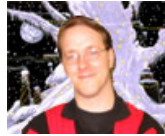


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Baltimore Bound

John Carter
Saturday School
Saturday, August 6, 2005



Send your rules questions to Level Four Judge [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](#).

The *Ninth Edition* release weekend is behind us, and we have less than one week before [US Nationals](#). Also at US Nationals is the [Junior Super Series Championship](#) as well as tons of side events and artists signings. If you're anywhere on the East coast from Boston to the Carolinas, you might consider taking a road trip to Baltimore for the event. If playing in the Nationals Qualifiers (aka "the Grinders") doesn't tempt you, Saturday and Sunday have plenty of open events for all levels of players interested in having fun and getting a chance to see the best in the country play for the right to represent the United States in Yokohama later this year. Information for all the Nationals events can be found [right here](#). If you can't make it in person, don't miss the live coverage here on [magicthegathering.com](#) beginning Friday.



Q: What happens if I have a [Blinking Spirit](#), I target it with [Reweave](#), and then I use [Blinking Spirit's](#) ability to return it to my hand? --Bryan A.

A: The [Reweave](#) will be countered for lack of target.

***Extra*:** If the spell has multiple targets, like [Consume Strength](#) or [Cannibalize](#), you could "blink" the Spirit safely to your hand, and the other portion of the spell would work with whatever targets remain.

***Extra*:** Don't forget that [Blinking Spirit](#) is indeed a Spirit and will trigger spiritcraft abilities like [Celestial Kirin's](#) whenever you play or re-play it.

Q: Can [Pithing Needle](#) stop [Mesmeric Orb](#)? --Nur I.

A: No, [Mesmeric Orb's](#) ability is triggered, and triggered abilities aren't played like an activated ability—they're just put on the stack when a player gets priority. [Pithing Needle](#) only applies to activated abilities.

Q: When is a spell actually considered played? Is [Oyobi, Who Split the Heavens'](#) trigger stacked on declaration of the spell or is it only considered played on resolution? --AL

A: A spell is considered played once you've completed the announcement of that spell. This would be right after you made all applicable choices for the spell and paid for its cost(s). Countering a spell doesn't affect whether a spell was played or not.

Playing a spell looks something like this: begin with announcing what the spell is and putting it on the stack. Then you make choices like mode, buyback, kicker, entwine, the value for X, and so on. Once you know things like entwine and so forth, you'll choose targets that go with those choices (choosing different modes or entwine might change what your target can be, for example). So we know what we're spell we're using, what way in which were doing it, and what we're doing it to. Now we need to clarify the effect of the spell (if the effect is different) or the division of damage or counters (if there is division to be made). Some of these parts we'd skip if they didn't apply (like picking a target if the spell isn't targeted.) Thus we know everything for playing it, but we still have to pay for it. So we figure out what it'll cost, add mana to our pool, and then we pay all the costs.



Let's put it all together in an example with [Grab the Reins](#). I'll play [Grab the Reins](#) (I show you the card and put it on the stack). I'm going to entwine it (thus I'll need two targets). My targets will be creatures A and B (but which is which—the effect is different for each target). I'm going to take creature A, and creature B is the one that will be damaged (now we know the potential effect on each). [Grab the Reins](#) costs 3 with entwine adding 2 —I'll add 5 to my mana pool and then pay for the spell. Now it's officially "played".

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***Extra*:** Compare Oyobi to **Recycle** from *Tempest*. Oyobi refers to spells, but **Recycle** refers to cards. Playing a card means either playing a card as a spell or putting a land card into play. Oyobi wouldn't trigger off playing a land (not that there are any Spirit or Arcane lands), but **Recycle** would. However, a **Glacial Ray** imprinted on an **Isochron Scepter** would trigger Oyobi when you play the copy, but it wouldn't trigger **Recycle** because you weren't playing an actual card.

***Extra*:** Some older cards use the phrase "successfully cast." This phrase was replaced with "play" when *Sixth Edition* came out (April '99). Cards that use the old phrase all have errata to update their usage. Whether or not the spell successfully resolves doesn't matter anymore for those triggered abilities.

Q: Can I play a **Reach Through Mists** and splice on a **Glacial Ray** targeting a **Paladin en-Vec**? --Jerm

A: Yes, the text of **Glacial Ray** is spliced onto **Reach Through Mists**, but the **Reach Through Mists**' color remains blue. Having protection from red won't help against **Glacial Ray** text spliced onto nonred Arcane spells.

***Extra*:** When the *Ninth Edition* update came out the line in the splice rules that said characteristic-setting abilities weren't copied was removed. Thus, if you play a **Kodama's Reach** and splice on **Evermind**, the line "Evermind is blue" will be copied by the splice (and the name will be updated to 'Kodama's Reach') and will turn the **Kodama's Reach** blue [CR 502.40c].

Q: If you have **Honden of Night's Reach** in play, and **Akuta, Born of Ash** in your graveyard, forcing a discard could make all the difference as to whether you have more cards in your hand than each opponent. How do you determine which goes first? --Steve W.

A: Since you control both triggers, you stack them in whichever order you prefer. However, Akuta's triggered ability has an "intervening 'if' clause," and if you don't already have more cards in hand than each opponent, then the triggered ability won't do anything [CR 404.3].

Q: If **Horobi, Death's Wail** and **Quicksilver Dragon** are both in play, along with another creature and someone hits the **Quicksilver Dragon** with a **Glacial Ray**, what happens to it if it re-targets the **Glacial Ray** at the other creature? -- John C.

A: Horobi's ability will have triggered for the **Quicksilver Dragon** by the time you can use the ability, and using the ability will cause the other creature to become the target of a spell, so Horobi will trigger again. The other creature is sacrificed, and then the Dragon is sacrificed.



Q: My opponent has **Kodama of the North Tree** in play. I play **Enduring Ideal**, fetching **Confiscate**. Can I take the **Kodama of the North Tree**? --Chris R.

A: Yes, putting an Aura into play without playing it means you'll have to choose a permanent to attach it to. However, it's not a spell or ability, so the North Tree won't be able to avoid it [CR 212.4e].

***Extra*:** Avoiding "untargetability" doesn't mean **Enduring Ideal** can avoid everything. Protection from blue would keep that permanent from being a legal choice for the Aura. Similarly, you won't be able to **Enduring Ideal** a Genju onto any land that doesn't have the right land type.

Q: If I use **Twincast** or **Uyo, Silent Prophet** to copy my own **Shrapnel Blast**, do I have to sac an artifact for each copy? --S.

A: No, **Twincast** and **Uyo** cover all your costs. The same is true for any spell with "as an additional cost" included.

Q: If I can't stop **Wrath of God** with **Gilded Light** since I am not being targeted and protection from white won't stop it, what in a white deck will? --Naz

A: White's defenses for its own best creature control tend to deal with not being around when the **Wrath** hits. **Astral Slide**, **Hikari**, **Twilight Guardian's** ability, **Blinking Spirit's** ability, and **Otherworldly Journey** are typical tricks up white's sleeve. And since **Champions of Kamigawa** was released every color has access to a Myojin, and indestructibility ignores **Wrath of God**.

Q: My opponent attacks with **Tangle Asp**, and I block with my **Slith Bloodletter**. Can I regenerate my Slith? If I regenerate it at all does it keep any +1/+1 counters it has? --Alex R.

A: Yes, if the Bloodletter doesn't have a counter, you'd need to regenerate once before resolving combat damage, and a second time before resolving the Asp's triggered ability. If the Bloodletter has counters, then the combat damage probably won't be lethal, but you'll still have to regenerate from the Asp's venom ability, but you would keep any counters or Auras on the Slith since it never left play (regeneration avoids death altogether, it doesn't die and return).

Q: If I have two **Sterling Groves**, would that make all my enchantments, including both Groves, immune to all spells or abilities? --Chris

A: Generally yes, each **Sterling Grove** would protect the other, and both Groves would be covering everything else. Be careful with “immune” though—the enchantments can’t be targeted, but they’re not immune to untargeted effects like **Akroma's Vengeance** or **Tranquil Grove**.



Q: About summoning sickness... only creatures have it, artifacts don't, what about artifact creatures? What about tokens? What about a Genju? -Niki T.

A: An easy way to remember summoning sickness is that everything has it, but only creatures are affected by it. This includes tokens as well as artifact creatures. If you have something that wasn't a creature but becomes a creature (like a land with a Genju on it), then if that something hasn't been under your control continuously since you started your most recent turn, then it just got sick, too.

Q: I have all of the white protection cards, but I've never come across one for silver cards, does one exist? --Jim

A: That depends on what you mean by “silver.” If you mean the Un- cards (*Un*glued and *Un*hinged cards with silver borders) there is no safety from silver-border land. If you're referring to the modern artifact frame like on the recent **Friday Night Magic** update of **Juggernaut**, the border color doesn't matter—they're artifacts whether the frame color is silver or brown. **Circle of Protection: Artifacts** and **Rune of Protection: Artifacts** will work fine either way.

Q: Can I use **Stifle** to counter the skip turn ability on **Time Vault** and untap it during my turn instead of skipping a turn and putting a time counter on **Time Vault**? --Shawn

A: You could **Stifle** the ability that would put a time counter on the **Time Vault** and untap it, but you'll have skipped a turn for nothing. You could also **Stifle** the take-a-turn ability, but then you'd be throwing away time counters for nothing. I'd suggest keeping the **Stifle** safely away from your **Time Vault**.

Q: If I have two **Elvish Champions** in play with a **Coat of Arms** would both of them get +3/+3 and have forestwalk? --Chris A.

A: They'd only get +2/+2 in total. +1/+1 comes from the other **Elvish Champion**, and then +1/+1 comes from the **Coat of Arms** because each Elf Lord sees one other Elf-or-Lord in play.

***Extra*:** If you add a generic Elf to the mix, then the Elf Lords would get +3/+3 (+1/+1 from the other Champion and +2/+2 from the Coat) while the generic Elf would get +4/+4 (+2/+2 from the Champions and +2/+2 from the Coat).

If you add in a **Goblin King** instead, the **Elvish Champions** would get +1/+1 from each other, and all three of the Lords would get +2/+2 from the Coat.



Q: My friend says that rampage, fear, and shadow are no longer “valid” abilities. I was wondering if that was true. --Eric E.

A: “Valid” isn't a term that appears in the **Magic** Comprehensive Rules. Keyword mechanics, like rampage and shadow, don't become invalid over time, but their overall impact might diminish. For example, rampage is annoyingly complicated and has been largely supplanted by “gets +X/+X for each creature blocking it.” This clearer version doesn't replace rampage, but it's much more likely to be reused than rampage is. On the other hand, “fear” and “vigilance” have been around since 1993, but it's only (relatively) recently that they were elevated to the status of having their own keywords. The closest something could get to becoming invalid is “obsolete”—not appearing in new sets-- but that doesn't mean the rules for handling those abilities have ceased to exist.

Q: How many cards in a sealed deck can be sideboarded in after the first game is played, and how many need to be kept in the original deck? Some people say no cards need remain (thus creating an entirely new deck out of your sideboard). --Erik Z.

A: In sealed deck there is no actual limit. You could conceivably swap out your entire deck for a second deck built out of the cards in your sideboard (plus basic lands) as long as you still meet the minimum deck size requirement. Of course, this is only true for limited (sealed deck and draft) formats—constructed still uses the one-for-one rule when sideboarding, and constructed sideboards must have either 0 or 15 cards.

Next week Saturday School will be collecting questions from the floor of US Nationals and the JSS Championship, which you can expect to see two weeks from now. As always, let me know what's on your mind using the link below, or swing down to Baltimore and say hello in person. Don't forget your decks though-- there's plenty of **Magic** to be had for all.

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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