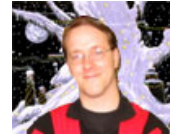


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## Guildpact is Upon Us

John Carter  
Saturday School  
Saturday, January 28, 2006



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](#).

Occasionally judges wonder what would happen if something happened at a prerelease. For people at the prerelease Saturday morning in Seattle, we found out. Evidently *Guildpact* is so hot it set off the fire alarm, and hundreds of players at various stages in their games were hustled outside until the all clear was given. This week we'll start with *Guildpact* questions straight from that prerelease and events around the world.

**Q:** Why does *Droning Bureaucrats* affect creatures that weren't in play when the ability resolved? How does this compare to the radiance effect from *Incite Hysteria*?

**A:** *Droning Bureaucrats*' activated ability generates a continuous effect. That effect doesn't modify creature characteristics; it modifies the rules of the game. [CR 418.3b] The game, not an individual creature, is told that creatures with a given converted mana cost can't attack or block for the turn.

*Incite Hysteria* as printed doesn't quite capture the intent of the card. Errata, as seen in Gatherer, have been issued. The errata grant an ability ("This creature can't block.") for the turn. Only creatures that are in play as *Incite Hysteria* resolves will be given the ability.

**Q:** Does *bloodthirst* use the stack?

**A:** No, if a creature with *bloodthirst* is coming into play after an opponent has been damaged, the counters are put on it while it is entering play, not after.

**Q:** I control an *Infiltrator's Magemark*. My opponent plays *Clinging Darkness* targeting my 2/1 creature that has no Auras on it. Does it die?

**A:** Your creature lives. [All of the Magemarks](#) give enchanted creatures you control +1/+1. *Clinging Darkness*' penalty and the Magemark bonus will kick in at the same time since the Darkness means your creature is now enchanted. Ultimately you 2/1 gets -4/-1 and +1/+1 which leaves you with a -1/1.

**\*Extra\*:** If you have to assign damage, any negative power is treated as 0. If you played *Gather Courage* on this -1/1, then you'd add the +2/+2 to make it a 1/3.

**Q:** Are Magemarks cumulative?

**A:** Yes, if you have two Magemarks, they will both give your enchanted creatures +1/+1.

**Q:** An opponent claimed that because *Necromancer's Magemark* goes to the graveyard at the same time as the creature, the creature wouldn't be reanimated. Could you clarify this? --Thomas E.

**A:** The enchanted creature never actually goes to the graveyard (NB: not a combo with *haunt*) because the Magemark's effect is a replacement. If an effect such as *Akroma's Vengeance* tries to destroy them both simultaneously, the Aura will go to the graveyard, but the Magemark's ability will replace the enchanted creature's trip to the graveyard with a trip to your hand.

**Q:** Are any combos that could be played with *Cerebral Vortex*? --Sung S.

**A:** That's not quite a rules question, but yes, there are. A simple one would be using *dredge* or some other effect to replace the draws - you'll not take damage for a draw that's been replaced. I'll leave it to the genius deckbuilders out there to try other ideas.

**Q:** If I use *Living Inferno* and targeting itself for 8 and play *Awe Strike* on it, do I gain 8 or 16 life? --Kris T.



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**A:** **Living Inferno** deals damage. Then the damage creature deals damage. That's two separate steps, so you'll only gain 8 life from **Awe Strike**, and the second damage effect will lethally damage the Inferno.

**Q:** If my opponent has **Wee Dragonauts** and plays **Gigadrowse** with four replicates, are his Dragonauts 3/3's or 11/3's? --Noah

**A:** The Wee are 3/3. Replicate copies are not played; they're put directly on the stack.

**Q:** I don't understand the point of **Nivix**, **Aerie of the Firemind**. If I'm reading it right, you still have to pay the spell's mana cost. --Blake

**A:** You do still have to pay the mana cost for the spell. But you didn't have to pay mana to play the land like you did to play an artifact **Bloodletter Quill**, for example. **Magic** is all about what business-folk would call risk-benefit analysis.

**\*Extra\*:** With a little help from **Sensei's Divining Top**, you can easily set up the next card to play or to remove just to get it out of your way.



**Q:** If **Arrest** or **Faith's Fetters** is played on **Niv-Mizzet, the Firemind**, can Niv's damaging-from-draw ability still be used? --Aman

**A:** Yes, Niv-Mizzet's damaging ability is triggered, **Faith's Fetters** and the like only shuts down activated abilities.

**Q:** Is **Followed Footsteps** any good for enhanced creatures like **Shrieking Grottesque**? --Corey J.

**A:** No, the copies you put into play weren't played, so nothing was paid for the playing that never happened. The enhance effect won't happen.

**\*Extra\*:** The same is true for **Followed Footsteps** on a creature with sunburst. You'll get no counters for sunburst on a Footsteps token.

**Q:** My opponent attacked with a 1/1 **War-Torch Goblin**, and I blocked with a 3/3 **Scab-Clan Mauler**. After combat damage was resolved, he sacrificed his Goblin to deal another 2 damage. I was told that the rules allows this. --Soh

**A:** Not quite, but the difference is very subtle. **War-Torch Goblin** will be dead after combat damage resolves. However, you are allowed to sacrifice the Goblin after combat damage is assigned - before it resolves.

**\*Extra\*:** Players can often be confused if timing is not clear. I would suggest just describing when you want to do something if you can't recall the technical terms. For example, "after assigning 1 damage to the Mauler, I'll activate the Goblin's ability targeting the Mauler" is a very technical way to say it. Just as easy to understand is "first stack damage, and before it takes damage I'll throw the Goblin at your Mauler." Just be clear about what and when.



**Q:** Is the special promo prerelease card was playable in a Standard format? I have never been to a Standard tournament, so I'm not sure. --Steve

**A:** Promotional foil cards like the prerelease **Djinn Illuminatus** are playable in any Constructed format that allows a card with that name. You can't play promo cards in the prerelease, of course.

**\*Extra\*:** **Djinn Illuminatus** and the rest of **Guildpact** becomes legal in Constructed formats on February 20th. If you're wanting to try out tournament Standard (a.k.a. Type 2), I'd recommend Friday Night **Magic** for a competitive yet relaxed event. More info about FNM is found [here](#).

**Q:** If I have a **Lightning Bolt** removed by **Eye of the Storm**, and a **Djinn Illuminatus** in play, does the **Lightning Bolt** have replicate? --Jesse J.

**A:** The copy that you play will have replicate. The copies from **Eye of the Storm** are played, and they are instants or sorceries. It doesn't matter that there's no actual card to represent the copy. You will have to pay the mana cost from the associated card to replicate the Bolt.

**Q:** If two players both decide to start the game out with a **Leyline of Singularity** each, when does the legend rule destroy them? --Mike

**A:** As the player who takes the first turn is about to get priority during his or her upkeep, state-based effects will check, and the two now-legendary enchantments will be put into the graveyard (not quite the same as destroyed).

**Q:** Does **Godless Shrine** count as a Shrine for the Kamigawa Honden? --Branden

**A:** No. **Godless Shrine** has the land subtypes Plains and a Swamp, but it doesn't have the enchantment subtype Shrine. The only Shrines the Honden see are other *Champions of Kamigawa* Shrines.

**Q:** If I flashback **Chainer's Edict** with **Djinn Illuminatus** in play, is it possible to replicate it? The replicate would just be 2 mana right? --Paul L.

**A:** Flashback is an alternate way of playing an instant or sorcery, but it is playing the spell, so **Djinn Illuminatus** will let you replicate it. The replicate cost is  $\{1\}$ .

**Q:** Will there be *Guildpact* tournament packs for sale? --Joe

**A:** No, *Guildpact* is only available in booster packs, fat packs, and theme decks. Tournament packs are produced only for the large set in a block.



**Q:** My friend played **Warp World**. I revealed a **Dream Leash** from the **Warp World**. What happens to the **Dream Leash** (there were no tapped permanents)? Would it go to my graveyard, the bottom of my library, into play, or to my hand? --Phil

**A:** The "play **Dream Leash** only on a tapped permanent" restriction only applies to playing the **Dream Leash** spell, not putting it into play some other way. So you can Leash an untapped permanent off of **Warp World** just fine.

**\*Extra\*:** Imagine if only sorceries and instants and a **Dream Leash** were revealed. Ick! In that case, there would be no cards to put into play, so there'd be no permanent to Leash. This would mean the Leash is one of the "cards revealed this way that weren't put into play," so you'd put it on the bottom of the library.

**Q:** When I play **Chord of Calling** to get **Verdeloth the Ancient**, can I convoke the kicker cost to put Saprolings into play? And if I can't, can I pay the kicker with normal mana as it comes into play? --Mike S.

**A:** Kicker is part of playing the Verdeloth spell, so convoking **Chord of Calling** for more than Verdeloth's converted mana cost won't do anything. Kicker isn't paid for objects being put into play by other means.

**Q:** I pay  $\{4\}$  to play **Vigor Mortis**. Do I put two +1/+1 counters on the creature or just one? --Brian

**A:** You put one counter on the creature. "Enhanced" spells such as **Vigor Mortis** ask only if a color of mana was spent. **Vigor Mortis**' answer is a simple yes or no, not a number of how much  $\{1\}$  was spent.

**Q:** Does **Heartstone** make **Frenetic Efreet**'s ability cost  $\{1\}$  instead of  $\{0\}$ ? --Travis M.

**A:** No, the Efreet's activation is naturally  $\{0\}$ . Since Heartstone's ability isn't what made the ability cost  $\{0\}$ , the  $\{1\}$  cost doesn't apply.

Several people have asked how **Izzet Guildmage** can copy a  $\{1\}$   $\{2\}$   $\{3\}$  **Lava Spike** with **Desperate Ritual** spliced on. The answer has to do with terms that we see very often but are easily confused. Rather than re-explain the combo, we're going to have a rules vocabulary review.

**Q:** What is a mana cost?

**A:** Mana cost is the cost printed in the upper-right corner of a card.

**Q:** What if there's an X in that cost?

**A:** X is treated as 0 anywhere except on the stack. The value of X while on the stack is the only time you'll see a mana cost that varies.



**Q:** Then what is converted mana cost?

**A:** Converted mana cost (CMC) is the mana cost made into a single number. Take generic mana, add a count of colored symbols, and you've just converted the mana cost. For example, the mana cost  $\{2\}$ ,  $\{1\}$ ,  $\{2\}$ ,  $\{3\}$ , and  $\{4\}$  all convert into 2.

**\*Extra\*:** Converted mana costs are just numbers. You won't see a converted mana cost in the gray circle that colorless mana appears in.

**Q:** So a converted mana cost is derived directly from the mana cost?

**A:** Exactly.

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**Q:** What about additional costs, alternate costs, or cost increases and reductions?

**A:** They're not in the upper-left corner. Those don't ever change a mana cost or a converted mana cost.

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**Q:** What type of costs are splice, kicker, and buyback?

**A:** They're additional costs--they let you pay something beyond the mana cost.

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**Q:** What about **Force of Will**, **Shining Shoal**, **Fist of Suns**?

**A:** They're alternate costs - they let you do something else rather than pay the mana cost.

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**Q:** Where do cost increases and reductions come into the picture?

**A:** All cost increases, whether from an effect like **Sphere of Resistance** or from splice, kicker and buyback affect the total cost.

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**Q:** What is "total cost"?

**A:** Total cost is what you actually are spending to play the spell or ability. It's the sum, or total, of all the other parts we just discussed.

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**Q:** Can you give me an example?

**A:** You know I love examples...

**Lava Spike's** mana cost is  $\{2\}$ . This converts into a CMC of 1. The total cost to play **Lava Spike** is  $\{2\}$ . If you splice on **Desperate Ritual** for an additional  $\{1\}$ , the total cost goes from  $\{2\}$  to  $\{3\}$ , but the mana cost and CMC remain  $\{2\}$  and 1 respectively. Take that same spliced Spike. Now pay for it with **Fist of Suns**. Rather than spending  $\{2\} + \{1\}$ , the total cost you'll spend  $\{1\} + \{1\} + \{1\}$ . That's not very cost effective, but the mana cost remains  $\{2\}$  and still converts into 1.

Since **Izzet Guildmage** only cares about the CMC, all the splicing, reducing, and alternate costs don't affect the Guildmage - it sees the CMC of 1 the whole time.

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That's all for this week. Don't forget that the [Guildpact release events](#) are next weekend to coincide with first days the set is available for purchase.

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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