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# Restock

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Single-Card Strategies  
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**I**nvasion Week. Oh, *Invasion Week*.

When Scott Johns announced *Invasion Week* to the writers, my heart did a little jump of joy. For me, *Invasion* was a major pinnacle **Magic**-wise. While *Invasion* was in rotation, I made a ton of great decks, and in limited excelled to one of the highest points in my career. **Magic** was doing great in Madison as well. Bob Maher was still regularly playing with abandon, Dustin Stern and Mike Hron were still very interested in the game, and we had **Magic** players from all parts of the country visiting us to playtest limited. Getting sixteen people with numerous Pro Tours under their belt together for drafts wasn't atypical, and for one moment, I think I could make the argument that Madison was the best place on Earth for draft. Sure, it would be an argument, but it could be made.

For Constructed, it was a good time. I helped work on the *Fires of Yavimaya* deck that Zvi would pilot to a Top 8 at Pro Tour Chicago (though I think mad props have to go to Seth Burn for including the Two-Headed Dragon), codigned the Black/Red deck that David Williams would take to the top in Tokyo, and designed Sunny D, the Domain deck Brian Davis would take to Top 8 at GP Minneapolis. There were other decks to be sure, but these were the ones that attracted the most notice. The thing about *Invasion* was that there were so many ideas to look into – so many things you could try out, so many interesting cards, so much fuel for the fire.

Incidentally, that deckbuilding fuel that *Invasion* gave me was part of the reason I got this column in the first place. Our editor Scott Johns was still playing **Magic** as a civilian on the Pro Tour in those days, and I put out so many decks (many of them bad, but a few with gems in them) working with him for Pro Tour Chicago that year, he thought of me when this column was to be resurrected. As Scott pointed out, many of the ideas I had for decks were innovative; they just weren't always Pro Tour level viable. When he chose me for this column, the main reason was because he believed that, freed from having to build PT-viable decks, I'd instead be freed up to showcase that creativity. That's allowed me to make a lot of the kind of free-spirited decks you've seen in this column. With that in mind, today I'll approach **Restock** – one of my favorite cards of all time.



## Holding it down

**Restock** stood out for many players when they got their first look at *Invasion*. It wasn't as splashy as a Dromar, but it was a **Regrowth**. **Regrowth** was a Restricted card in Type 1, and here was a card that did a *double-Regrowth*. Some whiners complained about **Restock** removing itself from the game when cast, but I know I'm really glad about that fact – even if the engine of **Restocking** for an old **Restock** and some other good spell is an expensive one, I'm glad it isn't possible to infinitely **Restock** (without a lot of work). In the end, despite the buzz, it got held back by some of its baggage.

There are many limiting factors to consider. Now there is the obvious high mana cost, but also worth considering is the issue of opportunity. Even if you somehow had the five mana floating on a turn to cast it, **Restock** isn't useful until you have two targets available; even then, it isn't that hot unless you have two useful targets. Finally, there is the question of action and reaction – **Restock** doesn't really reward reaction as much as it does action. Let's check out these issues in greater depth.

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## Mana, always mana

This is bound to be the shortest section, but it is a section we revisit constantly in Single Card Strategies. Once you get to a certain amount of mana (usually five), you need to work your mana a little bit, or you need to decide to wait a while before expecting to actually get off what you're planning on trying.

The more traditional ways of building mana used to be permanents – Birds, Elves, and Stones (like **Talisman of Impulse** or **Fellwar Stone**). These will do, but slightly better are various searching methods like **Kodama's Reach** or **Sakura-Tribe Elder**. Not only do these cards get something in the grave you might want to recover, but they also are very efficient cards otherwise, capable of gaining you further card advantage.

One other way to “fix” mana has always been card drawing. Card drawing, like searching out land, tends to leave something in the grave, great for a **Restock** to play with. One of my favorite methods of feeding **Restocks** mimics the card drawing power of **Ophidian**, but carries with it actual mana acceleration instead: **Avenging Druid**.

The **Avenging Druid**, if it can get through, is an almost ideal method to get a **Restock** going. Not only can it accelerate the mana situation, but it can provide **Restock** targets while it does so.



## Picking up the byproducts...



**Avenging Druid** isn't exactly a “clean” graveyard filler. It just dumps into the grave whatever happens to be between it and a land in your library. In a lot of ways, then, it is reminiscent of a **Fact or Fiction**: it is very efficient, good on its own, and leaves cards in the graveyard as a byproduct of what it is going to do anyways.

While you can always use more dedicated graveyard filling – anything from **Buried Alive** to **Cephalid Vandal** or **Traumatize** – byproducts make a way better way to fill the yard. An **Intuition** or **Gifts Ungiven** is all the more powerful when the cards in the yard are also effectively in range of your hand with just a single spell.

As you can see, most of the cards that get things into your 'yard are likely to be spells. Two things that **Restock** works particularly well with are active spells and disposable permanents. There are a few reasons for that.

## The things that last (and the things that don't)

When things last, they don't go to the graveyard. Now, there is nothing wrong with a good, solid card on the table doing its job. The question is whether or not the card **Restock** belongs in a deck full of solid cards. Take a White Weenie deck, for example. The deck is primarily based on permanents, and even if **Restock** were a White spell, you probably wouldn't find yourself playing it. You can't control when the majority of White Weenie spells go to the graveyard. Only if you are “lucky” and enough of your creatures have died would a card like **Restock** make sense. This is just a small part of the reason that Green beatdown didn't run **Restock**.

Non-permanent spells have this habit of going to the graveyard. There are notable exceptions (like **Restock** itself), but this is part of the reason that **Restock** usually finds itself in decks with an abundance of spells. Other things that **Restock** works with are the disposables. **Mindslaver** is a great example. If you're going to have the mana to cast a **Restock** or a **Mindslaver**, the concept of regrowing a **Mindslaver** for use later isn't so off.

Fragile but powerful creatures are another great **Restock** target. **Flametongue Kavu** can do a number on most of the reasonable creatures that aren't being “cheated” into play with reanimation or other methods, but it is incredibly fragile to pretty much everything.

Few decks want to be built of only temporary, disposable, and fragile cards. If your deck has an abundance of these cards, though, a card like **Restock** could be a real winner. **All Suns' Dawn** can return more potential cards, but the ability to return artifacts and land can be really significant. I've already mentioned one great disposable artifact (**Mindslaver**), but there are plenty more. Lands like **Wasteland** or **Bloodstained Mire** also make great **Restock** targets.



## A short word on action and reaction

Simply being temporary isn't enough. Being active is also key here. Reactive cards have this strong tendency to sit in the hand until they are used to, well, react to something. This is another reason why that White Weenie deck I mentioned above wouldn't be using a White **Restock** – even its spells tend to sit in the hand until they are needed.

Other reactive spells, like countermagic, struggle the same way. Reactive spells depend on the opponent to become useful, and sometimes your opponent will fail to oblige. Even though I've certainly seen some powerful **Restocks** in my time (5-color Invitational Champion Jim Hustad has been known to **Restock Time Walk** and **Mana Drain** more than a handful of times in his day), the fact is that you will get more mileage out of having cards like **Plow Under** and **Earthquake** as potential **Restock** targets. They are just that much more likely to be in your grave to be recovered.

## Dodging the RFG

People's dreams of infinite **Restock** were dashed by that pesky "remove from game" phrase that Wizards R&D decided to put on the card. Darn that R&D! Always out to ruin Green cards! Still, there are a couple of ways to go about dodging the RFG clause keeping you from infinitely **Restocking**.

**Burning Wish**: It's messy, but you can do something here. With cards like **Mischievous Quamar** or **Uyo**, **Silent Prophet**, you can copy a **Burning Wish** to search out a used up **Restock** and another **Burning Wish** to keep the fun coming. It's not all that clean, but it will work.

**Spellweaver Helix**: Another messy one, but doable. Get that **Restock** in your 'yard with some other useful Sorcery. Once you've drawn the *third* copy of your chosen other Sorcery, your "free" **Restock** can recover the *second* copy and let you infinitely **Restock**. Another option is a card like **Hammer of Bogardan** being the other card removed by **Spellweaver Helix**. Once you get to the second Hammer, buying back the Hammer and casting it comes with a pretty nice bonus.

**Panoptic Mirror**: The clean answer. Infinite **Restock** is a breeze, but you might have to find something to keep that grave full. Thankfully, a Mirror can fit other spells onto it if you are out of things you want to buy back.

Just getting infinite **Restocking** as an option doesn't mean much without a lot of mana, but it is still quite nice to be able to constantly fill up your hand with any of the best cards you've had thus far in the game.



## Wrapping Up

My deck for this week is a casual Legacy-legal land destruction deck. Legacy is still a largely unexplored format, so I don't know exactly what I'm trying to attack. Shooting in the dark, here is what I've come up with (and obviously this one is less budget-minded than some others have been):

Restock		
Casual Legacy Land Destruction		
<b>Main Deck</b> 60 cards		
4 Llanowar Wastes	4 Birds of Paradise	4 Sinkhole
4 Bayou	4 Avenging Druid	4 Ice Storm
4 Wasteland		3 Plow Under
3 Treetop Village	8 creatures	3 Restock
2 Krosan Verge		4 Pernicious Deed
3 Scrubland		3 Spellweaver Helix
3 Savannah		4 Chainer's Edict
		4 Cabal Therapy
23 lands		29 other spells

Even from the mana up (excepting the Birds), the deck has things it is putting into the graveyard. The pair of Verges can retrieve a pair of dual lands each (letting you potentially sideboard White cards) and accelerate your mana development, your **Wastelands** increase the LD factor, and the Villages are a bit vulnerable.

Deed and Edict help you attack any creatures on the table, while the deck spends its time aggressively hitting the land of your opponent. Land Destruction has generally been one of the most active pastimes of a **Magic** deck, and when Land Destruction is working it is usually because you are either backing it up with a small clock or because you are overwhelmingly destroying your opponent's land. Here, the **Spellweaver Helix** can either help you simply increase your abundant ability to hit land



destruction, or it can create a nice **Restock** engine (especially with the Flashback cards).

I hope you enjoyed this week's deck. Next week will be my last Single Card Strategies article. I'll be doing something a little different, and I hope you like it.

See you then, and have a great rest of the week.



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