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The Changing Tap Symbol

Magic Arcana
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One of the most fundamental symbols in **Magic** (right up there with ) is the tap symbol. Since its original look in the *Revised* set over years ago, the tap symbol has seen three different designs. (Magic cards in the *Alpha*, *Beta* and *Unlimited* sets had no tap symbols, and instead had the word "tap" in their rules text. See the *Beta Royal Assassin* for an example.) To see the change in design of the tap symbol over the years, let's look at how *Royal Assassin* has changed from *Revised* to *Fourth Edition* to *Eighth Edition*.



As you can see (above if your eyesight's good, or below with less eyestrain), in the original tap symbol (as seen on the *Revised Royal Assassin*), it's a slightly tilted capital "T" -- standing for, of course, the word "tap." Starting with *Fourth Edition* in 1995, the tap symbol changed to the curved arrow symbol, with a black rectangle representing the tapping card behind it. This change to a more symbolic tap symbol made Magic cards more translation-friendly. Then in 2003's *Eighth Edition* set, it changed to the simple, straightforward, easy-to-see curved arrow, without the rectangle behind it. See below for high-resolution versions of the three designs.



**Tap symbol,
Revised through *Fallen Empires***



**Tap symbol,
Fourth Edition through *Scourge***



**Tap symbol,
Eighth Edition to present**

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