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100 X-cellent mana costs

Magic Arcana
Thursday, December 4, 2003

With recent cards like **Cloudpost**, **Urza's Mine / Urza's Tower / Urza's Power Plant**, **Journey of Discovery**, and **Gilded Lotus**, there are opportunities for producing mana by the gobs. What better use for your mana-gobs than an X spell?

Spells with variables in their mana costs have been creature removal spells, card-drawers, counterspells, creatures, artifacts -- everything under the Dominarian sun. Their flexible natures -- their ability to be early-game tricks, solid mid-game spells, or late-game world-shatters, depending on what you need -- have served mages since the game's inception. Take a gander at this catalog of 100 X spells (and yes, there have been exactly 100 as of *Mirrodin*) throughout **Magic's** history.



1. **Abandon Hope** - This fixed **Mind Twist** may lack the punch of the original, but flexible amounts of discard can still be brutal.
2. **Aether Tide** - Adding card disadvantage to an X-spell limits its flexibility.
3. **Alabaster Potion** - Old-school players have been drinking the Potion in response to lethal damage for years.
4. **Avalanche** - Pricey and particular, but when X is the number of lands a spell destroys, watch out!
5. **Balduvian Hydra** - In classic Hydra style, this one can flavorfully regrow "heads" (+1/+0 counters).
6. **Blaze** - Now the standard for a red X burn spell. Even without the flair of **Fireball** or **Disintegrate**, **Blaze** is powerfully flexible creature removal -- or "player removal."
7. **Braingeyser** - Drawing X cards has been uber-powerful in many different forms. This was the original.
8. **Breakthrough** - An early game threshold enabler and late game card-drawer, **Breakthrough** has complex flexibility.
9. **Builder's Bane** - Even with the double X, multiple-artifact removal like this would have wrecked house in *Mirrodin* block. Thankfully it was left out.
10. **Captain's Maneuver** - A brutal combat trick in *Invasion* block limited.
11. **Chalice of the Void** - Chalice is the only card in **Magic** with XX as its mana cost.
12. **Choking Vines** - You can even block X unblockable creatures with this *Weatherlight* X-spell.
13. **Consume Spirit** - This clearer **Drain Life** refit comes with an X this time around.
14. **Death Grasp** - Speaking of **Drain Life** -- with white added in, it doesn't even require tons of black mana in this *Apocalypse* gem.
15. **Decree of Justice** - A mainstay of modern blue-white control decks, **Decree of Justice** actually has two X-spell modes -- the double-X Angel-generating mana cost or the additional-X Soldier-generating cycling cost.
16. **Detonate** - Functions as artifact removal that ignores **Welding Jar** and an X burn spell.
17. **Disintegrate** - The easiest way to kill **River Boa** on turn 2, or your opponent on turn 10.



18. **Distorting Wake** - Not terribly impressive when X is 1, but back-breaking when it's 3 or more.
19. **Dominate** - Plenty of people paid X for an instant-speed **Control Magic** in Standard at that time.
20. **Dregs of Sorrow** - X-spells with hefty "non-X" mana requirements are designed as late-game spells only. The power level is obvious, however, if you can pull it off.
21. **Dwarven Catapult** - This vicious combat trick almost cost Kai Budde an Auction of the People match at the [2001 Magic Invitational](#).
22. **Earthquake** - At the cost of a little pain to yourself, Quake clears the ground as flexibly and efficiently as any red card in the game.
23. **Endless Scream** - It's like a **Howl from Beyond** that doesn't end... making it... an endless scream... get it? (This and **Venarian Gold** are the only creature enchantments with X in their mana cost.)
24. **Energy Bolt** - A **Stream of Life** or a **Blaze** to the head -- you pick!
25. **Enrage** - **Howl from Beyond** has officially moved to red.
26. **Ertai's Meddling** - One of the few spells where X corresponds to a number of turns. Have you ever tried Meddling your own spell for a few turns before **blowing up the world**?
27. **Excise** - Now how much will your opponent pay?
28. **Fanning the Flames** - An X spell with Buyback?! This one caused quite the ripple when it came out, but the buyback cost is hefty enough to balance the card.
29. **Fault Line** - For a double-red in the mana cost, **Earthquake** becomes an instant.
30. **Fireball** - **Fireball's** Oracle mana cost is actually "X Y ☹️": "Fireball deals X damage divided evenly, rounded down, among Y plus one target creatures and/or players." Y not?
31. **Firecat Blitz** - The first time around, you pay X with mana. When you flash it back, you pay the X with Mountains.
32. **Flaming Gambit** - A powerful finisher that can catch an opponent by surprise.
33. **Flash of Insight** - Another X spell with an alternate way to pay X in the flashback cost.
34. **Flowstone Slide** - A red **Wrath of God** or a mass **Enrage**, or a little of both, depending on your careful selection of X.
35. **Forced March** - The Cateran have a harsh way of dealing with wimps. March, recruit!
36. **Frankenstein's Monster** - A triumph of flavor over playability, Frankie gets X counters of myriad types to simulate building the monster up out of different bodies.
37. **Ghitu Fire** - **Blaze** at rare gets an instant-speed kicker option.
38. **Goblin Offensive** - Some of the strongest flavor text ever, and a nice use of **Mana Flare** mana.
39. **Guardian Angel** - In case you picked too low a number for X, this (non-creature) Angel allows you to spend more later in the same turn!
40. **Heat Ray** - There are many, many tweaks of the red X burn spell, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Here you get **Blaze** at instant speed, but at the cost of only targeting creatures.
41. **Howl from Beyond** - The original instant-speed creature power pumper.
42. **Hurricane** - **Earthquake's** green cousin hits flyers and players, and has often served as a finisher for mono-green creature decks.
43. **Iceberg** - One of the few global enchantments with X in the mana cost, **Iceberg** lets you trade in X mana now for X or more mana later.
44. **Illuminate** - The kickers distinguish this burn spell, giving you more bang for your X.
45. **Ivy Elemental** - The archetypal X-creature, the Elemental trades a bit of power for the flexibility of being as big as you want. Now if only it trampled...
46. **Kaervek's Purge** - An insult, an injury, some Richard Kane-Ferguson art: everything you want in a removal spell.
47. **Kaervek's Torch** - Torch has long been the choice for a combo-player's finisher, for its



advantage of not being counterable by **Force of Will** alone.

48. **Krakilin** - **Ivy Elemental**'s regenerating cousin.
49. **Lava Burst** - This one is **Blaze** with prevention insurance.
50. **Malicious Advice** - Advise your opponent's army to tap down for your alpha strike.
51. **Meltdown** - Mass artifact removal based on casting cost. Powerful, but not that helpful when you're trying to get rid of that **Bosh** across the table.
52. **Meteor Shower** - This might win the award for "Most Math Required on a Common."
53. **Midnight Ritual** - The secondary cost of removing creatures from your graveyard keeps the Ritual a late-game spell as well as adding a good amount of flavor.
54. **Mind Twist** - It was clear pretty soon after Alpha that X cards for X+1 mana was too strong, even if those cards are discarded out of your opponent's hand. Twist is still restricted in Type 1.
55. **Mind Warp** - X discarded cards for X+4 mana, however, was in the neighborhood of "not strong enough." Mind Warp remains unrestricted in Type 1.
56. **New Frontiers** - Symmetrical X effects require subtle deckbuilding to pull off effectively.
57. **Outmaneuver** - Red got the reverse of **Choking Vines**.
58. **Part Water** - It's clear how much respect landwalk got in the early days of **Magic**. Note how clever the flavor of the name is.
59. **Phyrexian Marauder** - The earliest card with just ⓧ as its casting cost.
60. **Power Sink** - Blue's countering ability often relies on the value of X.
61. **Prismatic Boon** - Take that, **Earthquake**!
62. **Prosperity** - **Prosperity** is symmetrical, but combo decks like **Pros-Bloom** break that symmetry in half.
63. **Rats' Feast** - A sure-fire way to wreck **threshold**, **flashback** and **Incarnations X** ways from Sunday.
64. **Read the Runes** - Reading these Runes does a collection of interesting things -- and anything that draws X cards gets the attention of astute deckbuilders.
65. **Recall** - Multi-**Regrowth** is strong, but with the discard drawback, Recall is no longer considered strong enough to **restrict in Type 1**.
66. **Riptide Replicator** - It's probably best that this refit of the ultra-strong **Phyrexian Processor** has X in the mana cost.
67. **Rock Hydra** - Note: those counters (heads) are counters (heads) that you can regrow (like heads)!
68. **Rock Slide** - Good ol' rock. Nothing beats X rocks.
69. **Rolling Thunder** - A multiplayer favorite, **Rolling Thunder** tops the list of red X burn spells in terms of flexibility for a cheap cost.
70. **Savage Twister** - When you add a **Hurricane** to an **Earthquake**, you get something pretty savage (but no player damage, interestingly).
71. **Scorched Earth** - Johnnies everywhere tried to break this card when it released in **Tempest**. Turns out it's pretty balanced.
72. **Sealed Fate** - Sort of a **Spy Network** or **Index** for your opponent's deck, with an X option.
73. **Serene Sunset** - The havoc it wreaks with your opponent's creatures in combat is anything but serene. At least they get to see a pretty sunset while your creatures, still dealing damage, trample them.
74. **Shattered Crypt** - **Raise Dead** with an X.
75. **Shifting Wall** - X/X for X is pretty good, especially if you have **Rolling Stones** or **Fling** in your arsenal.
76. **Skeletal Scrying** - A strong way to refill your hand in black.
77. **Soul Burn** - Turns out it's actually hard to template what is essentially an intuitive effect.
78. **Soul Echo** - It makes players' brains hurt, but it functions like a **Sun Droplet**.
79. **Soul Strings** - The X here is insurance that your opponent doesn't make the effect fizzle out.
80. **Spell Blast** - It's usually counterproductive to counter by paying *more* than your opponent paid



- to cast the original spell.
81. **Spoils of War** - You can actually pay less than the number of dead creatures an artifacts -- you don't have to match it.
 82. **Starstorm** - Straightforward, efficient, cyclable -- deadly.
 83. **Stream of Life** - Life gain for X isn't considered as tournament viable as damage for X, since winning the game is contingent on getting someone's life total down to zero rather than getting someone's life total up to some other number.
 84. **Stroke of Genius** - Instant-speed card-drawing for X+3 is brutally efficient.
 85. **Syncopate** - Like **Power Sink** but with a remove-from-game bonus effect.
 86. **Tectonic Break** - **Wildfire** never had it so flexible.
 87. **Temper** - A beating in **Tempest** block limited, **Temper** is like damage prevention that sticks around. This would probably be a green effect today.
 88. **Thrive** - **Battlegrowth's** creature-pumping comes in an X variety.
 89. **Torrent of Lava** - The flavor here is -- untapped creatures can jump out of the way to dodge some of the lava flow damage.
 90. **Tribal Unity** - A powerful green creature pumper for tribal decks.
 91. **Tropical Storm** - **Hurricane** without the player damage, but with an extra glove-slap for blue flyers.
 92. **Venarian Gold** - The Gold in the name is the glittery gold dust that puts the creature to sleep.
 93. **Vitalizing Cascade** - An attempt to improve **Stream of Life** at the cost of a little math.
 94. **Volcanic Eruption** - Look, it's blue land destruction and creature removal! With "Volcanic" in the title!
 95. **Volcanic Geyser** - Straight-up **Blaze-as-an-instant** for an extra 🍷.
 96. **Wave of Indifference** - Another **Outmaneuver** variant.
 97. **Weird Harvest** - Let's all **Eladamri's Call** ourselves X times! Be careful that your opponent doesn't fetch better creatures than you.
 98. **Winter Blast** - A chilling effect on flying creatures.
 99. **Winter's Chill** - In the *Ice Age* days, they were not afraid of a little 4-point text as long as it was flavorful.
 100. **Word of Binding** - Tapping as a sorcery is not as useful, but still a nice way to punch through with your attackers.



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