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Ask Wizards - January, 2006

Ask Wizards
Monday, January 2, 2006

Do you have a question about **Magic: The Gathering** or *Wizards of the Coast*? Send it, along with your name and location, to us via this [email form](#). We'll post a new question and answer each day.

 Search Ask Wizards

January 31, 2006

Q: "I'm sure many readers must know this, but what is the difference between the design team, development team, and the creative team that works on each new set?"
--Evan
Boston, Massachusetts, USA

A: From **Paul Sottosanti, Magic R&D:**

"Hi Evan,

"Being a designer myself, I was originally going to write a reply about how designers come up with perfect **Magic** sets and then it's all downhill from there, but I eventually decided to help you out and play it straight instead. Here goes:

"The design team comes up with the initial ideas for the set, including the mechanics, the individual cards, and any overarching concepts for the set. They build the first card file and tweak abilities until they've created as fun and interesting an experience as possible. During design there are often a lot of overly powerful cards, for one simple reason. Everyone likes powerful cards better, and it's much easier to see a card's possibilities when it costs two mana instead of six. I've rarely seen someone walk away from a design playtest without a smile on their face.

"But it's clear that the health of the game would suffer if every card was more powerful than the ones that came before it, and playing against overly powerful cards can get old fast. So to address those issues, the set goes to the development team, who are in charge of taking design's card file and molding it into the form that will eventually find its way onto store shelves around the world. This involves spending countless hours on issues for Limited play like making sure that each color has creatures of varying sizes, a reasonable mana curve at common and uncommon, and no commons that will prove too frustrating to play against over and over again. Then there are the hundreds of games played between constructed decks in the Future Future League, in an attempt to balance the constructed formats and ensure that there will be multiple strategies available to players utilizing the new cards.

"When it comes to the Creative Team, they are in charge of commissioning art work, naming the cards, adding flavor text to those cards that have enough room, and everything else that goes into creating the worlds our game is set in. Their job, while not impacting the actual gameplay as much, is just as important as those of the other two teams, because they shape the feel of the game and make it into something more than just a jumble of numbers and words. Through their work we get to experience rich and diverse worlds like the metal-heavy Mirrodin, the spirit world of Kamigawa, and most recently, the city-covered Ravnica.

"There is also an editing team that deals primarily with templating but also with numerous other issues like cards getting the correct frames, the correct watermarks, correct expansion and mana symbols, and even collector numbers. Once they're done with their work, the set is sent to the printers and soon finds its way into packs, which you then open and (hopefully) enjoy.

"Hope that helped."

January 30, 2006

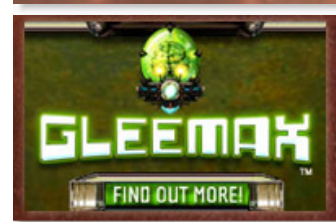
Q: "Why don't you make a creature with creature type 'teenage' so that **Mistform Ultimius** could be a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle?"
--Bernardo
Alcochete, Portugal, Europa

A: From **Mark Rosewater, Magic Head Designer:**

"Bernardo,

"I was in charge of creature types in *Unhinged* so I actually did think about it. The strikes against it:

"1) It was a very obscure joke.
2) Creature types are nouns and 'teenage' is an adjective.
3) Brady Dommermuth, the person in charge of tournament-legal creature types, would have killed me in my sleep."



January 27, 2006



Q: "I know you guys have a huge art staff for the average set, but do you specifically ask your artists to work in a particular medium (i.e. pencil, pastel, oil, etc.)? If not, does it seem the majority of the artists have a preference to a certain medium due to its clarity at smaller size or due to transfer quality?"

--Patrick
Charleston, South Carolina, USA

A: From **Jeremy Cranford**, Magic Art Director:

"Hi Patrick,

"We use a lot of freelance artists to produce a card set but they are not 'on staff'. **Magic** artists tend to work in all sorts of media: oil, acrylic, gouache, water color, digital and mixed media. I let the artist work in whatever medium they like best.

"Making sure that a composition reads well when it is reduced in size is a skill that varies from artist to artist. Their success has more to do with the type of assignment (busy or simple) and execution rather than which particular medium they tend to work in.

"For more on this topic, make sure to read Matt Cavotta's article '[RT3000, The Future of Magic Art](#)'."

January 26, 2006



Q: "Flavor-wise, how does the ninjutsu ability relate to unblocked creatures?"

--Adam
Oakland, CA

A: From **Brady Dommermuth**, Magic Creative Director:

"If another creature manages to get to your enemy, a ninja can take advantage of the hole in the enemy's defenses, or can at least use the diversion to sneak past another way. Ninja do not wear [pig suits](#)."

January 25, 2006



Q: "When a given card changes rarity does that automatically mean that you have to change the art as well?"

-- Charlie
Long Island, NY

A: From **Jeremy Cranford**, Magic Art Director:

"Hi Charlie,

"There are several reasons why we might change the art of a card (something we've discussed on the site in several places), but rarity on its own wouldn't normally be one of them. I'm not sure if you had a particular example in mind, but the changing of the rarity of a particular card does not automatically mean that we would have to change the art as well."

January 24, 2006



Q: "I see a massive 937 players turned up for GP Lille! Is that the biggest-ever turnout? If not, which **Magic** tournaments have had the largest number of participants? Thanks!"

--Scott
Redhill, England

A: From **Didier Monin**, OP Data Systems Manager:

"Grand Prix Lille was a big event, but it wasn't even close to the biggest ever. Here are the three largest GP events so far:"

GP Paris 11/27/2004 **1592 players** (!)

GP Madrid 2/21/2004 1351 players

GP Kobe 8/18/2001 1350 players

January 23, 2006



Q: "If **Mistform Ultimus** is every creature type, and if R&D doesn't like to be redundant with card text, then why does the Ultimus have the creature type 'Illusion'?"

--Benjamin
Lansing, MI, USA

A: From **Brady Dommermuth**, Magic Creative Director:

"Two reasons, Benjamin: (1) We don't like redundancy, but we do like elegance, and it's elegant for all the [Mistforms](#) to have the Illusion type on them. (2) As it stands now, the Ultimus continues to be an Illusion even while [Humility](#) is in play, for example."

Update: I've been away from rules for too long! The rules text of **Mistform Ultimus** isn't an ability, but characteristic-setting text, so it isn't removed by Humility's effect. With **Humility** in play **Mistform Ultimus** continues to have all creature types. So the elegance reason is the only reason for it to read "Creature – Illusion." Well, that and the fact that a type line with just "Creature" or "Creature – " is weird and creepy.

January 20, 2006



Q: "Since 'pingers' normally use weapons (**Viridian Longbow**) or minor spells (**Prodigal Sorcerer**) to deal their damage, how does **Viashino Fangtail** do its damage flavor-wise?"

--AJ

Pittsburgh, PA

A: From **Brady Dommermuth**, **Magic** Creative Director:

"Consider that tail a ranged weapon, AJ, in the same way a long spear is. The original concept asked for the tip of the viashino's tail to be shooting off toward some out-of-frame target, but when the art came in, we decided that a long, whiplike tail would suffice."

January 19, 2006



Q: "When the design team is in the process of designing a card, do they consider all the cards it could possibly combo with?"

--Dan

A: From **Matt Place**, **Magic** R&D:

"Hi Dan,

"Yes we do consider all the cards a new design might combo with. There are over 10,000 **Magic** cards and a new design could combo with any one of those cards, so considering possible combos with a new design is no small task. Each member of R&D is responsible for a set of cards. For example, I am responsible for **Tooth and Nail** through **Zzyxas's Abyss** (I was out sick the days they designed **Darksteel Colossus** and **Kiki-Jiki**). I know you are still thinking that there is no way we could consider every possibility with every card for every new design. Well you would be right except we have a few shortcuts to make the job easier. One example of a shortcut is we don't consider interactions with artifacts. This has worked out well so far with only a few mistakes. Hope this answers your question, Dan!"

January 18, 2006



Q: "After recently buying a *Ninth Edition* booster I noticed that while the normal cards are printed with white borders the foil cards have black borders. Is there any particular reason for this?"

--Gary

Australia

A: From **Alex Tinsman**, Associate Brand Manager, **Magic: The Gathering**:

"We make the Core Set cards white-bordered as part of the way to clearly distinguish between the original printing and the Core Set reprint. As for foils, we've found that white border just doesn't come across well in foil format so all foils are black-bordered (or silver for *Unhinged*)."

January 17, 2006



Q: "What is the state of the latest Invitational card 'Unluckyman's Paradise' – anything you can tell about how close it is to completion, or when it may be coming out? It seems like a potential rules nightmare!"

--Jyri

Pori, Finland

A: From **Randy Buehler**, Director of **Magic** R&D:

"First, an explanation for those who may not know what Jyri is talking about ... Every year at the **Magic** Invitational, the winner gets to design their own **Magic** card and appear in the art. [Last year](#) we added a new twist and we polled the audience as to which of the 16 **Magic** All-Stars had submitted the coolest idea for a new card. We promised to publish a card inspired by that one too (though the winner would not be in the art). Tsuyoshi Fujita won the fan ballot with his 'Unluckyman's Paradise.'

Unluckyman's Paradise

Land

If Unluckyman's Paradise is in your opening hand and you're not playing first, you may begin the game with it in play. If you do, Unluckyman's Paradise comes into play with a luck counter on it.

T: Add 1 to your mana pool.

T: Add one mana of any color to your mana pool. Play this ability only if Unluckyman's Paradise has a luck counter on it.



Fujita, battling in the finals of the '05 Magic Invitational at E3

"Well, the rules problems weren't nearly as hard for us to solve as the fact that the card is incredibly powerful. You just did not lose when you got 'lucky' and got to put one of these cards into play for free, never mind the games where you plopped down two or three of them! Our first adjustment was to make it into a legendary land, that way you could only ever drop one at the beginning of the game. That version was still so powerful that every single deck in the FFL ran 4 of them. Eventually we concluded that there had to be a cost associated with using what turned out to be an incredibly powerful ability. Now if you're going second and you want to start with this in play, you have to remove a card in your hand from the game. It's still quite good (it's basically a better **Chrome Mox**, but only when you go second) and still shows up in FFL decks.

"So to answer your question, Jyri, we had to tweak it a bit to keep it within sight of being fair and balanced, but we've done that now and the fully developed version of Tsuyoshi Fujita's design will appear this fall in the first set of the next block, codenamed 'Snap.' The full text will look like this:"

Legendary Land

If CARDNAME is in your opening hand and you're not playing first, you may begin the game with CARDNAME in play with a luck counter on it. If you do, remove a card in your hand from the game.

{oT}: Add {o1} to your mana pool. If CARDNAME has a luck counter on it, add one mana of any color to your mana pool instead.

January 16, 2006



Q: "Regarding the Dimir, if the guild is so secret, how can people actually recruit to the guild? Or are people simply being recruited without being asked?"

--Uria

Amstelveen, The Netherlands

A: From **Brady Dommermuth**, **Magic** Creative Director:

"Uria, is 'Dimir' some kind of nickname for one of Ravnica's nine guilds? I'm not sure how to answer your question because I don't know what you're talking about. (If there were a guild called 'Dimir,' it probably wouldn't accept applicants.)"

January 13, 2006



Q: "Can someone please explain to me the big 'WOW' about **Lion's Eye Diamond**? I don't understand why the card is so great but based on other comments I know I'm missing something. Please help!"

--Willem

Florida Glen, Johannesburg

A: From **Nate Heiss**, **Magic** R&D:

"Well Willem, let's see...."

- "Zero-cost artifact:
33% historical chance of being broken (9 out of the 27 in **Magic** have been at least restricted)
- "Artifact that produces 'Lotus Flavor' mana:
50% historical chance of being broken (2 out of 4)
- "Resemblance to **Black Lotus**:
100% awesomeness.

"However, mere resemblance to great cards doesn't make a card great (you can ask **Lotus Vale** about that one). Indeed, **Lion's Eye Diamond** has hidden treasure in its play value.

"While some naysayers might view **Lion's Eye Diamond** as being strictly worse than **Black Lotus**, some people have turned their lemons into lemonade and abused the Lion's Eye right into restriction in Vintage. Just imagine a **Black Lotus** that lets you discard your hand, allowing you to do things like play madness cards, play flashback cards for less, or dump dredge cards into the grave...heck, I would at least pay ♠ for that! Just imagine if you could play 4 of these in the **Ichorid** deck in Extended! There are other cool things you can do with it, like make infinite mana with **Auriok Salvagers** or just negate the drawback with **Yawgmoth's Will**, making even more juicy mana to play your tasty spells from the grave.

"Truly, **Magic** is the only game where you can take one of the best cards ever, throw two drawbacks on it (discard and instant speed), and make it even better in some situations.

"I hope that clears some confusion up!"



January 12, 2006



Q: "I was hoping you could help me settle an argument. What type of animal is the **Infernal Spawn of Evil**? We have agreed it is from the rodent family, however our agreements have all ended there. We have argued that it is a rat, hamster, prairie dog, mouse, and have even gone beyond that. Perhaps it is a mix of two types of rodents, or maybe a

creature from another plane of existence? Please help me settle/win the argument."

--Adam
Janesville, WI

A: From **Mark Rosewater, Magic** Head Designer:

"Adam,

"For starters, don't be fooled by appearances. Yes, the **Infernal Spawn of Evil** appears to be a mouse, but then that's what it wants you to think. Who's going to be worried about a cute little mouse? One that drinks hot cocoa no less. How could such a creature possibly cause any harm? Yet, the mere knowledge that he's coming causes people such anxiety as to cause them physical pain. If you want the official word to settle your argument, I'll give you the company word. He's a demon. You heard it here. A demon. What? One second.

"After conferring with my colleagues, I've determined that he is actually a beast. Not a demon as previously stated. What? Another moment please.

"It has been brought to my attention by a different set of colleagues that the **Infernal Spawn of Infernal Spawn of Evil** is a demon. Can a beast spawn a demon? My sources say no. What? Hold on.

"Okay, the first set of colleagues has brought to my attention that in certain cultures, the term 'beast' is synonymous with 'demon'. So, yes, a beast could spawn a demon. What? Just one more second.

"All right. The second set of colleagues has used several unprofessional words and phrases about the first set of colleagues and the two are currently participating in a, um, let's call it a 'jovial, team-building brawl.' I think I have to go.

"Let's just say it's a mouse and leave it at that. At least that's what it wants you to think."



January 11, 2006

Q: "I was wondering, are you able to disclose the formats of the Last Chance Qualifiers of the [Pro Tours of the 2006 season](#) (at least the [LCQ of Pro Tour Honolulu](#))? Thank you very much."

--Joshua, USA

A: From **Scott Larabee**, DCI Program Manager:

"Joshua, our policy is that LCQ formats are always Standard for Constructed Pro Tour events, and Sealed Deck for Limited Pro Tour events. So, the Honolulu LCQ will be Standard format."

January 10, 2006

Q: "During the prereleases for new sets you get a tournament pack from the main set in the block, and then three boosters from the new set. The *Guildpact* prerelease will then have you spread out among 7 guilds. Won't it be difficult to use the new guild's cards if half of the cards you receive are from *Ravnica*?"

--Andrew
Renton, Washington, USA

A: From **Mike Turian, Magic** R&D:

"Ahh...the [prerelease for the newest set](#), is there any better time of year?

"Wizards R&D wondered about the exact issue that you asked about today. In his City Planning articles Mark Rosewater went into detail about some of the issues that *Ravnica: City of Guilds* and the guild model went through.

"The first way your concerns are addressed is through the availability trinities. Red, White, Green (Boros, Gruul, Selesnya) are all represented within *Ravnica* and *Guildpact*. Likewise, White, Green, Black (Golgari, Orzhov, Selesnya) are all present within the two available sets. If you decide to play those three color combinations at the prerelease then you won't have any issues getting at least one of the three new guilds into your pre-release deck. If you have your heart really set on playing as many of the new cards as possible I would suggest going with a Blue, Red, Green deck. This lets you get two *Guildpact* guilds, Izzet and Gruul, into your deck.

"Here is another way we made it possible to play more strategies. We intentionally looked at the numbers of mono-colored cards in each set to take into account that the guild distribution wasn't even throughout the block. If you look at *Ravnica*, for instance, there are more monored and monoblue cards than other mono colored cards. We wanted to help make it possible to have a reasonable selection of cards to work with even if half of the cards come from *Ravnica*.

"The Signets and Karoos (such as *Selesnya Sanctuary*) give you the perfect mana in order to cast your guild spells. It wasn't an uncommon sight to see someone casting an Orzhov spell using its Signet followed on the next turn by using an Izzet Karoo to play an Izzet spell. Even though playing four or five colors isn't always the way to go, the Signets and Karoos will help make your mana work that much better and let you play as many of the new guilds as you want at the prerelease.

"I know I will be at the Seattle Prerelease. I hope to see you playing all of the guilds there!"

January 9, 2006



Q: "I recently acquired some **Serra Angels**, and was wondering if you could give me some clue as to which set they are from. I shall set out the distinguishing features:

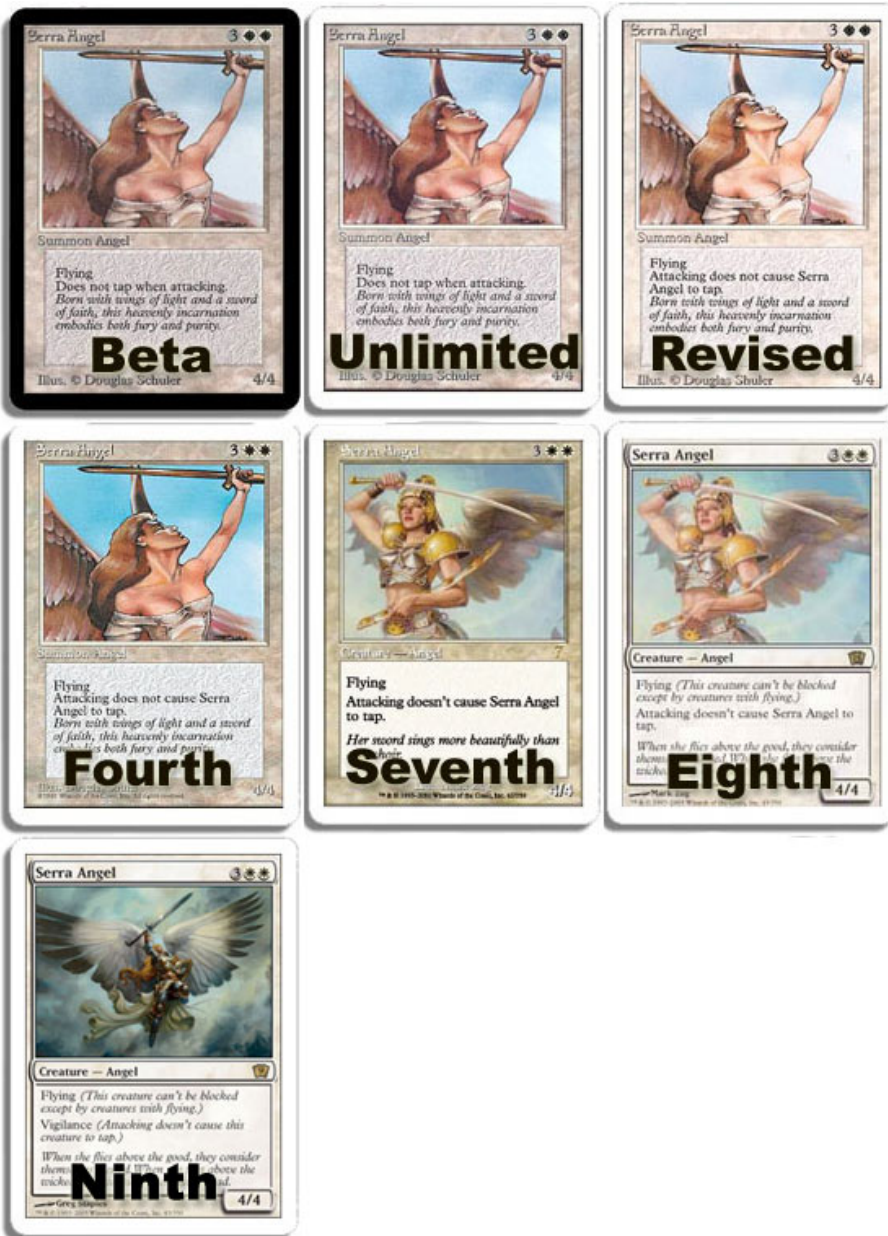
1. Illustrated by Douglas Schuler
2. Has no dates, the bottom of the card simply stating 'Illus. (c) Douglas Schuler'
3. Has a white border
4. The white mana symbol is old style (as seen on *Alpha* cards, for example)
5. The text reads 'Attacking does not cause Serra Angel to tap' as opposed to 'Does not tap to attack'
6. Has a light background, not the dark one (as seen in *Fourth Edition*)
7. Has a plain black line around the card artwork (i.e., between the artwork and its white border).

"Thanks, you will be saving us much grief!"

- Graeme and Andrew

A: From **Doug Beyer**, magicthegathering.com web developer:

"It sounds like the **Serra Angel** in question is from the *Revised* set, the set that came between *Unlimited* and *Fourth Edition*. It can be tough to identify cards in that period, so here's an unofficial **SERRA ANGEL IDENTIFICATION GUIDE**:



"Here's how you might come to the conclusion that it's a *Revised* card. First of all, *Alpha* and *Beta* cards are black-bordered, so they're out. The *Unlimited* Serra has the old 'Does not tap to attack' wording, and has the *Unlimited* set's characteristic [bevel](#) just inside the white border. The *Revised* Serra has a washed-out look to the print, no bevel, and the newer 'Attacking does not cause Serra Angel to tap' wording. The *Fourth Edition* one has modern-style [white mana symbols](#) and a richer color saturation. *Fifth Edition* cards carry no expansion

symbol, so a *Fifth* card would look similar to a *Fourth Edition* one, but Serra wasn't printed in *Fifth* or *Sixth Edition*, so that's out as well. And the *Seventh*, *Eighth* and *Ninth Edition* printings have new Serra art, and starting in *Ninth*, she has the keyworded vigilance ability.

"So there you go. Congratulations on your new *Revised Serra Angels!*"

January 6, 2006



Q: "It seems like **Magic** is increasingly a game of the young. Just out of curiosity - and to keep up the hopes of we unfortunates on the shady side of thirty - could you tell me who was the oldest player to win a Pro Tour? How about for a Grand Prix, or a National Championship?"

--David
Aberdeen, Scotland

A: From **Didier Monin**, OP Data System Manager:

"Thanks for the question David, we've been getting some interesting ones about events like this lately. For ease of search I just used premier events, which gave the following Top 4:

- "Scottish player Darryl Tweedale, born in 1930, won Day 1 of Scottish Nationals in 2001.
- "US player Tom Swan, born in 1950, won [Grand Prix Boston in 2001](#) defeating Alan Comer in the semi's and then our Content Manager Scott Johns in the final. In fact, at the time the average age of the four semi-finalists from this event was 34.5!
- "Mexican Enric Rodamilans, born in 1961, won 2004 Mexican Nationals.
- "Michael Pustilnik, of the US, born in 1965, won [PT Los Angeles in 2001](#)."



Tom Swan, GP Boston '01

January 5, 2006



Q: "As I am from Switzerland it is very cool that the Swiss rounds of a tournament are called so. But what is the origin of this name? There are many good **Magic** players in Switzerland, but our country did not seem to have a huge impact on the **Magic** community, except of the topic I am asking about. Swiss Greetings!"

--Philipp
Liestal, Switzerland

A: From **Scott M. Larabee**, DCI Program Manager:

"Philipp, the reason is a historical one. The first known tournament to use this style of pairings was a chess tournament in Zurich, Switzerland, all the way back in 1895.

"Reference: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swiss_tournament"

January 4, 2006



Q: "How do you decide whether an ability will have a 'may' on it (i.e. may draw a card, may gain life, may destroy something) versus not giving the choice?"

--Avi
Elgin, Illinois

A: From **Del Laugel**, **Magic** Senior Editor:

"That's a question I've seen before, but not on **magicthegathering.com**. It was the topic for a Tuesday **Magic** Meeting last year. Here's the handout I took to that meeting:

When are abilities optional? That is, when do we use "you may"?

April 12, 2005

Older cards (say, pre-2001) maintain their printed functionality.

Activated abilities are generally mandatory. We figure that you wouldn't have played the ability if you didn't want the effect. However, if the ability depends on cards in a hidden zone (usually your hand), it's optional so that a judge doesn't need to verify that you can't do the effect.

{T}: You may put a creature card with converted mana cost equal to the number of charge counters on **AEther Vial** from your hand into play.

You aren't required to find cards when you "search" (unless you're searching for just some number of cards) so most search abilities don't have to use "you may." They're optional either way. However, 31 cards in Oracle, including many in recent sets, do have optional search abilities. For some reason, this template just makes sense to players with the "you may" there to reinforce the rules.

When **Goblin Matron** comes into play, you may search your library for a Goblin card, reveal that card and put it into your hand. If you do, shuffle your library.

Triggered abilities that act as drawbacks are mandatory, for obvious reasons.

When **Balduvian Horde** comes into play, sacrifice it unless you discard a card at random.

Triggered abilities that allow you to draw cards are always optional because forgetting to draw a card carries more severe penalties than forgetting other effects. This template change kicked in around *Seventh Edition*. (We're just stuck with older cards like **Thieving Magpie**.)

[snipped an excerpt from the Floor Rules]

Triggered abilities that act like one-time activated abilities are optional.

Whenever **Dromar, the Banisher** deals combat damage to a player, you may pay {o2oU}. If you do, choose a color. Return all creatures of that color to their owners' hands.

Other triggered abilities are usually optional, for several reasons:

(1) To avoid backing up during games. The poster child for this is Soul Warden, which is mandatory, in a multiplayer game. Backing up isn't fun. Your opponent has been making decisions based on an inaccurate picture of the game state. If you forget about a beneficial effect, then you alone should suffer.

Whenever a player plays a blue spell, you may gain 1 life.

Whenever you play a Spirit or Arcane spell, you may put a ki counter on **Blademane Baku**.

(2) To avoid screwing yourself (without hurting the card in multiplayer, junking up the text, etc.).

When a creature with converted mana cost 6 or more comes into play, you may return **Dragon Breath** from your graveyard to play enchanting that creature.

Imprint -- When **Duplicant** comes into play, you may remove target nontoken creature from the game.

(3) To give players more options. If there's some possible scenario where choosing not to use the ability is the correct play, why not let players do that? (This is the same reason why we prefer "target player" over "target opponent" or "you.")

(4) To save people who don't know the rules from thinking that they can't play **Bladewing the Risen** without a Dragon in the graveyard. This isn't a high priority for the templating team, but it's a nice added bonus. :)

When **Bladewing the Risen** comes into play, you may return target Dragon card from your graveyard to play.

"The part about 'If you forget about a beneficial effect, then you alone should suffer' got a lot of support during the meeting, especially from the normally mild-mannered Mike Turian. Having to remind your opponents to kill you is one of the most miserable, unfun experiences you can have in a **Magic** game. And not reminding opponents about mandatory effects is cheating. The cards should prevent players from being in those situations.

"Only one policy change did come out of the meeting: Comes-into-play effects are generally mandatory now. Players are unlikely to forget to draw cards from **Flight of Fancy**, for example, because they had to read the spell before playing it anyway.

"That covers the basic policy, but no explanation of **Magic** templating is going to be completely consistent with the printed cards. (Read your black cards at the [Guildpact Prerelease!](#))"

January 3, 2006



Q: "I've noticed that 2/2 wizards, such as the **Meddling Mage**, tend to be very handsome. I've also noticed that 1/3 wizards, such as **Shadowmage Infiltrator**, aren't so nice to look at. I would think that, these being the high-profile Invitational cards that they are, you would be careful in this area. Is this a trend you plan on continuing?"

--Chris P.
New York, NY

A: From **Worth Wollpert**, **Magic** R&D:

"Dear Chris P.,

"Thanks for writing in! I guess the best way this can be explained is that even the ugliest creatures are usually considered 'handsome' by someone, usually the creature's mother. It's funny though, this is the only email we've gotten that claims the **Meddling Mage** could be even remotely considered as an attractive man. Conversely, we are bombarded by emails (mostly from adoring female fans, actually) about how cute the **Shadowmage Infiltrator** is. I don't work in the Online Media department, but at last count I heard those emails were coming in at a rate of about 2592 per day. Actually now that you mention it, as far as wizards go, the poor **Meddling Mage** is quite homely compared to the male-model types that are **Dark Confidant**, **Sylvan Safekeeper**, **Voidmage Prodigy**, and the aforementioned Shadowmage. In fact, I've heard that the second 'figure' to appear in the **Dark Confidant** art (in the background) is widely considered to be Brad Pitt to **Meddling Mage's** Dom Deluise. Yes, I know that's a rather unfortunate comparison for Chris Pikula who was the inspiration behind **Meddling Mage**, but facts are facts. Since your name is also Chris, I'm not sure if you are a guy or a girl, but if we safely assume you are female, and you appear to consider **Meddling Mage** attractive, I ask only that you consider your fellow humans before deciding to procreate. Thanks for writing in, sorry your warped view of reality doesn't mesh too well with actual facts. Let me know if I can be of any further assistance to you!"

Worth Wollpert
Shadowmage Infiltrator Fan
Wizards of the Coast R&D

January 2, 2006



Q: "I'm asking a very important question on behalf of the... oh gosh, TEN female gamers in the world. Is Matt Place single? I really can't think of anything better than an attractive man who games well AND can keep up with me doing a few laps (50 or more) around your mana pool. More often than not, I'm let down by guys who can barely keep up with me gaming, let alone doing laps. Please, oh please, tell me there's hope out there somewhere."

--Siren
Wichita, Kansas

A: From **Matt Place, Magic R&D:**

"Hello Siren,

"First of all, I want to thank you and all the other women who have sent similar emails.

"Since I was hired here at Wizards I have, of course, been approached by many women. Overall it has been great, but I have been 'used' in the past. For example, Nicole was the first girl I started dating after I got to Wizards. She was perfect, everything you could want in a woman, or so I thought. She eventually convinced me to suggest to Rosewater a cheap equipment card that gives your creature +1/-1 and has a trigger of 'when this creature dies, draw two cards'. To make a long story short, Nicole was banned from the Wizards buildings and soon after she broke up with me.

"To answer your question, there is hope, I'm always willing to try again.

"Forever the Fool'
Matt Place"



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