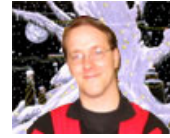


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Covering the Basics

John Carter
 Saturday School
 Saturday, April 16, 2005



Send your rules questions to **Magic Rules Manager John Carter**. Can't find the answer to your question somewhere else, like the [Magic Comprehensive Rules](#)? Maybe he's already answered it! Try the [Saturday School Searchable Rules Database](#).

GP Detroit and GP Lisbon are a week away. Pro Tour Philadelphia is just around the corner, and shortly after that is the prerelease for *Saviors of Kamigawa*. But enough of that event business... on to the questions!

Q: My girlfriend attacks me with a **Frogmite** equipped with **General's Kabuto**. I block with my **Kaijin of the Vanishing Touch**. Can the **Frogmite** be "bounced" even though it's untargetable? --Michael Cole

A: Yes, the Kaijin's ability doesn't target.

Q: A friend of mine says that **Opal-Eye, Konda's Yojimbo** targets a creature and that he can negate his effect with **Soratami Rainshaper**. So does Opal-Eye target or is it a universal effect? --Derick F.

A: It doesn't target (though I wouldn't say it's "universal"). With Opal-Eye, you'll choose a source with one ability or be preventing damage to Opal-Eye with the other ability. Compare this to something like **Kitsune Healer** which targets for either ability.

There are two issues at hand with cards like Opal-Eye or Circles of Protection, and that's what a "source" is and whether something is targeted. Choosing a source doesn't target. All you have to do when you choose a source is pick something that matches the restrictions from the source. For example, a **Circle of Protection: Black** specifies a black source. So you'll pick a black card or token, a black spell, or an ability or combat damage from something black. You can CoP: Black a Protection from White creature with no problem because choosing a source doesn't target (Protection from stops targeting).

So how can you tell if something targets? As simple as it sounds, just read the card. If it says the word "target", then it targets. The only other time something targets is for local enchantments when you play them. Cards printed since 1999 are very strict about this, and most older cards are generally okay as well. When in doubt, just look in [Gatherer](#) for the Oracle text. Right now, there are almost 2,800 cards that contain the word "target".



Q: Can **Chisei, Heart of Oceans** eat the age counters from permanents with cumulative upkeep? What other kind of counters can't it eat? --Rasmus N.

A: Yes, age counters are fair game for Chisei. All cards with cumulative upkeep use "age" counters to track their upkeep, and feeding Chisei those counters will help keep your upkeeps costs down. Chisei's not a picky eater, so also any counter will satisfy its appetite-- except those instant counters that stop your spells. Those bite in a different way.

Q: If I have **Seizan, Perverter of Truth** and **Tomorrow, Azami's Familiar** or **Uba Mask** in play at the beginning of my upkeep, do I still lose 2 life? --Mario

A: Yes, you're losing 2 life whether you actually draw two cards or not.

Q: Does the **Damping Matrix** or the **Cursed Totem** stop the Ninjutsu ability? --Luis R.

A: No, both apply to creatures, and Ninjutsu is an ability of a creature card. The Ninja isn't a creature until it's actually in play.

Q: **Final Judgment** states "Remove all creatures from the game." It doesn't specify "in play"? --Mike A.

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A: It doesn't need to specify "in play" because a creature is not a creature unless it's in play. Everywhere else it's a "creature card". By not including the word "card" with creature, the effect is naturally limited to just affecting things in play. The same is true for all permanent types. Compare **Ostracize** and **Raise Dead** to help see the difference.

Q: I have a **Vedalken Orrery** in play. My opponent has a **Dosan the Falling Leaf**. Can I still play my non-land cards as instants? --Matthew

A: You can play your non-land cards any time you could play an instant but only on your own turn. While the Orrery lets you play things at a variety of times, Dosan just turns off entire turns, so the Orrery never gets a chance to adjust when you could play things on those turns.

Q: My opponent has a **Sosuke, Son of Seshiro** and a **Kashi-Tribe Warriors**. I attack with **Ronin Cliffdrider** and use his effect to deal Sosuke 1 damage, and then I use **Crushing Pain** to kill Sosuke. Does the **Kashi-Tribe Warriors** still have the Sosuke effect? --Lorne D.

A: No, Sosuke's destroy ability went away with Sosuke. In short, if Sosuke isn't in play when someone's Warrior deals damage, then their Warrior won't do anything special.

Q: If a player activates Ninjutsu, can I kill the creature with an instant like **Shock** before it deals damage? --Adam R.

A: Yes, hopping a Ninja into play isn't passing priority, and all players have to pass before damage can go on the stack. Once a Ninja is in play all players will have a chance to roast it before you actually get to stack damage.

Q: I animated a Genjued land and attacked. My opponent used **Giant Oyster's** tapping ability to target my animated land. Does my Genjued land return to being a land at the end of turn, or does it stay tapped and does it accumulate counters as long as **Giant Oyster** remains tapped? --Eric M.

A: The land will stay tapped and accumulate counters as long as the Oyster stays tapped. The Oyster's ability only cares about the target being a tapped creature on announcement and resolution. After that, the ability keeps working even though putting -1/-1 counters on an unanimated land doesn't really hurt. If you animate the land again, the counters will matter. Otherwise, the Oyster will take away the counters when it untaps.

Q: I plan to sacrifice three **Floating-Dream Zubera** to **Lifespinner**. Which actually happens first, the card drawing from the Zuberas, or the creature search from **Lifespinner**? --Eric

A: The triggers resolve first. Since sacrificing the Zubera is a cost that's paid as you put the **Lifespinner** ability on the stack, the draws from the Zubera abilities can't ever come before the ability that required the sacrifice.

Q: If I've got a Mountain enchanted with **Genju of the Spires**, and my opponent plays **Spectral Shift** on it, changing Mountain to Plains, does the Genju fall off? --Charles

A: Yes. Regardless of whether you change the Genju or the land, if the land type and the "Enchant <land type>" don't match, then the Genju falls off the next time state-based effects are checked. The line "Enchant <foo>" means the permanent the enchantment is attached to must be a <foo>, or the enchantment falls off.

Q: I activate a **Darksteel Brute**, then play **Serra's Embrace** on it. Will the enchantment fall off at the end of turn when it becomes a regular artifact, or will it stay on since it was a legal target when I enchanted it? --Chris

A: The "Enchant <foo>" line is checked with state-based effect. If that line doesn't match, the enchantment falls off. So your Embrace gets put into the graveyard just after you discard (which is just before the next turn starts).

Q: A friend told me that to play the Ninjutsu ability an opponent has to have a creature capable of blocking in play, otherwise my creatures can't be considered unblocked. Is this true? --J.

A: It's not true. "Unblocked creature" equals "attacking" + "blockers have been declared" + "no creatures were declared as blockers from this creature". If your opponent has no blockers at all, then once they decline to block (as they must) all your attackers become unblocked.

Q: Can I target my opponent's **Echoing Decay** to stop him from killing my 8 1/2 Tails? --Victor V.



A: You won't be able to stop 8.5 from being targeted, but you can stop the Decay from hurting. **Eight-and-a-Half-Tails** can turn the spell white, and give itself Protection from White. Since **Echoing Decay** is targeted, 8.5 would be an illegal target, and the Decay would be countered. Note that this won't help against **Hideous Laughter** since the Laughter doesn't target.

Q: If I have a **Voltaic Construct**, **Coretapper**, and an **Orochi Hatchery** in play, can I target my **Coretapper** more than once per turn with the Construct to put charge counters on my Hatchery? --Spenser M.

A: That works fine. The Hatchery will produce Snakes for all the charge counters on it, so your triumvirate of evil is set to make many a token.

Q: If I have **Coat of Arms** in play along with multiple types of rats (rat ninja, rat warrior, etc.), will they all receive +1/+1 for each other rat, even if they have another type besides rat? If I have multiple rat ninjas, will they receive +1/+1's for being both a rat and a ninja? --DMJ

A: Your Rat Ninja and Rat Warriors will give each other bonuses for being Rats. A Rat Ninja won't give a double bonus to another Rat Ninja because the Coat only cares if a type is shared, not how many types are shared. Basically, take a given creature and ask "how many other creatures share any creature type with this guy?" That answer is the bonus that guy will get.

Q: I have a **Sun Droplet**, and my opponent's card steals 1 life for each spirit or arcane spell. Is it considered damage for the **Sun Droplet** or not? --Jose

A: Losing life isn't the same as being dealt damage. A card like **Thief of Hope** will steal a point of life for every Spirit or Arcane spell, and the **Sun Droplet** won't even notice.

Q: I have a **Vedalken Shackles**. Someone plays a "comes into play" ability, then I take control of the creature after letting the ability stack. Who gets to do the ability? --Sean C.

A: The person who put the comes into play creature into play was the controller when the ability was put on the stack, so that person will be the one who uses the ability. With something like **Viridian Shaman**, that player will have even picked the target to destroy (such as the Shackles) before you ever get a chance to use the Shackles (which means you'll get the Shaman, but only for a little while before losing the Shackles gives the Shaman back).

Q: The way **Intuition** is worded, would I be able to search for only 1 card and force my opponent to pick that one? --Taylor H.

A: Not often. Let's look: "Search your library for any three cards and reveal them. An opponent chooses one. Put that card into your hand and the rest into your graveyard. Then shuffle your library." As written, the opponent picks a card, and you keep that card. Any extras would go to the graveyard. However, **Intuition** only asks for a quantity of cards, not a quality (such as name or type). The definition of Search says that for quantity-only searching, we have to find the right number (if you have enough cards). So you must find three cards if you have three. If your library has only one card, then you find that one, and your opponent picks it. Otherwise, you find as many as you can (usually three), and you keep just one.

Q: I am trying to understand the difference between kicker costs and entwine costs. If you decide to use the kicker you must pay it all up front, but for the entwine effect, you can wait and see if there is a response to the spell (while it is on the stack) and then choose to pay the entwine cost. Do I understand that correctly? --Cliff R.

A: No, both must be decided while you play the spell. Entwine actually functions like a mixture of modal spells (the "Choose one —" spells) plus a kind of kicker.

Kicker and Entwine similarities...

- Both require added decisions while announcing a spell.
- Both require some sort of extra cost for choosing that option.
- Neither can be retroactively added to a spell once it's been played.
- Neither changes the converted mana cost of the spell (only X does that).

Kicker and Entwine differences...

- Kicker is used on sorceries, instants, and creatures / Entwine is only on sorceries and instants
 - Entwine allows either effect regardless of whether the entwine is paid-- paying just gives both / Kicker doesn't ever do the "other" part unless the kicker is paid
-

Q: I'm playing a Mind Bend deck, and my opponent is playing an Elf deck. After I play **Shifting Sky** (red) and **Wrath of Marit Lage**, he plays **Mycosynth Lattice**. Since they're artifacts, apparently they all become colorless, and I'm screwed. I'm ok with losing, but I remember reading that artifacts could have colors. Can artifacts have colors? --Porgon



A: They can, and being an artifact doesn't automatically make things colorless. The reason **Mycosynth Lattice** helped the Elf guy is because one of the things it says is "All cards that aren't in play, spells, and permanents are colorless." That line is why the original **Shifting Sky** didn't matter. However, if you played another **Shifting Sky** you'd find that the later timestamp would cause all the non-land permanents to become whatever color you chose.

Q: I play the +2/+2 half of **Consume Strength** on a creature of mine and the -2/-2 half on an opponent's creature, but then my opponent removes my creature. Does the -2/-2 effect still work or are both targets required? -Thomas B.

A: The -2/-2 still happens. With multiple targets, you have to remove all the targets to stop the effect. Otherwise, the effect will still apply appropriately to the legal targets that remain.

Q: If **Otherworldly Journey** is played on an animated **Blinkmoth Nexus**, does the Nexus gain the +1/+1 counter granted by the Journey although it returns to play as a land? --Falk

A: Yes, it gets the counter, and when animated the counter will make it a 2/2.

***Extra*:** Cards like **Otherworldly Journey** use phrases like "that creature" to refer to "the thingy you're doing stuff to". In the most literal sense, you can't return a creature from the removed from the game zone-- that would be a "creature card".

Q: I was wondering if you could tell me what it means when an equipment card says "equip only as a sorcery." In general, I just want to know if you could explain the whole artifact equipment thing to me. --Jordan L

A: Equipment is a subtype of artifact that stays in play and can be attached to creatures you control. The key difference between something like Equipment and a local enchantment is that Equipment doesn't leave play when the equipped creature leaves play. Attaching an Equipment from one creature to another means the Equipment stays on the newly equipped creature until it leaves play or you attach the Equipment elsewhere. The "equip only as a sorcery" reminder text refers to when you're allowed to use the equip ability. "As a sorcery" is a shorthand for "at the time when you could play a sorcery" which is itself a shorthand for "on your turn, during the main phase, while the stack is empty, and if you have priority". Obviously, that won't fit on a text box along with the rest of the ability, so it gets distilled into the reminder-sized version.

That's all for this week
Class dismissed.

--Carter

*Carter has been playing **Magic** since 1994 and has been a certified judge since 1997. He has judged at every size and type of event, and he's always interested in new ideas to make events and **Magic** better for the gaming community. Carter enjoys helping players understand the rules, even if his analogies aren't as funny as he thinks they are.*



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