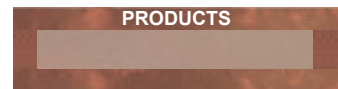


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# Scorched Earth

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Building on a Budget  
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PRO TOUR-VALENCIA

Every so often, I get the feeling I want to go blow up some lands. Land Destruction decks are fun to play and will generally obliterate your opponent when they work. Back in the old days of magic people used to play land destruction all the time. The thought of attacking a whole new subset of resources turns a lot of people on to this type of deck. Usually creatures are the target of removal, but by attacking lands, you never have to worry about your opponent not having any creatures (if they are playing a control deck), leaving lots of dead cards in your hand. Also, against a creature deck, attacking their mana can leave them with lots of guys clogged up in their hand that will never see the light of day. The theory back then was that your deck should focus on attacking one type of resource and crippling it – creatures in play, cards in hand, or lands. Eventually this theory evolved because if you were only attacking lands and they snuck a creature through it was very difficult to deal with.

This deck uses a mix of land destruction cards and creature removal. More or less could be played of either, but I recommend you find the mix that is appropriate for your metagame. If you play against a lot of control decks, you will want more land destruction – if you play versus more weenie decks, you will want more creature elimination. Even though the name of the deck implies everyone's lands being blown up, I assure you it's only your opponent's.



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### Building on a Budget: Scorched Earth (under 30 tickets, by a mile)

Main Deck		
60 cards		
20 Mountain	4 Arcbound Slith	4 Stone Rain
20 lands	4 Oxidda Golem	4 Molten Rain
	4 Slith Firewalker	4 Lay Waste
		4 Shock
	12 creatures	4 Electrostatic Bolt
		4 Spark Spray
		4 Volcanic Hammer
		28 other spells

The deck plays out by putting a Slith into play on turn 2 and then blowing up your opponent's lands for the next few turns, trying to make it so they cannot cast anything to get in the way of your steadily growing Slith. Sometimes you may have to remove a blocker that squeaked through, but once your Slith gets to about 4/4 it will be very hard to stop. You can get the assist from Oxidda

Golem sometimes as well.

The thing I really like about this deck is the elegance. First off, there are zero rares (and zero Skullclamps). The deck is mono-colored so it doesn't get mana screwed often. Plus, the deck takes advantage of two cool abilities from Darksteel – Modular and Affinity for Mountains. You see, the trick to making a Land destruction deck work has always been getting your threats down before you start destroying their lands, since you will end up spending all your later turns blowing up lands instead of playing threats. If you play your threats after you destroy lands it takes much longer to kill them (hence they have more time to recover). By playing the Sliths (Arcbound and Firewalker) you get some powerful creatures into play that will grow quickly. By the time your opponent recovers they may be facing down a Slith too large to stop. Oxidda Golem is also nice because you can cast it for 1 mana once you get to 5, allowing you to Stone Rain, Cast an Oxidda Golem, and Electrostatic Bolt a blocker all in one turn.

## Tips on playing the Deck

- Spark Spray is great for clearing an early blocker out of the way for your Sliths (like Arcbound Worker) but otherwise you should almost always cycle it.



Cycling **Lay Waste** is correct if they have already recovered from your land destruction. If faced with this decision, think about what else you might want to draw rather than the **Lay Waste**.

**Oxidda Golem** (and other **Arcbound Sliths**) is the only target you have for modular (you can have more by adding money to the deck...see below), so if you have a large **Arcbound Slith** out take extra care not to let the golem die. Sometimes you will be faced with the decision to destroy a land or cast a creature. Usually you will want to destroy the land. This is especially true if your opponent did nothing on the previous turn since they are likely to do nothing again



*Take advantage of the flexibility cycling offers.*

given the same amount of mana to work with. This creates tempo for you, essentially 'Time Walking' your opponent.

## Adding Money to the Deck



**Blinkmoth Nexus** is a great add – although it hurts your **Oxidda Golems** a bit, the extra modular targets really help out. Also, **Hammer of Bogardan** is often more helpful than **Volcanic Hammer**, since you can bring it back for another round. **Chrome Mox** can also be helpful (once again hurting the **Oxidda Golems** since you probably should take a few mountains out for these), since it allows you to get the ridiculously powerful turn one **Slith Firewalker** - turn two **Stone Rain** draw.

This deck is very good for those of you who are beginners at **Magic**. It is fairly easy to play and is a great way to learn more about **Magic** theory. One of the most difficult concepts to grasp is that of 'tempo'.

This deck is a great tool to learn all about tempo and why it is powerful.

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