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# Tenth Edition Vampire Bats Art Process

Magic Arcana  
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The countdown to *Tenth Edition* and [Magic Game Day](#) is on! *Tenth Edition* is packed with [cards you chose](#) last summer, and is in many cases illustrated with new art that you selected at the sketch stage.

Although you may have seen the final art of *Tenth Edition's Vampire Bats*, today we take a look at the entire process of illustrating the card, from sketch to finish. You selected the *Vampire Bats* sketch of artist Chippy, and now Chippy himself takes you through the process of creating the new art, in his own words.

## Stage 1



"Starting with the initial sketch, it was quite a different perspective on a flying creature for **Magic**. A bat's wings are so big in proportion to its body that I really thought the guy would end up looking a bit lost on the card, and kind of strange to have as something that does damage to other things. So I decided to go in close and just concentrate on the expression on its face and make sure you could see its teeth. I also wanted a moon in there, and some sort of sleepy Germanic hamlet—all the classics. So this is what I got when I put it all together."

## Stage 2

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"Going to colour I got rid of all the B/W on the page. I saw my first red moon the other day so that inspired me to go for a rusty orangy palette, which wasn't what I had in mind at all when I was sketching, but I figured it would be different and fun."

### Stage 3



"I worked in the background first. Usually I do this last but I've been thinking it's probably best to put something in context before I go in to the main character, so that's what I'm trying here. It worked quite well and I'll probably go this way with future pieces. I really wanted to set a little scene here so there's quite a bit of stuff going on, the moon of course, but also the little bridges, the trees, the windows and stuff. Fun to get lost in."

#### Stage 4



"I started to work on the values of the bat itself and that in turn began to effect how I thought about the background. So just about everything is being worked on together from here on in, with the bat taking the lead now and the background conforming to the changes I made on it."

#### Stage 5



"I decided the background was too low and I was losing my little bridge that I liked down at the bottom, so the only reason I changed things here was because I didn't want the bridge to disappear in a crop for print. Really I

should give it more of a bleed and I wouldn't have that problem."

### Stage 6



"The bat's core shadows are pretty much set here, so after this I can just get to work on rendering it out the next time I come back to it."

### Stage 7

"What happens quite a lot when you're working on something is you get lost in it. You stop 'seeing' what you're working on and it's not till you come back later that a problem you didn't notice before is now glaringly obvious. I got carried away with my funky moon colour scheme and didn't work with the tonal composition well enough. Basically the bat's tonal value was too close to the sky and getting lost in it, and that made everything a bit messy. So I went back to the original sketch and used the tonal values from there because it was way punchier. The background lost a lot of its tonal range but it created a much clearer tonal range across the whole piece, which makes it simpler to 'read.'"

### Stage 8



"So this is the finish, apart from the rendering. The only other new choice I made was to change the colour hue in the top right, to help the piece stop feeling floaty around there. It helps anchor the corner a little more. Oh yeah, and it was pointed out by several people that the card was Vampire BatS so I added a couple more in, and this helped the composition a little too, so all for the better. Oh, and I made his eye a little narrower and nastier."

#### Stage 9



"So, never say anything is finished, because it pretty much puts a cast-iron guarantee on it that it isn't. After reviewing the final, Jeremy Jarvis, the art director, let me know that the nice detailing in the moon wouldn't show up in the printing with the final brightest moon, and we'd be best to go back to one of the earlier ones. So I made

the changes and re-sent the picture. Thankfully he had already approved the piece, which means I got to send my invoice. :)"



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