters on it.

**Example:** *Striped Bears* reads, "When *Striped Bears* comes into play, draw a card." A Clone comes into play as a copy of *Striped Bears*. The Clone has the Bears' comes-into-play triggered ability, so the Clone's controller draws a card.

**503.6.** When copying a permanent, the "choices" of the permanent aren't copied. Instead, if a card comes into play as a copy of another permanent, the copy's controller will get to make any "as comes into play" choices for it.

**Example:** A Clone comes into play as a copy of *Chameleon Spirit*. *Chameleon Spirit* reads, in part, "As *Chameleon Spirit* comes into play, choose a color." The Clone won't copy the color choice of the Spirit; rather, the controller of the Clone will get to make a new choice.

Got it?

Sow how does that change the way Clone works now compared to how it worked "back in the day?" For one, the old Clone couldn't be played if there were no creatures in play. (But what happened if you cast *Animate Dead* on a Clone without any other creatures in play? With the reworked Clone, that doesn't matter.) Instead of being a \*/\* creature, Clone is now a 0/0 husk which may copy a creature as it comes into play. This makes it possible to play a 0/2 Clone if there's a Castle on the board, even without any other creatures for it to copy. Not that I'd recommend that course of action.

## Thanks for all the Guma

When Clone attempts to copy a creature, it doesn't target anything. This allows you to choose untargetable creatures and protection from blue creatures as the master copy from which you will xerox. Maybe you need an answer to that stray Guma beating you down, or need to stop Deadly Insect when your hand is full of bounce and counterspells. Clone is your answer to all these problems and more, including the very odd application of being able to copy Morphling in a blue on blue mirror match.

Speaking of Morphling...

## Where have all my copies gone?

For a long, long time, Wizards shied away from printing any sort of copy cards. After the original four in Alpha (*Clone*, *Vesuvan Doppelganger*, *Copy Artifact*, and *Fork*), it became clear that printing any sort of copy cards resulted in massive rules headaches.

Other attempts at copy cards proved no less frustrating to the rules team. *Dance of Many*, *Echo Chamber*, and *Volrath's Shapeshifter* all caused big problems, as did the simplified versions such as *Unstable Shapeshifter*. Finally, Wizards had it with trying to get copy cards to work, and threw them entirely out the window. The famous story of *Morphling* is that it was originally supposed to be a Clone variant, but the rules team couldn't find a way to get it to work easily. Instead of getting rid of the card entirely, it was changed to a creature which could change into the form of other creatures by altering power, toughness, flying, targetability, and state of "tappedness."

## Simple solutions

Wizards finally began re-exploring the copy mechanic in *Prophecy*, with the much overlooked *Dual Nature*. Instead of being able to copy any old card in play, it instead gave you a copy of a creature as the creature came into play. This simplified the mechanic quite a bit, since instead of having tons of corner cases which could arise about the nature of copying, it just gave you two of something instead of one. *Mirari* and *Parallel Evolution* continued this trend by creating copies which either gave you more of what you already had (or gave your opponent more tokens, in the case of *Evolution*) while *Radiate* took away some of the problem of *Fork* by hitting every legal target essentially at once.

So now we have the first copy creature to see print since *Stronghold*, and, thanks to some scrubbing of the rules, it's one of the classic creatures of Magic at that. Whether you're copying a *Serra Angel*, *Shivan Dragon* or *Verdant Force*, you'll know that Clone proves the old adage about blue mages: "What's mine is mine, and what's yours is mine"

## Oh, you want answers do you?

1. Can *Copy Artifact* or *Clone* copy an activated *Mishra's Factory*? Yes, but if you read the rules above, you'd know that the copies would not be animated and therefore not creatures (unless you pay 1 to animate them). Copying a card is almost exactly like playing the card, and when you play a *Mishra's Factory*, it isn't animated.



When in play, a Clone should be treated as a virtually indistinguishable copy of the card it duplicated.

- Will a **Forked Capsize** return **Fork** to your hand? The answer is no. **Fork** puts a copy of the spell on the stack when it resolves, just like **Mirari** does. **Fork** has long since resolved and is in the graveyard by the time the copy of the spell resolves. And the copy of **Capsize** is not an actual physical card which can return to your hand. Refer to the [Oracle](#) for **Fork**'s current wording.
- Can you use **Dance of Many** to create a copy of an animated **Chaos Orb** and represent the copy of the Orb with a pillow? The answer is yes. Under strict tournament rules, a token must be something which doesn't disturb the field of play, but **Chaos Orb** is banned in DCI tournaments, so that point is kind of moot. In casual play, feel free to flip the biggest pillow you can find to take out your opponent's permanents. (Warning: Flipping a cup of coffee as your **Chaos Orb** token might result in bodily harm.)

See, copy cards are rules headaches. And these are the *cleaned-up* versions! But before you can come up with any more questions, I leave you with the section from the forthcoming *Onslaught* FAQ on Clone:

### Clone



Creature -- Clone

0/0

As Clone comes into play, you may choose a creature in play. If you do, Clone comes into play as a copy of that creature.

- Clone doesn't copy any effects on the creature -- you just get exactly what's printed on the card and nothing more. So if you copy an animated land, for example, you get a normal, nonanimated land.
- Clone doesn't copy whether the original creature is tapped or untapped, or any enchantments or counters on the creature.
- Any comes-into-play abilities of the copied creature will trigger when Clone comes into play.
- If a Clone copies another Clone, it copies whatever the first one copied. That is, you get what was printed on the card that the original Clone copied.
- You can choose not to copy anything. In that case, Clone comes into play as a 0/0 creature, and is probably put into the graveyard immediately.
- If Clone copies a face-down creature, it's a 2/2 face-up creature, with no name, abilities, color, or creature types. The converted mana cost of the copy is 0. If the face-down creature is later turned face up, that doesn't affect the copy.



*Paul Barclay won't return our emails about the interaction of Clone and Clone Officer. He's probably mad that we stole his tech.*

Cards that copy permanents		Cards that copy spells	
Card	Expansion	Card	Expansion
Clone	Alpha	Fork	Alpha
Copy Artifact	Alpha	Mirari	Odyssey
Vesuvan Doppelganger	Alpha	Radiate	Torment
Dance of Many	The Dark	Spells that allow themselves to be copied	
Echo Chamber	Tempest	Card	Expansion
Unstable Shapeshifter	Tempest	Chain Lightning	Legends
Volrath's Shapeshifter	Stronghold	Chain Stasis	Homelands
Dual Nature	Prophecy	Five more in Onslaught...	
Parallel Evolution	Torment		
Clone	Onslaught		

Ben may be reached at [bleiweiss1@cox.net](mailto:bleiweiss1@cox.net).

Ben Bleiweiss has written about his obsession with **Magic: The Gathering** for over a decade. He's travelled the world because of **Magic**, both as a player and a writer. When not spending time playing **Magic**, writing about **Magic**, or thinking about **Magic**, Ben is employed by [StarCityGames.com](#), where he works with **Magic** cards all day long. He lives with his wife in Virginia, and they sleep comfortably at night under their Orgg down comforter.



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