

Introduction

This document is the ultimate authority for *Magic: The Gathering* competitive game play. It consists of a series of numbered rules followed by a glossary. Many of the numbered rules are divided into subrules, and each separate rule and subrule of the game has its own number. (Note that subrules skip the letters “l” and “o” due to potential confusion with the numbers “1” and “0”. For example, subrule 7.4.5.k is followed by 7.4.5.m, then 7.4.5.n, then 7.4.5.p.)

Changes may have been made to this document since its publication. You can download the most recent version from the *Magic* rules website at magic.wizards.com/rules.

1

(Game Concepts)

1.0

(General)

1.0.1

These *Magic* rules apply to any *Magic* game with two or more players. Such a game is either a two-player game or a multiplayer game.

1.0.1.a

A two-player game is a game that begins with only two players.

1.0.1.b

A multiplayer game is a game that begins with more than two players. See [section 8 \(Multiplayer Rules\)](#).

1.0.2

To play, each player needs his own deck of traditional *Magic* cards, small items to represent any tokens and counters, and some way to clearly track life totals.

1.0.2.a

Constructed play is a way of playing in which each player creates their own deck ahead of time. In constructed play, each deck has a *minimum deck size* of 60 cards. A constructed deck may contain any number of basic land cards and no more than four of any card with a particular English name other than basic land cards. For the purposes of deck construction, cards with interchangeable names have the same English name (see [rule 2.1.3](#)).

1.0.2.b

Limited play is a way of playing in which each player gets the same quantity of unopened *Magic* product, such as booster packs, and creates his own deck using only this product and basic land cards. In limited play, each deck has a minimum deck size of 40 cards. A limited deck may contain as many duplicates of a card as are included with the product.

1.0.2.c

A *Commander* deck is subject to additional deckbuilding restrictions and requirements. See [rule 9.3 \(Commander\)](#) for details.

1.0.2.d

The occasional format or casual play variant allows players to use a supplementary deck of nontraditional *Magic* cards (see [rule 1.8.2.a](#)). Such a supplementary deck has its own deck construction rules. See rules [7.17 \(*Attraction Cards*\)](#), [9.1 \(*Planechase*\)](#), and [9.4 \(*Archenemy*\)](#).

1.0.3

The occasional card requires coins or traditional dice. The occasional casual variant requires additional items, such as specially designated cards, nontraditional *Magic* cards, or specialized dice.

1.0.4

Each player may also have a *sideboard*, which is a group of additional cards that the player may use to modify his deck between games of a match.

1.0.4.a

In constructed play, a sideboard may contain no more than fifteen cards. The four-card limit (see [rule 1.0.2.a](#)) applies to the combined deck and sideboard.

1.0.4.b

In limited play involving individual players, all cards in a player's card pool not included in his deck are in that player's sideboard.

1.0.4.c

In limited play involving the Two-Headed Giant multiplayer variant, all cards in a team's card pool but not in either player's deck are in that team's sideboard.

1.0.4.d

In limited play involving any other multiplayer team variant: Each card in a team's card pool but not in any player's deck is assigned to the sideboard of one of those players. Each player has his own sideboard. Cards may not be transferred between players.

1.0.5

If a deck must contain at least a certain number of cards, that number is referred to as a minimum deck size. There is no maximum deck size for non-Commander decks.

1.0.6

A *Magic* tournament is an organized play activity where players compete against other players to win prizes. The usual *Magic* tournament has additional rules covered in the *Magic: The Gathering* Tournament Rules (found at wpn.wizards.com/en/resources/rules-documents). These rules may limit the use of some cards, including barring all cards from some older sets.

1.0.6.a

The usual tournament consists of a series of *matches*. The usual two-player match involves playing until one player has won two games. The usual multiplayer match consists of only one game.

1.0.6.b

A player can use the *Magic* Store & Event Locator at wizards.com/locator to find tournaments in his area.

1.0.7

The occasional card is intended for casual play and may have features and text that aren't covered by these rules. Such a card may be a *Mystery Booster* playtest card, a promotional card or card in an “Un-set” that was printed with a silver border, or a card in the *Unfinity* expansion that has an acorn symbol at the bottom of the card.

1.1

(The *Magic* Golden Rules)

1.1.1

Whenever a card's text directly contradicts these rules, the card takes precedence. The card overrides only the rule that applies to that specific situation. The only exception is that a player can *concede* the game at any time (see rule 1.4.3.a).

1.1.2

When a rule or effect allows or directs something to happen, and another effect states that it can't happen, the “can't” effect takes precedence.

Example

Explore has the ability “You may play an additional land this turn.”. Turf Wound has the ability “Target player can't play lands this turn.”. If a player casts Explore, and then another player casts Turf Wound targeting the first player, the first player can't play lands this turn.

1.1.2.a

Adding abilities to objects and removing abilities from objects don't fall under this rule. (See rule 1.13.10.)

1.1.3

Any part of an instruction that's impossible to perform is ignored. (The card often will specify a consequence for this. If it doesn't, there's no effect.)

1.1.4

If multiple players would make choices and/or take actions at the same time, the active player (the player whose turn it is) makes any choices required, then the next player in turn order (usually the player seated to the active player's left) makes any choices required, followed by the remaining nonactive players in turn order. Then the actions happen simultaneously. This rule is often referred to as the “Active Player, Nonactive Player (APNAP) order” rule.

Example

Innocent Blood has the ability “Each player sacrifices a creature of his choice.”. When Innocent Blood is cast: First, the active player chooses a creature he controls. Then each of the nonactive players, in turn order, chooses a creature he controls. Then all creatures chosen this way are sacrificed simultaneously.

1.1.4.a

If an effect has each player choose a card in a hidden zone, such as his hand or library, those cards may remain face down as they're chosen. However, each player must clearly indicate which face-down card he is choosing.

1.1.4.b

A player knows the choices made by the previous players when making his choice, except as specified in 1.1.4.a.

1.1.4.c

If a player would make more than one choice at the same time, the player makes the choices in the order specified. If no order is specified, the player chooses the order.

1.1.4.d

If a choice made by a nonactive player causes the active player, or a different nonactive player earlier in the turn order, to have to make a choice, APNAP order is restarted for all outstanding choices.

1.1.4.e

If multiple players would make choices or take actions while starting the game, the starting player is considered the active player and each other player is considered a nonactive player.

1.2

(Players)

1.2.1

A *player* is one of the people in the game. The *active player* is the player whose turn it is. Any other player is a *nonactive player*.

1.2.2

In a two-player game, a player's *opponent* is the other player.

1.2.3

In a multiplayer game between teams, a player's *teammate* is any other player on his team, and a player's opponent is any player not on his team.

1.2.4

The occasional spell or ability uses the term "your team" as shorthand for "you and/or your teammates". In a game that isn't a multiplayer game between teams, "your team" means the same thing as "you".

1.3

(Starting the Game)

1.3.1

At the start of a game, the players determine which one of them will choose who takes the first turn. In the first game of a match (including a single-game match), the players may use any mutually agreeable method (flipping a coin, rolling dice, etc.) to do so. In a match of several games, the loser of the previous game chooses who takes the first turn. If the previous game was a draw, the player who made the choice in that game makes the choice in this game. The player chosen to take the first turn is the *starting player*. The game's default turn order begins with the starting player and proceeds clockwise.

1.3.1.a

In a game using the shared team turns option, there is a *starting team* rather than a starting player.

1.3.1.b

In an Archenemy game, these methods aren't used to determine who takes the first turn. Rather, the archenemy takes the first turn.

1.3.1.c

One card (Power Play) states that its controller is the starting player. This effect applies after this determination has happened, and supersedes these methods.

1.3.2

The occasional game requires additional steps that are taken after the starting player has been determined. Perform the actions listed in 1.3.2.a–e in order, as applicable.

1.3.2.a

If any players are using sideboards (see rule 1.0.4) or cards being represented by substitute cards (see rule 7.13), those cards are set aside. After this happens, each player's deck is considered his *starting deck*.

1.3.2.b

If any player wishes to reveal from outside the game a card that he owns with a companion ability, he may do so. A player may reveal no more than one card this way, and he may do so only if his deck fulfills the condition of that card's companion ability. The revealed card remains outside the game. (See rule 7.2.139 (Companion).

1.3.2.c

In a Commander game, each player puts his commander from his deck face up into the command zone. See rule 9.3.6.

1.3.2.d

In a constructed game, each player playing with sticker sheets reveals all of his sticker sheets and chooses three of them at random. In a limited game, each player chooses up to three sticker sheets from among those in the sealed product he opened and reveals them. In either case, that player has access to only the stickers on the chosen sheets during the game, and those sticker sheets remain revealed. (See rule 1.23 (Stickers).

1.3.2.e

In a Conspiracy Draft game, each player puts any number of conspiracy cards from his sideboard into the command zone. See rule 9.5.4.

1.3.3

After the starting player has been determined and any additional steps performed, each player shuffles his deck so that the cards are in a random order. Each player may then shuffle or cut his opponents' decks. Each player's deck becomes his library.

1.3.3.a

In a game using one or more supplementary decks of nontraditional cards (see rule 1.0.2.d): Each supplementary deck's owner shuffles it so the cards are in a random order. Each player may then shuffle or cut his opponents' supplementary decks.

1.3.4

Each player begins the game with a *starting life total* of 20. The occasional variant game has a different starting life total.

1.3.4.a

In a Two-Headed Giant game, each team's starting life total is 30.

1.3.4.b

In a Vanguard game, each player's starting life total is 20 plus or minus the life modifier of his vanguard card.

1.3.4.c

In a Commander game, each player's starting life total is 40.

1.3.4.d

In a two-player Brawl game, each player's starting life total is 25. In a multiplayer Brawl game, each player's starting life total is 30.

1.3.4.e

In an Archenemy game, the archenemy's starting life total is 40.

1.3.5

Each player draws a number of cards equal to his *starting hand size*, which normally is seven. (The occasional effect can modify a player's starting hand size.) A player who is dissatisfied with his initial hand may take a *mulligan*. First, the starting player declares whether he will take a mulligan. Then each other player in turn order does the same. Once each player has made a declaration, all players who decided to take mulligans do so at the same time. To take a mulligan, a player shuffles the cards in his hand back into his library, draws a new hand of cards equal to his starting hand size, then puts a number of those cards equal to the number of times that player has taken a mulligan on the bottom of his library in any order. Once a player chooses not to take a mulligan, the remaining cards become that player's *opening hand*, and that player may not take any further mulligans. This process is then repeated until no player takes a mulligan. A player can take mulligans until his opening hand would be zero cards, after which he may not take further mulligans.

1.3.5.a

In a Vanguard game, each player's starting hand size is seven plus or minus the hand modifier of his vanguard card.

1.3.5.b

If an effect allows a player to perform an action “any time [that player] could mulligan”, the player may perform that action at a time he would declare whether he will take a mulligan. This need not be in the first round of mulligans. Other players may have already made their mulligan declarations by the time the player has the option to perform this action. If the player performs the action, he then declares whether he will take a mulligan.

1.3.5.c

In a multiplayer game and in any Brawl game, the first mulligan a player takes doesn't count toward the number of cards that player will put on the bottom of his library or toward the number of mulligans that player may take. Subsequent mulligans are counted toward these numbers as normal.

1.3.5.d

In a multiplayer game using the shared team turns option: First each player on the starting team declares whether that player will take a mulligan, then the players on each other team in turn order do the same. Teammates may consult while making their decisions. Then all mulligans are taken at the same time. A player may take a mulligan even after a teammate has decided to keep his opening hand.

1.3.6

The occasional card allows a player to take actions with it from his opening hand. Once the mulligan process (see [rule 1.3.5](#)) is complete, the starting player may take any such actions in any order. Then each other player in turn order may do the same.

1.3.6.a

If a card allows a player to begin the game with that card on the battlefield, the player taking this action puts that card onto the battlefield.

1.3.6.b

If a card allows a player to reveal it from their opening hand: The player taking this action does so. The card remains revealed until the first turn begins. Each card may be revealed this way only once.

1.3.6.c

In a multiplayer game using the shared team turns option: First, each player on the starting team, in whatever order that team likes, may take such actions. Teammates may consult while making their decisions. Then each player on each other team in turn order does the same.

1.3.7

In a Planechase game, the starting player moves the top card of his planar deck off that planar deck and turns it face up. If it's a phenomenon card, the player puts that card on the bottom of his planar deck and repeats this process until a plane card is turned face up. The face-up plane card becomes the starting plane. (See [rule 9.1 \(Planechase\)](#).)

1.3.8

The starting player takes his first turn.

1.3.8.a

In a two-player game, the player who plays first skips the draw step (see [rule 5.4 \(Draw Step\)](#)) of his first turn.

1.3.8.b

In a Two-Headed Giant game, the team that plays first skips the draw step of its first turn.

1.3.8.c

In all other multiplayer games, no player skips the draw step of his first turn.

1.4

(Ending the Game)

1.4.1

A game ends immediately when a player wins, when the game is a draw, or when the game is restarted.

1.4.2

There are several ways to win the game.

1.4.2.a

A player still in the game wins the game if that player's opponents have all left the game. This happens immediately and overrides all effects that would preclude that player from winning the game.

1.4.2.b

The occasional effect states that a player wins the game.

1.4.2.c

In a multiplayer game between teams, a team with at least one player still in the game wins the game if all other teams have left the game. Each player on the winning team wins the game, even if one or more of those players had previously lost that game.

1.4.2.d

In an Emperor game, a team wins the game if its emperor wins the game. (See [rule 8.9.5.](#))

1.4.3

There are several ways to lose the game.

1.4.3.a

A player can concede the game at any time. A player who concedes leaves the game immediately. That player loses the game.

1.4.3.b

If a player's life total is 0 or less, that player loses the game the next time a player would receive priority. (This is a state-based action. See [rule 7.4.](#))

1.4.3.c

If a player is required to draw more cards than are left in his library, he draws the remaining cards and then loses the game the next time a player would receive priority. (This is a state-based action. See [rule 7.4.](#))

1.4.3.d

If a player has ten or more poison counters, that player loses the game the next time a player would receive priority. (This is a state-based action. See [rule 7.4.](#))

1.4.3.e

The occasional effect states that a player loses the game.

1.4.3.f

If a player would both win and lose the game simultaneously, that player loses the game.

1.4.3.g

In a multiplayer game between teams, a team loses the game if all players on that team have lost the game.

1.4.3.h

In a multiplayer game using the limited range of influence option (see [rule 8.1](#)), an effect that states that a player wins the game instead causes all of that player's opponents within the player's range of influence to lose the game. This may not cause the game to end.

1.4.3.i

In an Emperor game, a team loses the game if its emperor loses the game. (See [rule 8.9.5.](#))

1.4.3.j

In a Commander game, a player who's been dealt 21 or more combat damage by the same commander over the course of the game loses the game. (This is a state-

based action. See [rule 7.4](#). See also [rule 9.3.10](#).)

1.4.3.k

In a tournament, a player may lose the game as a result of a penalty given by a judge. See [rule 1.0.6](#).

1.4.4

There are several ways for the game to be a draw.

1.4.4.a

If all the players remaining in a game lose simultaneously, the game is a draw.

1.4.4.b

If a game that's not using the limited range of influence option (including a two-player game) somehow enters a "loop" of mandatory actions, repeating a sequence of events with no way to stop, the game is a draw. Loops that contain an optional action don't result in a draw.

1.4.4.c

The occasional effect states that the game is a draw.

1.4.4.d

In a multiplayer game between teams, the game is a draw if all remaining teams lose simultaneously.

1.4.4.e

In a multiplayer game using the limited range of influence option, the effect of a spell or ability that states that the game is a draw causes the game to be a draw for that spell or ability's controller and all players within his range of influence. Only those players leave the game. The game continues for all other players.

1.4.4.f

In a multiplayer game using the limited range of influence option, if the game somehow enters a "loop" of mandatory actions, repeating a sequence of events with no way to stop, the game is a draw for each player who controls an object that's involved in that loop, as well as for each player within the range of influence of any of those players. Only those players leave the game. The game continues for all other players.

1.4.4.g

In a multiplayer game between teams, the game is a draw for a team if the game is a draw for all remaining players on that team.

1.4.4.h

In the Emperor variant, the game is a draw for a team if the game is a draw for its emperor. (See [rule 8.9.5](#).)

1.4.4.i

In a tournament, all players in the game may agree to an intentional draw. See [rule 1.0.6](#).

1.4.5

If a player loses the game, that player leaves the game. If the game is a draw for a player, that player leaves the game. The multiplayer rules handle what happens when a player leaves the game. See [rule 8.0.4](#).

1.4.6

One card (Karn Liberated) restarts the game. All players still in the game when it restarts then immediately begin a new game. See rule 7.24 (Restarting the Game).

1.5

(Colors)

1.5.1

There are five *colors* in the *Magic* game: white, blue, black, red, and green.

1.5.2

An object can be one or more of the five colors, or it can be no color at all. An object is the color or colors of the mana symbols in its mana cost, regardless of the color of its frame. An object's color or colors may also be defined by a color indicator or a characteristic-defining ability. See rule 2.2.2.

1.5.2.a

A *monocolored* object is exactly one of the five colors.

1.5.2.b

A *multicolored* object is two or more of the five colors.

1.5.2.c

A *colorless* object has no color.

1.5.3

The occasional effect changes an object's color or gives a color to a colorless object. If an effect gives an object a new color, the new color replaces all previous colors the object had (unless the effect said the object became that color "in addition" to its other colors). The occasional effect also makes a colored object become colorless.

1.5.4

If a player is asked to choose a color, he must choose one of the five colors. "Multicolored" is not a color. Neither is "colorless".

1.5.5

If an effect refers to a *color pair*, it means exactly two of the five colors. There are ten color pairs: white and blue, white and black, blue and black, blue and red, black and red, black and green, red and green, red and white, green and white, and green and blue.