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# The Original Magic Rulebook



*John Carter · Saturday School  
Saturday, December 25, 2004*

*This week, for that holiday nostalgia fix, please enjoy this transcription of the original rulebook (Alpha edition, with some Beta updates intermixed) that came with **Magic: the Gathering**. I hope you have as much fun reading this as I did – we've come a long way!*



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## Introduction

Worzel felt the telltale prickling at the back of her neck; her domain was being challenged! *It's someone old*, she thought. *Someone I know... Thomil!* It had been a long time since he had challenged her. Quickly, she called her vassals into action. She would need much mana for this duel, much indeed.

The last time Worzel fought with Thomil, he had focused on the destructive magic of the mountains. It had been a close fight; she still saw in her nightmares the brigade of firebreathers that had pushed her to the brink of submission. Since then, Worzel had learned from a specialist in white magic that there were ways to protect herself from the raw force Thomil loved. Unfortunately, the white magician had been unwilling to part with the knowledge in exchange for her offered artifact; she had been forced to coerce it out of him in other, more violent ways. It took a while, but she was a far more experienced duelist than he, and in time he was forced to yield what she sought.

Worzel soon found that gathering the proper mana for her protective spells was going to be difficult. She needed the mana of the countryside, and disturbances in the ether were preventing her from making the necessary psychic bonds to any of those lands. She had precious little to draw on in the first place,

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so it could take a while before she managed to get a link to the plains. *Just having the knowledge to protect yourself isn't enough*, she thought. *Well, let's see if I can't stall him with my friends of the forest in the meantime.*

Worzel resisted the temptation to invest herself in blue magic, in case the rumor that Thomil had taken to raising serpents had any truth. Now she began to regret the loss of the Glasses of Urza, which might have given her some clue where the focus of his attack would be.

Thomil countered her creatures with a legion of undead. *Black magic*, she thought. *Thomil! I wouldn't have expected that from you.* Thomil had always enjoyed displays of pure power, but she had regarded him as a relatively clean fighter. *At least, cleaner than most.*

A sudden sense of horror came over Worzel as she felt a large drain on the mana plane— an *enormous* drain, accompanied by a stink of sulfur and the grave. Something big was coming.

*Learned some new tricks since we last met, eh?* muttered Worzel, under her breath. *Well, so have I, dear Thomil, so have I.*

It was going to be a tough fight.

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## Beta Rulebook

### Playing Your First Game

You've just bought your first two decks of *Magic: The Gathering*, and you're ready to play. You should probably read through the rules first, and then come back to this page. Most of the basic information you need to play the game is right here. Page numbers in parentheses tell you where to go for more information on each topic.

You begin the game by shuffling your deck. Then, cut your opponent's deck, and turn over the top card as ante (p.7). Draw seven cards from your own deck for your hand, and determine who goes first (p.7).

Begin your turn by drawing a card. You'll want to begin by playing a land card (a mountain, swamp, forest, plains, or island). Put that card on the table in front of you. Now, see if you can play any other cards in your hand. Compare the casting cost (p.14) to the mana you can draw from your lands in play (p.13). If you can play an appropriate card, tap your land (pp.9-10) and put the card you're casting onto the table.

Generally, it's a good idea to summon creatures (p.21) as soon as you can. Once you summon a creature, you have to wait a turn before you can attack with it. You can also play any artifacts (pp.16-17), enchantments (pp.17-18), instants, interrupts, or sorceries (all p.19).

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If you can cast a spell, you're doing well. If you can't, that's okay, too. It usually takes a few turns before you have enough mana to do anything. Meanwhile, you should figure out whether you need to discard (p.11). Then announce the end of your turn, and let your opponent have a go.

Remember to untap any tapped cards at the start of your next turn. After you do that, perform any upkeep (p.11), and draw a card.

If you managed to summon a creature last turn, you can now attack with it. To do this, tap the card and announce your attack. Your opponent must then decide whether and how to block your attacker (pp.24-25). Next, either or both of you may use fast effects (p.25). After all announcements have been made and all fast effects have been cast, damage is dealt (p.26). Any creatures that were damaged (p.23) and defeated should be placed into the graveyard (p.8). Keep track of any damage suffered by you or your opponent. If you are the first to reduce your opponent's life points from 20 to 0, you win!

Remember, *Magic* is a game of action and reaction, planning and improvisation. But in the beginning, it's simply a matter of doing what you can. You'll probably have to play through a duel or two before you get the hang of it. Once you figure it out, though, you'll see that the rules are simple; it's the interactions between cards that are complex and interesting.

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### Game Description

*Magic* is a two-person card game in which the cards in your deck represent the lands, creatures, spells, and artifacts at your disposal. When you play the game, you pit your deck against your opponent's deck in an arcane duel, and the winner takes one random card to keep from the loser's deck. Over time, your deck will grow and shrink; it will have weaknesses you can try to fix by winning the correct games, and strengths with which you can barter between games. Sometimes winning a duel can be a lot less profitable than a successful trading session, and it is always more dangerous! Be especially on your guard when playing new opponents. They will likely have spells and artifacts you have never seen before, and they will certainly have unique

deck mixes and styles of play. Also, watch out for old rivals -- anyone can have a magical encounter with a stranger and pick up some new surprises. No matter who your opponent is, never forget the possibility of learning a trick or two with the same old cards.

## Equipment

To play, you need two decks of at least forty *Magic* cards each and at least twenty counters for each person. These counters represent life points. They can be pennies, poker chips, or whatever is convenient you can even keep track of life points on paper if you want to. It's also best to have a large, flat playing area on which to lay out the cards.

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## The Duel

One complete game of *Magic* is called a *duel*. A *set* is won by the first player to win three duels. A *match* is the best two of three sets. Players should agree before starting whether they are fighting a single duel, a set, a match, or some other competition. During the course of a single competition, players may never add or subtract any cards from their decks except those won or lost in the ante.

## Setting Up

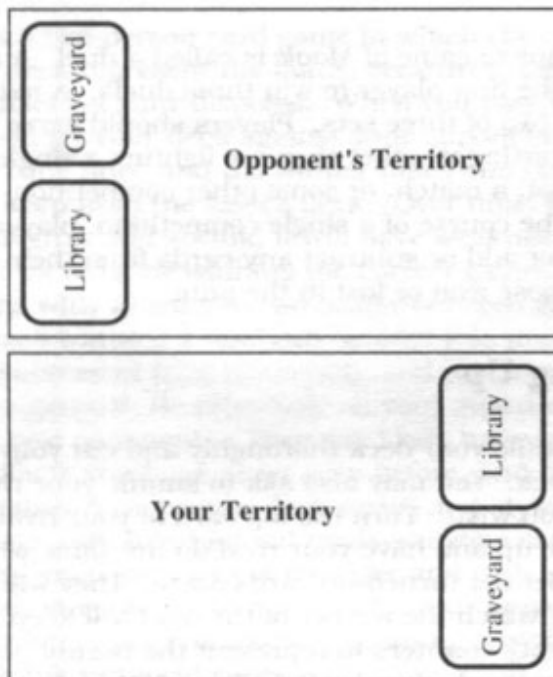
First, shuffle your deck thoroughly and cut your rival's deck. You may also ask to shuffle your rival's deck if you wish. Turn the top card of your rival's deck face up and have your rival do the same with yours. Set the turned-up cards aside. They will be the ante, which the winner of the duel will keep. Take twenty counters to represent the twenty points you begin the duel with. Your life will go up and down during the course of a duel, and you may end up with more than 20 points—if you're lucky.

Draw the top seven cards of your deck to form your hand, and set the remaining cards aside, face down, as your library. The loser of the previous game takes the first turn; if there was no previous game, decide who goes first randomly.

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## The Playing Area



**Figure 1—Table Layout.**

Throughout the course of the game, you will have a library of undrawn cards, a graveyard of discarded cards, and a hand. The space in front of you, called your *territory*, will also contain cards played face up. These cards are the ones currently in play. Usually your cards will be played in your own territory, though you may occasionally have cards in play in your rival's territory. After the duel is finished, you

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will retrieve all the cards that you began with, except for the ante, which is taken by the winner. Be sure to note when you play a card in your rival's territory. Ideally, you should mark these cards in some way, like with a coin or paper clip, so you don't accidentally lose one after the duel.

## Overview of Play

The object of the game is to reduce your rival's life points to zero, forcing him or her to flee the plane in which you are dueling. If you both are reduced to zero simultaneously, then the duel is a draw, and both players retrieve their contributions to the ante. You also win if your rival's library becomes so depleted that he or she cannot draw a card when required.

The cards represent lands and spells. Lands generate mana, which is required to cast spells. Spells can be used to summon creatures and artifacts, or generate magical effects.

To play a card, take it from your hand, and place it face up in the playing area. Many cards, such as creatures, and some artifacts, can only be used once per turn. If you have already used such a card during the current turn, you must turn it on its side. This is a procedure called *tapping* the card. At the start of your next turn, you return your tapped cards to the upright, *untapped* position (see Figure 2).

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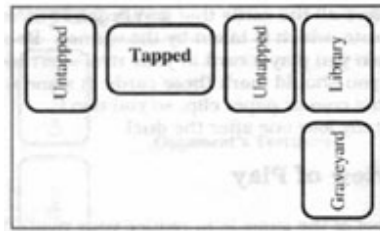


Figure 2—Tap/Untap.

You and your rival play in turns. Each pair of turns is called a round. Turns follow the sequence of events described below in "Game Turn".

During the course of play, you will reduce your rival's life by successfully casting certain spells and by attacking successfully with your creatures. The upper right-hand corner of each spell card shows the cost of casting the spell. This cost is in mana, which you get from your lands, and occasionally from other sources. One of the vital concerns during a duel is getting enough of the right type of land into play to generate the mana you need to cast your spells.

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## Game Turn

Both your turn and your rival's turn follow the same pattern. A game turn consists of the following phases:

1. Untap. Untap all your previously tapped lands, creatures, and artifacts.
2. Upkeep. Deal with any enchantment, creature, or artifact that requires upkeep or has an effect at the start of a turn. The card will tell you if a given item requires upkeep.
3. Draw. Draw one card from your library.
4. Main. You may do several things during the main phase. In no particular order:
  - (a) You may put any one land from your hand into play. Mana from this land may be used during the current turn.
  - (b) You may make one attack against your rival with any or all of your creatures in play except those that came into play this turn. Newly summoned creatures cannot be used until the next turn.
  - (c) You may cast any spells in your hand, provided you have enough mana. You can cast spells before and after taking other actions.
5. Discard. If you have more than seven cards in your hand, discard until you again have only seven.
6. End. Let your rival know you are finished.

Unless an action described above includes the word *may*, you must perform this action.

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You and your rival may cast certain spells known as *instants* and *interrupts* at any time, even if it isn't your turn. You can also use your artifacts, enchantments, or special powers of creatures in play. These are called *fast effects*. Interrupts take place more quickly, actually being resolved before actions in progress, whereas instants don't take effect until both players have finished reacting to one another. At this point, they take effect simultaneously. Fast effects are always considered instants, unless they say otherwise. For more details, see "Timing" on pp.29-32.

## Casting Spells


As mentioned earlier, you need mana from lands to cast spells. There are five different types of mana—one for each basic type of land. Red mana comes from mountains, blue mana from islands, green mana from forests, black mana from swamps, and white mana from plains. However, some spells can change the type of land a card represents. In this case, the changed land provides mana appropriate to the new land type. Occasionally, mana comes from other sources, in which case it may be of no color. If a spell doesn't explicitly call for a particular color of mana, then any color mana, or any colorless mana, can be used.


The chart on page 13 explains the mana symbols, and the relationships between the five colors of magic.


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## Mana Chart

 **Black Magic:** The black magician's power stems from the swamps and bogs. Black magic is the magic of death. The often self-destructive lore of black magic is regarded by most as best left unknown. The traditional enemies of black are white and green.

 **Blue Magic:** The blue magician taps the islands for energy. Blue magic is mental in nature. The fortes of the blue magician are artifice, illusion, and deception, as well as the elemental forces of air and water. The traditional enemies of blue are red and green.

 **Green Magic:** The green magician draws energy from the forest. Many magicians have been lulled into complacency by green magic's peaceful exterior, the magic of life, and have been caught unaware by the vast destructive capability of its nature. Green's traditional enemies are blue and black.

 **Red Magic:** The red magician gets power from the mountains. Red magic is a destructive magic, the magic of earth and of fire, of chaos and of war. The traditional enemies of red are blue and white.



 **White Magic:** The white magician draws energy from the plains. Spells of healing and protection are the white magician's specialty, though chivalrous war magic is not unfamiliar. White's traditional enemies are red and black.

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Each of your lands provides one mana of the appropriate color at the beginning of your turn. If you choose to use this mana, you must tap the land until the start of your next turn. Otherwise, you may keep this mana in reserve for use during your rival's turn. Mana does not accumulate from round to round, however. If you choose not to use a land's mana during a given round, that land still gives you only one mana at the start of your next turn.


Mana drawn from any source is put in your *mana pool*, which is simply the mana you have ready to use. Most of the time, you simply remember what mana you have in your pool, though you can write it down if you have a large series of spells being cast. Adding mana to your mana pool is always considered an interrupt. You lose all of the mana in your mana pool if you do not use it before a phase ends. The mana pool is also cleared when an attack begins and when an attack ends. You lose a life point for each mana lost in this manner. However, you cannot be deprived of a chance to use the mana in your pool. If a card provides more than one mana, you must draw the full amount into your pool when you use it.

The cost to cast a spell, listed in the upper right-hand corner of the card, is shown in the form of a number and/or mana symbols. The mana symbols indicate the amount needed of a particular mana color, while the number indicates how much additional mana, which can be any color or no color, is also required. For example,   means the spell costs 2 white mana

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plus 1 mana of any or no color. The *total cost* of a spell is the total number of mana needed to cast the spell—in this example, 3. If the cost includes an X, you can choose what number X will be by spending that much mana from your mana pool.

*Example: A player casts Fireball, which costs  and does X damage to one or more targets. The player spends one red mana plus three mana for X, thus doing three points of damage to the targets.*

## Spell Types

There are six different kinds of spells: artifacts, enchantments, creature summonings, instants, interrupts, and sorcery. A card is only considered a spell until it is successfully cast, after which it becomes an artifact, enchantment, or creature, or has its effect and is then put in the caster's graveyard. Artifacts, enchantments, and creatures are called *permanents* since they remain in play until destroyed or removed by a spell effect. The only spells that can be cast during your rival's turn are instants and interrupts, though you may also use permanents that are already in play. Permanents may not be removed from play by choice, but only as a result of some card effect.

Some permanents have costs associated with them. In this case, the spell description will contain the cost, or the effect will be preceded by a colon and the

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cost. For example, 3: *Do one damage to any target*, would mean that for three mana (of no particular color), you could do one damage to any target. Sometimes these effects may require you to tap the permanent as well.

You cannot cast a spell or use a fast effect if a target is needed and is not available. For example, the effect ✱: Destroy a black card in play cannot be used if no black cards are in play.

The term "you" on a spell always means the person currently controlling the spell. The controller is usually the person who cast the spell, but this occasionally can change through a card effect. If a spell has a cost associated with it, only the controller of the spell can pay that cost.

If a spell affects a creature, land, or other item, and the card doesn't specifically say "of your opponent's" or "of yours", then you may choose either as the target. If the card says "player", you may take that to mean either player.

**Artifacts:** Artifacts never require any particular color of mana to put into play, and they may be used during the turn in which they are played. If an artifact becomes tapped, you may not use it again. Even its continuous effects cease until it is untapped. Artifacts often have a cost to use, which is listed on the card.

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Figure 3—Artifact Cards.

There are four types of artifacts:

- 1) *Mono*. These artifacts have one charge each round, and are tapped when used, making them unusable until untapped.
- 2) *Poly*. These artifacts may be used many times each turn and so are not tapped after use.
- 3) *Continuous*. These artifacts have a continuous effect on the play environment. They never have a cost to use, and the effect cannot be stopped unless the artifact is removed from play or tapped by a spell effect.
- 4) *Creature*. Treat artifact creatures as both artifacts and creatures; see "Creatures" on pp.21-22.

**Enchantments:** Enchantments are called either *enchantment* or *enchant [something]*, where "something" is another card type, such as a creature. They have a lasting effect on the game after they are cast. You may only cast an enchantment during the main phase of your turn. Some enchantments have a cost listed before the effect; this is the cost to use. An enchantment with a cost may only be used and paid

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for by the controller (usually the caster). If the enchantment has no cost, it is constantly in effect. An enchantment may be used more than once each turn, and it is never tapped.

An enchantment can even be used more than once at a time. For example, if an enchantment costs 1 red mana to add 1 to a creature's power, you can spend 3 red mana and give an extra 3 power to the enchanted creature.

If the spell enchants something, put the enchantment card on top of the card you wish to enchant. You can enchant your rival's cards, but be careful to retrieve your enchantment cards when they are removed from play. If an enchanted card is put out of play, the enchantments cast upon it are discarded.

If the spell just says "enchantment", put the card face up in front of you. Such an enchantment will either affect the environment of the game or give you a special power. Both players are subject to the effects of an enchantment unless the card says otherwise.



Figure 4—Enchantment Cards.

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**Instants:** An instant can be played at any time, and is always discarded afterwards. You cannot interrupt your rival with an instant, but your rival's spells do not take effect until after you have had a chance to respond with instants and other fast effects. Once you have responded, your rival can respond to you, and so forth. After all responses are finished, all spells take place at the same time.

**Interrupts:** Interrupts can be played by either player at any time. Many interrupts modify the effects of spells; you cast them just as you or your rival are playing a spell you want to change. Although you must discard the interrupt immediately after you play it, its modification to a spell such as a summoning can be permanent. If you are not sure if you want to cast an interrupt, ask your rival to wait while you think. After your rival casts another spell, it is too late to interrupt the first. You may interrupt your own spells, and you and your rival can play more than one interrupt at a time. If you interrupt your own spells, your interrupt happens before your rival's. You may also interrupt an interrupt.

**Sorceries:** These spells are discarded after use and can only be played during your main phase.

**Summonings:** Summoning spells, which can only be cast during the main phase of your turn, bring creatures into play. A creature cannot attack, or use a special ability that would tap it, until you begin a turn with it in play.

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## The Color of Spells and Effects

For the purposes of certain spells, a card is considered the color of the mana required to cast it. Land has no color, and neither do artifacts. If a card has an effect, that effect is considered to have the same color as the card. If a creature has its toughness or strength changed by a card of a different color than the creature, the color of the creature does not change. However, a card may change color as the result of a spell. Remember, though, that a card can only have one color at any one time.

*Example: Circles of Protection are important defensive cards that cancel the damage done to you by a certain color of creature or spell. Each such defense costs 1 mana. Let's assume you have a Circle of Protection from red magic, and you are attacked by a Goblin, which is a red creature. The green instant Giant Growth has been cast on the Goblin, which adds to the damage of the Goblin's attack. However, you can still cancel all of the damage with your Circle of Protection for 1 mana, because the actual attack is from a red creature. If all you had was a Circle of Protection from green magic, you could not cancel any damage. The green spell affects the creature's strength, but does not affect its color.*

## Creatures

Any cards with numbers in the lower right-hand corners are considered creatures. They are brought into play mainly by summoning spells, but sometimes other spells bring them into being as well. Walls are considered creatures; the only differences are that they cannot attack and are subject to some additional spells. Summons are always *Summon [Creature Type]*. The creature type indicates exactly what sort of creature is summoned.

All creatures have two characteristics listed in the lower right corner: first power, then toughness. A creature's power rating indicates the amount of damage it does when it hits, while toughness indicates how much damage it takes to destroy the creature. Damage done to a creature accumulates throughout a turn, and is healed at the end of the turn.

Some creatures have special abilities that may or may not have a cost associated with them. The cost will be listed preceding the effect, or be included in the description of the effect. If the effect taps the creature the description will say that. Otherwise the ability may be used more than once in a turn.

The turn a creature comes into play on your side, it may not be tapped either to attack, or to use a special ability. However, you may use such a creature for

defense. This restriction ends when you begin a turn with the creature already in play.

Some spells refer to the normal characteristics of a creature. These characteristics include creature type, power, toughness, summoning cost, and special abilities. They do not include any enchantments that may have been placed on the creature.

Occasionally, a card will ask for the sacrifice of a creature. If this happens, you may choose a creature of yours to put out of play. This creature is placed into your graveyard, and it cannot be regenerated (see "Creature Abilities" on pp.27-29).

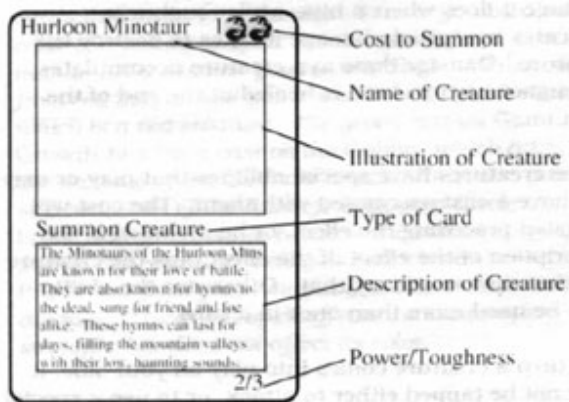


Figure 5—Creature Card.

## Damage

If a player suffers damage, that player loses one life point for each point of damage suffered. If a creature is damaged, note how much damage it took, in case it suffers more damage later in the turn (you usually won't need counters for this). If the damage done to the creature in one turn is equal to or greater than its toughness, the creature is destroyed and must be put into the graveyard. If a spell does damage but the card doesn't specify a target, the controller may choose to damage either player or any creature.

## Destroyed, Discarded, Countered, and Removed Cards

When a card is destroyed or discarded, it is placed into the graveyard. If a spell is countered as it is being cast, it, too, goes into the graveyard, without ever having its effect. Occasionally, a card will be removed from the game entirely. In this case, it is set aside until the next game.

## The Attack

You may announce one attack during your main phase. After you announce an attack, only fast effects may be used until the end of the attack; no sorcery may be cast and no new enchantments, creatures, artifacts, or land may be put into play.

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Attacking creatures are considered tapped as soon as the attack is declared, so you may not use special abilities during the attack if they require you to tap the creature. Defending creatures are not tapped. It is important to note that attacking creatures can only attack your rival. They may not attack your rival's creatures—though your rival's creatures can attempt to block them. They may not attack each other or you.

The turn sequence for an attack is as follows:

- 1) Player Declares Attack
- 2) Opponent Declares Defense
- 3) Fast Effects
- 4) Damage Dealing

**Player Declares Attack:** To attack, first indicate which creatures are attacking. Walls and tapped creatures may not attack, and creatures that did not start the turn in play in your territory may not attack.

**Opponent Declares Defense:** After you announce your attack, your rival chooses the defense, indicating which defending creature is blocking which attacking creature. Tapped creatures may not block. An attacking creature need not be blocked, and a defending creature is not compelled to block. More than one creature may block a single attacking creature, but one creature may *not* block more than one attacking creature. After the defense has been announced, a blocked attacking creature attacks only

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the creatures blocking it, even if the blockers are somehow neutralized or destroyed before the attack is resolved.

*Example: The player announces an attack with creatures A, B, and C, tapping them accordingly. Defender can elect to block with creatures X and Y. X and Y could both gang up on B; X could block C while Y does nothing; or X could block B while Y blocks A. However, Y could not block B and C, while X blocks A, since one defending creature can only block one attacking creature, or group of banded creatures. Defending creatures which block are not tapped.*

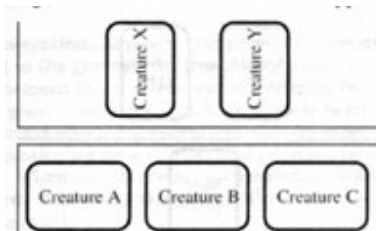
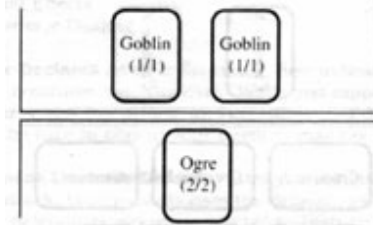


Figure 6 -- Legal/Illegal Defense.

**Fast Effects:** After the defender has finished declaring blocking, both the attacker and the defender can use enchantments or artifacts in play, instants, or interrupts to affect the outcome of the battle. You may also use fast effects during the attack and defense declarations, even though this phase is set aside for that purpose.

**Damage Dealing:** When the attack is resolved, every unblocked attacking creature does its power in damage to the defender, removing that many life points. Blocked creatures will not do any damage to the defender, only to the blocking creatures. A blocked attacking creature receives damage from all the defending creatures blocking it. A blocked attacking creature may distribute its power in damage to the blockers in whatever arrangement the attacker chooses. If a creature became tapped after it was assigned as a blocker, the creature still blocks but doesn't deal any damage. All damage dealt during this round is considered simultaneous.



**Figure 6—Ogre Versus 2 Goblins.**

*Example: An Ogre, with power and toughness 2, attacks. The defense has two Goblins, each with power and toughness 1. The defender may choose any of the following: let the Ogre through unblocked and suffer 2 life points of damage; block with one Goblin, killing the Goblin and doing 1 point of damage to the ogre; or block with both Goblins, killing the Ogre*

*and both Goblins. In the last case, the attacker could also choose to have the Ogre do 2 points of damage to one Goblin, allowing the other Goblin to survive.*

Many creature abilities that affect combat are described in the following section.

## Creature Abilities

Some creatures naturally have special abilities, and any creature with the appropriate creature enchantments may acquire special abilities. Some of the most common abilities are listed below.

**Regeneration:** Regeneration prevents a creature from going to the graveyard. This ability must be used at the moment the creature would normally be removed from play. Creatures that have already been discarded into the graveyard cannot be regenerated. Enchantments on a regenerated creature remain in play. When a creature is regenerated, it is always tapped. A creature that is sacrificed may not be regenerated.

**Evasion Abilities:** Some creatures have the ability *flies*, which means that they can only be blocked by other flying creatures. Other creatures have *landwalk* abilities, such as swampwalk or forestwalk. If the defender has a land of the relevant type in play, such as swamp for swampwalk, the attacking creature cannot be blocked, even by creatures with the same landwalk ability.

**Bands:** A creature with the ability *bands* has two special powers.

A banding creature may join forces with another attacking creature. The resulting band must be blocked or let through as a unit. If any creature in the band is blocked, the entire band is blocked. There can be more than two creatures in an attacking band, though all but one must have the bands ability.

Anytime a group of your creatures blocks, or is blocked, and one or more have the ability bands, then the damage they receive from your rival's creatures is not distributed among them by your rival as usual, but by you. You may choose to assign more damage to a creature than it can survive.

**Trample:** A creature with *trample* can do damage to the defender even if blocked. Such a creature does a special kind of damage called *trample damage*. If a blocker has sufficient damage to destroy it then any trample damage done in excess of that amount is applied to the defender instead.

**Protection:** A creature with *protection* from one or more colors of magic cannot be affected by any magic of those colors. For example, a creature with protection from blue cannot be blocked by blue creatures, dealt damage by blue creatures, or enchanted, damaged, or otherwise affected by blue cards. Damage done by such a creature cannot be prevented using blue cards. Note that the creature

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does not have this ability until it is successfully summoned. If, for example, you are summoning a creature with protection from blue magic, your rival can still cast a blue interrupt that affects the summoning spell.

**First Strike:** Creatures with *first strike* have the ability to hit their blockers, or the creatures they are attacking, before being damaged themselves. During the dealing damage phase of an attack, first strikers deal their damage first, simultaneously. Afterwards, surviving creatures without first strike deal their damage.

**Mana Enhanced Power/Toughness:** You may be able to increase the power or toughness of some creatures by spending mana. This enhancement lasts until the end of the turn. You may spend as much mana of the appropriate type as you like to increase the creature's characteristic. For example, if a creature's characteristics are listed as "♣: +1/+0", you could increase the creature's power by 1 for each added black mana, but you could not increase its toughness.

## Timing

In general, you should try and cast as few spells at once as possible, because it makes things simpler. It also gives your rival less information upon which to plan his or her actions. Occasionally, there will be

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conflicts of timing when both players want to use spell effects at the same time. When this happens, the player whose turn it is announces their spells and effects first. Then, the other player can respond to each one with one or more fast effects (instants, artifacts in play, enchantments in play, or creature special abilities). These reactions can be reacted to, and so forth, and nothing happens until both players have finished taking actions. At this point, all spells take effect simultaneously. Usually, the outcome will be clear, but if the timing of any two effects makes a difference, the player casting the later spell gets to choose whether it occurs before or after the conflicting spell. Once it is announced, nothing can stop a fast effect unless it is countered immediately by an interrupt. Once a spell is announced, the mana has been spent, whether or not the spell actually takes effect as planned.

An exception to this are *interrupts*, which are resolved as soon as they are announced, unless the interrupt itself is interrupted. Don't literally interrupt your rival with these; let him or her finish saying just how their spell will be used, and how much mana is being spent on it. Then announce your interrupt before another spell is cast. Your rival must give you the opportunity to do this. Your rival can also interrupt the spell or your interrupt with another interrupt, and so forth. If the same spell has more than one interrupt done during its casting, the caster of that spell does his or her interrupts first, regardless of

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whether it was announced first. Interrupts take effect immediately, unless they themselves are interrupted, in which case you resolve their interruptions first. Interrupts commonly counter the spell being cast, but they sometimes change it in some way or have some peculiar side effect. Effects which take mana into your mana pool are usually interrupts, so you can get mana for your spells quickly enough to respond to your rival's actions.

Though a spell or effect that needs a target cannot be used unless a target exists, it is possible for a target to disappear before the spell affects it. In this case the effect is ignored, though the mana is used, and the spell is still considered cast.

*Example: Your rival uses an artifact. You respond by destroying the artifact with a spell. Since your spell is not an interrupt, the artifact's effect still takes place, though your rival can't use it again.*

*Example: You cast a blue spell, and your rival interrupts with an Elemental Blast—a spell that counters blue spells. You announce an interrupt that changes blue cards to green cards, in order to change your original spell to a green spell. Your interrupt goes first since you are the original spellcaster, and changes your spell to a green spell. The target of your rival's spell is no longer legal, so that spell is simply discarded to the graveyard.*

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*Example: Your rival casts a spell that would kill your creature. You respond by casting Unsummon, which puts the creature back into your hand. You cannot have a creature simultaneously go to the graveyard and into your hand, so the outcome depends on the timing of the spells. You may choose whether the Unsummon comes before or after the damage spell, since you cast your spell last. Naturally, you choose to have it come first and the creature is safely in your hand when the damaging spell takes effect. The damaging spell may not be redirected, and since its target is no longer in play it must simply be discarded. If your rival had responded to your Unsummon with another damage-dealing spell, your rival could have opted to have that last spell take effect before your Unsummon, giving your creature the deep-six.*

## Variations of Play

You can play *Magic* with only one deck if it is large enough. Just divide it between the players. One way to play in this case is with antes, continuing until one player wins enough cards to render the other's deck unplayable (though, of course, the owner gets all the cards back afterwards). This can take a while if the deck is large.

By mutual consent, players may agree not to play for ante. This is recommended until you get a feel for the game. You can also agree to reduce the stakes. For example, you could agree that one card goes to the

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winner of a full set, rather than risking your ante for each duel. You can also agree not to "play for keeps" but exchange ante anyway, keeping track of won and lost cards on paper so they can be returned afterwards. After all, it's fun to try to work with new spells and a shifting distribution of cards.

Rules for multiplayer *Magic*, tournament *Magic*, and league *Magic* are forthcoming.

## About the Rules

If a card contradicts the rules, the card takes precedence.

Be prepared to encounter house versions of this game when you play someone you haven't played before. These rules are a framework from which to start; after you know how to play, your play group may develop local rules, new ways to play particular cards, or other variations. Just be sure before you start that everyone is playing the same game.

During the course of a game, a dispute that you cannot solve by referencing the rules may occur. If both players agree, you can resolve the difference for the current game with a coin toss. After the duel, you can come to a decision about how you want to play such a situation in the future. If the players don't agree to a coin toss, both players retrieve their ante and the duel is a draw.

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## Some Questions and Answers

Q: Can I use my Giant to kill my rival's Goblin?

A: Not unless your rival uses the Goblin to block your Giant or your rival attacks you with the Goblin, in which case you can block with the Giant. The only time creatures fight each other is when blocking.

Q: Can I use my Shatter spell to get rid of my rival's artifact before she uses it?

A: The Shatter spell is an instant that destroys an artifact. When your rival puts the artifact into play you cannot use Shatter, because until it is in play it is a spell, not an artifact. Once it is in play, you could destroy the artifact first if Shatter were an interrupt. Since it isn't, your rival will have the opportunity to use the artifact concurrent to its destruction. Maybe if you had an interrupt artifact destroyer, or could counter the artifact when she was putting it into play, you could get it out of play before she could use it.

Q: My friend got several *Magic* decks and put them together into one deck. How can I compete with that without doing the same?

A: There are many answers to this question. If your friend is playing with more powerful cards, then your occasional victories will net you more valuable cards. Or perhaps your friend would agree to play with a

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handicap. For example, he might play with some of the weaker cards he doesn't normally use. You can also work up a competitive deck of your own, simply by trading and dueling. A person who obtains their cards by guile is usually more formidable than a person who simply buys them. You can also use the option of splitting your friend's deck into two, as described in the "Variations of Play" section on p. 32.

Q: My opponent keeps using her Circles of Protection. How can I get around those?

A: A Circle of Protection against a color you rely on can be crippling. However, there are many spells which cripple or destroy enchantments. If you don't have any of those, try waiting until your rival uses a lot of mana. Then, try to lure her into investing all of her the rest of her mana in Circles or in some other defensive measure, and, when she is out of mana to spend on them, slip in a spell you really want to cast.

In general, though, any time you rely too heavily on one thing, be it one color of magic, or one particular creature, it is usually not too hard to construct a deck to cripple it. To overcome this, vary your card mix so your opponent doesn't always know what to expect.

Q: Can my opponent do something that doesn't make sense, such as casting both Holy Strength and Unholy Strength on his Air Elemental?

A: Yes, these effects are magical, after all.

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Beta Rulebook

### Clarification to Rules

**Banding:** Creatures only band for the duration of a single attack. Banded creatures do not gain abilities of the other creatures in the band.

*Example:* A Mesa Pegasus (a flying creature with banding ability) bands with a Benalish Hero (a non-flying creature with banding ability) and Shanodin Dryads (a non-flying creature with forestwalk ability). The Hero cannot fly or forestwalk, all of the banded attackers can be blocked by any creature that can block the Hero. But the attacker gets to choose how the damage from the blocking creature is distributed among the banding creatures.

**Casting Cost:** You only need to pay the casting cost of a card (the amount in the upper right hand corner) once. If the card requires you to pay mana for upkeep, it will say so on the card.

**Discarding:** You only need to discard if you have more than seven cards in your hand, unless a card in play specifically instructs otherwise. Similarly, you may not discard unless you have more than seven cards, or are forced to by a card in play.

**Enchantments:** Enchantments remain in effect until they are destroyed or disenchanting, or the target upon which they are cast is destroyed or discarded.

*Example: You cast Paralyze on your opponent's Hurlloon Minotaur. Paralyze taps the Minotaur, and then requires your opponent to pay 4 mana during upkeep to untap the creature. If your opponent pays*

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*the 4 mana, the Minotaur is untapped, but Paralyze is not discarded. If the Minotaur becomes tapped again, your opponent will again have to pay to untap it.*

**Flying:** Creatures that can fly can be blocked only by other flying creatures. Flying creatures can block either flying or non-flying creatures.

**The Graveyard:** When cards are placed into or removed from the graveyard, they must be visible to both players.

**Interrupts and Instants:** The difference between interrupts and instants is timing. Interrupts take place as soon as they are cast. Instants take effect only after all fast effect reactions have been announced.

**Special Costs:** In the card text, a mana symbol preceding an effect should be read as "For each (mana) spent..."

**Special Types of Fast Effects:** Using the special abilities of creatures, using artifacts already in play, and using enchantments in play are all fast effects.

*Example: You have a Circle of Protection: Blue in play. Your opponent attacks with Sea Serpent, a blue creature, and taps Prodigal Sorcerer, another blue creature with a special ability that lets it do 1 point of damage to any target. You may spend 1 mana of any or no color to prevent the damage from either source. To prevent the damage from both sources, you must spend 2 mana— one for each source.*

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**Tapping:** The purpose of tapping is to indicate that a land has been used to provide mana, a creature has attacked, or an effect has been generated by an artifact or special ability. A tapped card may not be used again until it is untapped.

*Example: You have Llanowar Elves in play, and you want to use the mana it can provide to summon your Scryb Sprites. To show that the Elves have been used to generate mana this turn, you tap the card by rotating it 90° to a horizontal position (see page 10).*

**Timing of Special Abilities:** Tapping a creature to use a special ability is an instant; it may be done during your opponent's turn.

*Example: Your opponent is attacking you with Merfolk of the Pearl Trident, a 1/1 creature. You block it with your Mons's Goblin Raiders, also a 1/1 creature. However, you also have a Samite Healer in play. This creature has the ability to prevent 1 damage to any target. So you can tap your Healer to prevent the Merfolk from damaging the Goblin. Your Goblin still does 1 point of damage to the Merfolk, killing it. If you had only the Healer in play, you could still block with the Healer, and then tap it to prevent the damage to itself. However, a creature that is tapped after it is announced as a blocker—the Healer, in this case—does not deal damage, so neither creature would take damage this turn.*

**Other Questions:** Send a letter and a SASE to the address on page 40. Those with electronic mail can write to [questions@wizards.com](mailto:questions@wizards.com). E-mailers can also ask about the Garfield Games electronic mailing list.

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## Important References

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