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COMPREHENSIVE  
RULES

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In response to play issues and to keep these rules as current as possible, changes may have been made to this document since its printing. See the Wizards of the Coast® website for the current version of the official rules.

**[www.wizards.com](http://www.wizards.com)**

# Magic: The Gathering®

## Comprehensive Rules

### Introduction

This book is designed for people who've moved beyond the basic **Magic: The Gathering**® game. If you're a beginning **Magic**® player, you'll probably find these rules pretty intimidating. They're intended to be the ultimate authority to the game, and you won't usually need to refer to them except in specific cases or during a tournament.

For casual play, and nearly every ordinary situation, you'll find what you need in the general rulebook included with the **Magic: The Gathering—Classic**™ game box. That's also the best place to begin if you're moving up from a starter-level **Magic** product such as the **Magic: The Gathering—Portal**™ or **Portal Second Age**™ sets. If you're sure this is where you want to be, keep reading.

This document is organized in a series of numbered rules. Many of these rules are in turn subdivided, and each separate rule of the game has its own number. Words or phrases in *italics* are defined in the glossary, which starts on p. 46.

We at Wizards of the Coast® recognize that no matter how detailed the rules, there will always be situations in which the interactions of specific cards require a precise answer. If you have questions, you can get the answers from us. See inside the front cover for contact information.

# 1. The Game

## 100. General

- 100.1. These **Magic** rules assume a game between two players. Optional rules allow for more players but aren't discussed here. These can be found at the Wizards of the Coast® website at <[www.wizards.com](http://www.wizards.com)>.
- 100.2. In constructed-deck play, each player needs his or her own *deck* of at least sixty *cards* with no more than four copies of any card except basic lands; small objects to represent any *tokens* and *counters*; and some way to clearly track *life totals*.
- 100.3. For sealed-deck or draft play, only forty cards are required in a deck, and a player may use as many copies of a card as he or she has. See the DCI™ Standard Floor Rules for more information.
- 100.4. There is no maximum deck size.
- 100.5. Most **Magic** tournaments have special rules (not included here) and may limit the use of some cards, including barring all cards from older sets. See the DCI Standard Floor Rules for more information.

## 101. Starting the Game

- 101.1. At the start of a game, each player shuffles his or her own deck so that the cards are in a random order. Each player may then cut his or her opponent's deck.
- 101.2. After the decks have been shuffled, the players determine who will play first, using any mutually agreeable method (flipping a coin, rolling dice, etc.). In a *match* of several games, the loser of the previous game decides who will play first.
- 101.3. Once the starting player has been determined, each player sets his or her life total to 20 and draws a *hand* of seven cards.
- 101.4. The player who plays first *skips* the *draw step* (see rule 304, "Draw Step") of his or her first turn.
- 101.5. A player who is dissatisfied with his or her initial hand may *mulligan*. That player shuffles his or her hand back into the deck, then draws a new hand of six cards. He or she may repeat this process as many times as desired, drawing one fewer card each time, until the hand reaches zero cards. Once the first player decides to keep a hand, the second player may mulligan. Once both players are satisfied with their hands, the first player takes his or her turn.

## 102. Winning and Losing

- 102.1. If a player's life total is 0 or less, he or she loses the game immediately.
- 102.2. When a player is required to draw more cards than are left in his or her library, he or she loses instead.
- 102.3. A game immediately ends when either these rules or a card effect states that a player loses or wins.
- 102.4. If both players lose simultaneously, the game is a *draw*.
- 102.5. If a player would both win and lose simultaneously, he or she loses.
- 102.6. If the game somehow "loops," repeating a sequence of events with no way to stop, the game is a draw.
- 102.7. A player may concede a game at any time.

## 103. The Golden Rule

- 103.1. The **Magic** Golden Rule is: Whenever a card's text contradicts these rules, the card takes precedence. The card overrides only the rule that applies to that specific situation. If an instruction requires taking an impossible action, it's ignored. (In many cases the card will specify consequences for this; if it doesn't, there's no effect.)

## 2. Cards

### 200. General

200.1. When a rule or card text refers to a “card,” it means a **Magic** card with a **Magic** card front and the **Magic** card back. An *Unglued™* card that represents a token isn’t considered a card for rules purposes.

### 201. Parts of a Card

201.1. The parts of a card are: name, *mana cost*, illustration, *type*, *expansion symbol*, text box, *power/toughness*, credit, legal text, and collector number.

### 202. Name

202.1. The name of a card is printed on its upper-left corner.

202.2. Card text that refers to that card by name means just that particular copy of the card and not any other copies of it, regardless of any name changes due to game effects.

202.3. Two cards are considered to have the same name if the English versions of their names are identical, regardless of anything else printed on the cards.

### 203. Mana Cost

203.1. The mana cost of a card is indicated by *mana symbols* printed on its upper-right corner. Tokens and *lands* have no mana cost. Paying a card’s mana cost requires matching the color of any colored mana symbols.

203.2. A card is the *color* or colors of the mana symbols in its mana cost, regardless of the color of its border. For example, a card with a mana cost  $2 W$  is white; one with a mana cost of  $2 W B$  is both white and black. Cards with no colored mana symbols are *colorless*.

203.3. The *converted mana cost* of a card is the total amount of mana in the mana cost, regardless of color (for example, a mana cost of  $3 U U$  translates to a converted mana cost of 5). The converted mana cost may be paid with any combination of colored and/or colorless mana.

203.4. Any *additional cost* listed in a card’s rules text isn’t part of the mana cost. (See rule 409, “Playing Spells and Activated Abilities.”)

### 204. Illustration

204.1. The illustration is printed on the upper half of a card and has no game significance. For example, a *creature* doesn’t have the *flying ability* unless stated in its rules text, even if it’s depicted as flying.

### 205. Type

205.1. The type (and subtype, if applicable) of a card is printed directly below the illustration. (See rules 212–215.)

### 206. Expansion Symbol

206.1. The expansion symbol indicates in which **Magic** set the card was published and is printed below the right edge of the illustration.

206.2. The color of the expansion symbol indicates the rarity of the card within its set. A gold symbol signifies the card is rare; silver, uncommon; and black, common or basic land. (Prior to the *Exodus™* set, all expansion symbols were black.)

206.3. A *spell* or ability that affects cards from a particular set “looks” only for that set’s expansion symbol. A card reprinted in the basic set receives the basic set’s expansion symbol; the reprinted version of the card no longer counts as part of its original set. The first five editions of the basic set had no expansion symbol.

### 207. Text Box

207.1. The text box is printed on the lower half of the card. It contains rules text stating what the card does and any special requirements for playing it.

207.2. The text box may also contain italicized *reminder text* (in parentheses and italics) summarizing a rule that applies to that card, and/or italicized *flavor text* that has no game function but, like the illustration, adds artistic appeal to the game.



## 208. Power/Toughness

208.1. A creature card has two numbers separated by a slash printed on its lower-right corner. The first number is the creature's power (the amount of *damage* it deals in *combat*); the second is its toughness (the amount of damage needed to *destroy* it). For example, 2/3 means the creature has power 2 and toughness 3.

## 209. Credit

209.1. The illustration credit for a card is printed directly below the text box. This has no effect on game play.

## 210. Legal Text

210.1. Legal text lists the publication date and copyright information. It has no effect on game play.

## 211. Collector Number

211.1. Some card sets feature collector numbers. This information is printed in the form <card number/total cards in the set>, immediately following the legal text. These numbers have no effect on game play.

## 212. Card Type

212.1. All cards have one or more types: *artifact*, *creature*, *enchantment*, *instant*, *land*, or *sorcery*. Only one multiple type—*artifact creature*—currently exists. Artifact creature satisfies the criteria for any effect that applies to an artifact card or a creature card.

212.2. Some card types include subtypes, printed on the same line.

**EXAMPLE:** "*Creature—Minotaur*" means the card has type *creature* and *creature* subtype *Minotaur*. "*Enchant Creature*" means it has type *enchantment* and subtype *enchant creature*.

## 213. Spell Type

213.1. Every card, except land cards, is a *spell* as it's being played and stops being a spell when it *resolves* or is *countered*. For more information, see rule 401, "Spells."

213.2. A spell's type is the same as its card type.

## 214. Permanent Type

214.1. A *permanent* is a card or token that remains in play. There are four types of permanents: artifacts, creatures, enchantments, and lands.

214.2. A permanent's type(s) and subtype(s) are the same as those printed on its card. A token's type(s) and subtype(s) are set by the spell or ability that created it.

214.3. A card becomes a permanent when it *comes into play* and stops being a permanent when it *leaves play*. The term "card" or "spell" is often used to refer to a card type that's not in play, such as a creature card in a player's hand. For more information, see rule 217, "Zones."

214.4. When a permanent's type or subtype changes, the new type replaces any existing type(s). This changes only the permanent type—the card type doesn't change. Counters, effects, and damage affecting the permanent remain with it, even if they are meaningless to the new type.

214.5. The *initial value* of a permanent's characteristic is the value printed on the card, or specified by the spell or ability that created a token or changed the type of a permanent. Using a type-changing ability changes the initial values of characteristics stated in the ability's text, not the current values. Changing the initial value of a characteristic won't override *continuous effects* that are changing it.

### 214.6. Artifacts

214.6a Artifacts have no special characteristics. Artifact spells are colorless, although other spells or abilities might confer a color.

214.6b Artifact creatures combine the characteristics of both the creature and artifact subtypes and are subject to spells and abilities that affect both.

### 214.7. Creatures

214.7a If a card instruction requires choosing a creature subtype, this may be any noun (even if the creature doesn't exist in **Magic**), but only one. A word that has some other **Magic** meaning isn't a valid choice, because that would cause confusion.

**EXAMPLE:** *Merfolk or Wizard is acceptable, but not Merfolk Wizard. Words like "opponent" or "swamp" can't be chosen because they have other meanings in the game.*

214.7b Plurality and gender are ignored when determining creature types.

**EXAMPLE:** *Ogre, Ogres, Ogress, and Ogresses all count as the same creature type—Ogre.*

## 214.8. Enchantments

214.8a A *global enchantment* simply reads "Enchantment" as its type. *Local enchantments* comprise various subtypes: enchant artifact, enchant creature, enchant enchantment, enchant land, and enchant permanent.

214.8b A global enchantment is put into play like any other spell that creates a permanent.

214.8c A local enchantment spell must be attached to a *target permanent*, whose type is indicated by the enchantment subtype.

**EXAMPLE:** *An enchant creature spell requires a target creature. Additional targeting restrictions are indicated by the phrase "Play <card> only on <permanent type>."*

214.8d When playing a local enchantment spell, the player announces the spell's target. The local enchantment comes into play attached to the target permanent. If a local enchantment is coming into play through any other means, its controller chooses a permanent when it attempts to enter play. If no legal permanent is available, the enchantment remains in the zone that it attempted to move from.

214.8e If a local enchantment ends up enchanting an illegal permanent or its target permanent no longer exists, the enchantment card is put into its owner's *graveyard*.

214.8f A local enchantment can't be attached to itself.

214.8g The permanent a local enchantment is attached to is called "enchanted." The enchantment "enchants" that permanent.

214.8h The abilities of local enchantments don't target the enchanted permanent unless they're activated abilities that can target something.

214.8i The *controller* of a local enchantment is separate from the controller of the enchanted permanent. Changing control of the permanent doesn't change control of the enchantment, and vice versa. Only the enchantment's controller can play its abilities. However, if the enchantment adds an ability to the enchanted permanent, that enchanted permanent's controller is the only one who can play that ability.

## 214.9. Lands

214.9a A land card isn't a spell card. It's put directly into play.

214.9b A player may normally play only one land card each turn. Spells and abilities may allow playing additional lands; doing so doesn't prevent a player from taking the normal action of playing a land.

214.9c A land card is one of two categories: *basic* and *nonbasic*. Basic and nonbasic are not types or subtypes.

214.9d The basic lands are plains, island, swamp, mountain, and forest.

214.9e A basic land has an intrinsic ability to produce colored *mana*. (See rule 406.1, "Mana Abilities.") The card is treated as if its text box read, " *c* : Add <mana symbol> to your mana pool" even if the text box doesn't actually contain text. Plains produce white mana; islands, blue; swamps, black; mountains, red; and forests, green.

214.9f If an effect changes a permanent into a basic land, the permanent is no longer its old type and has only the *mana ability* of that basic land. It now counts as a basic land. If that land was "Legendary," it is no longer.

214.9g Any land that isn't a basic land is a nonbasic land. Even if its rules text or a game effect states that it "*counts as*" a basic land type, it is still nonbasic.

214.9h Nonbasic lands don't necessarily have mana abilities.

## 215. Legends and Legendary Types

215.1. The word “Legend” or “Legendary” may be added to a card type or subtype. This means that the permanent created when that card enters play is subject to the *Legend rule* (see rule 420, “State-Based Effects”) as well as the rules for its type.

215.2. “Legend” is a creature type; “Legendary” is not.

## 216. Tokens

216.1. Some spells and abilities put a token creature into play. The rules text of the spell or ability defines the initial characteristics of the token it creates. A token’s name is its creature type unless otherwise specified; for example, the creature type of a Goblin token is Goblin.

216.2. A token is subject to anything that affects permanents in general or the token’s type or subtype. A token isn’t considered a card (even if represented by cards from other games or *Unglued* token cards) and isn’t subject to any effect that specifically uses the word “card.”

216.3. A token in a zone other than the in-play zone ceases to exist. This is a state-based effect. (Note that a token changing zones will set off triggered abilities before the token ceases to exist.)

## 217. Zones

217.1. A zone is a place that **Magic** cards can be during a game. There are six basic zones: *library*, *hand*, *graveyard*, *in play*, *stack*, and *removed from the game*. Each player has his or her own copy of each zone, except for the in-play and stack zones, which are shared.

### 217.2. Library

217.2a When a game begins, each player’s deck becomes his or her library.

217.2b Each library must be kept in a single face-down pile. Players can’t look at or change the order of cards in a library.

217.2c A player may count the number of cards remaining in either player’s library at any time.

### 217.3. Hand

217.3a The hand is where a player holds cards that have been drawn but not yet played.

217.3b Each player has a maximum hand size, which is normally seven cards. A player may have any number of cards in his or her hand but as part of his or her clean-up step must discard excess cards down to the maximum hand size.

217.3c A player may arrange his or her hand in any convenient fashion and look at it as much as he or she wishes. A player can’t look at the cards in the other player’s hand but may count the number of cards in either player’s hand at any time.

### 217.4. Graveyard

217.4a A graveyard is a discard pile. Any card that’s countered, discarded, destroyed, or *sacrificed* is put on top of its owner’s graveyard. Each player’s graveyard starts out empty.

217.4b Each graveyard is kept in a single face-up pile. A can examine the cards in any graveyard at any time but can’t change their order.

217.4c If an effect puts two or more cards into the same graveyard at the same time, the owner of those cards may arrange them in any order.

### 217.5. In Play

217.5a Most of the area between the players represents the in-play zone. The in-play zone starts out empty. Cards a player controls (other than local enchantments enchanting the other player’s permanents) are kept in front of him or her.

217.5b A spell or ability affects only the in-play zone unless it specifically mentions another zone. Permanents exist only in the in-play zone.

217.5c Whenever a card enters the in-play zone, it’s a brand-new permanent as far as the game is concerned and has no relationship to any previous permanent represented by the same card.

217.5d A card outside the in-play zone isn't "in play" and isn't considered *tapped* or *untapped*.

#### 217.6. Stack

217.6a When a spell or ability is played, it goes on top of the stack and waits to resolve. The stack keeps track of the order that spells and/or abilities were added to it. See rule 408, "Timing of Spells and Abilities."

217.6b A spell card is played face up in the stack zone, and other spells played in response are "stacked" on top of it. Abilities in the stack are represented by imaginary cards called *pseudospells*. A pseudospell has the color of the permanent that created it, as well as the text of the ability, and is controlled by the player who played the ability.

217.6c When both players decline to add a spell or ability to the stack, the top (last-played) spell or ability resolves.

#### 217.7. Removed from the Game

217.7a A spell or ability can remove a card from the game. Some spells or abilities may provide a way for the card to return to play and use the term "set aside." Cards that are set aside this way are still removed from the game, even if temporarily.

217.7b Cards in the removed-from-the-game zone are kept face up and may be examined by either player at any time. Cards "removed from the game face down" can't be examined by either player except when instructions allow it.

217.7c Cards that might return to play should be kept in separate piles to keep track of their respective ways of returning. Cards with no way of returning may be kept in one pile for each player, regardless of what removed them.

217.8. Whenever a card moves from one zone to another, it is treated as a new copy of that card (effects connected to its previous existence expire) with the exception that effects editing a spell in the stack will continue to apply to the permanent that spell becomes.

## 3. Turn Structure

### 300. General

- 300.1. A turn consists of five phases, in this order: *beginning*, *first main*, *combat*, *second main*, and *end*. Each of these phases takes place every turn, even if nothing happens during the phase. The beginning, combat, and end phases are further broken down into *steps*, which are followed in order.
- 300.2. A phase or step ends when the stack is empty and both players *pass* in succession. No game events can occur between turns, phases, or steps.
- 300.3. When a phase or step ends, any effects scheduled to last “until the end of” that phase or step or “until” the next phase or step expire.
- 300.4. When a phase ends (but not a step), any unused mana left in a player’s *mana pool* is lost. That player loses 1 life for each one mana lost this way. This is called *mana burn*. (See rule 406.1, “Mana Abilities.”)
- 300.5. When a phase or step begins, any triggered abilities “at the beginning of” that phase or step are added to the stack.

### 301. Beginning Phase

- 301.1. The beginning phase consists of three steps, in this order: *untap*, *upkeep*, and *draw*.

### 302. Untap Step

- 302.1. First, the *active player* determines which permanents he or she controls will untap. (Normally they all do, but *effects* may modify this.) Then he or she untaps them all simultaneously.
- 302.2. No player receives *priority* during the untap step, so no spells or abilities can be played or resolved. Any ability that *triggers* during this step will be held until a player receives priority during the upkeep step. (See rule 303, “Upkeep Step.”)

### 303. Upkeep Step

- 303.1. At the beginning of the upkeep step, any abilities that triggered during the untap step, as well as abilities that trigger at the beginning of upkeep, go on the stack. Upkeep-triggered abilities use the phrase “At the beginning of your upkeep” or similar wording. (See rule 404, “Triggered Abilities.”) Then the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

### 304. Draw Step

- 304.1. At the beginning of the draw step, the active player draws one card from his or her library. This is played as a triggered ability, just as if a card read “At the beginning of your draw step, draw a card.” Then the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

### 305. Main Phase

- 305.1. There are two main phases in a turn. The first main phase and second main phase are separated by the combat phase (see rule 306, “Combat Phase”) and are collectively known as the “main phase.”
- 305.2. The main phase has no steps.
- 305.3. After triggered abilities (if any) are added to the stack, the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities. This is the only phase in which a player can play artifact, creature, enchantment, and sorcery spells.
- 305.4. During either main phase, the active player may play one land from his or her hand if the stack is empty, the player has priority, and he or she hasn’t yet taken this special action this turn.

### 306. Combat Phase

- 306.1. The combat phase has five steps: beginning of combat, declare attackers, declare blockers, combat damage, and end of combat.
- 306.2. A creature is removed from combat if it stops being a creature or its controller changes. Once it’s declared as an attacker or blocker, tapping or untapping a creature doesn’t remove it from combat or prevent it from dealing combat damage. Neither does playing a spell or ability that, if played earlier, would have prevented it from attacking or blocking.

## 307. Beginning of Combat Step

307.1. After triggered abilities (if any) are added to the stack, the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities when the step begins.

## 308. Declare Attackers Step

- 308.1. The active player declares which, if any, creatures he or she controls are *attacking*. Tapped creatures (even those that can attack without tapping), *Walls*, creatures that the active player didn't control continuously since the beginning of the turn, and noncreature permanents can't be declared as attackers. This declaration is simultaneous, not sequential, and doesn't go on the stack. Any *triggered ability* generated during this action waits until a player receives priority.
- 308.2. The active player determines whether the attack is legal. (See section 5, "Additional Combat Rules.") If it is, he or she pays all required *costs*. Tapping is a cost to attack for all creatures unless otherwise specified; other costs and/or restrictions may also apply. (See rule 409.9.) The active player may play mana abilities at this time only if an attack cost includes a mana payment.
- 308.3. If the proposed attack isn't legal or the active player can't pay all required costs, all actions described in rules 308.1 and 308.2 are canceled. Then the active player redeclares attacking creatures. (See rule 422, "Handling Illegal Actions.")
- 308.4. If no creatures are declared as attackers, the game proceeds directly to the end of combat step, *skipping* the remainder of the declare attackers step and the intervening steps.
- 308.5. A creature becomes an *attacking creature* when declared as part of an attack. It remains an attacking creature until it's removed from combat or the combat phase ends.
- 308.6. After a legal attack has been declared and all required costs paid, the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

## 309. Declare Blockers Step

- 309.1. The defending player declares which, if any, creatures he or she controls are *blocking* and which attacking creature each one blocks. Tapped creatures and noncreature permanents can't be declared as blockers. Each creature may block only one attacking creature, though any number of creatures may block the same attacking creature. (Note that blocking doesn't cause a creature to tap.) This declaration is simultaneous, not sequential, and doesn't go on the stack. Any triggered ability generated during this action waits until a player receives priority.
- 309.2. The defending player determines whether the block is legal. (See section 5, "Additional Combat Rules.") If it is, he or she pays all required costs. A player may play mana abilities at this time only if a blocking cost includes a mana payment.
- 309.2a. If the proposed block isn't legal or the defending player can't pay all required costs, all actions described in rules 309.1 and 309.2 are canceled. Then the defending player redeclares blocking creatures. (See rule 422, "Handling Illegal Actions.")
- 309.3. A creature becomes a *blocking creature* when declared as a blocker. An attacking creature with one or more creatures declared as blockers against it becomes a *blocked creature*; one with no blockers becomes an *unblocked creature*. The creature's status remains unchanged until the creature is removed from combat or the combat phase ends.
- 309.4. Once a creature has been declared as a blocker, playing a spell or ability that removes it from combat doesn't "unblock" creatures it was blocking.
- 309.5. After all legal blocks have been declared and all required costs paid, the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

## 310. Combat Damage Step

- 310.1. First the active player announces how each attacking creature will deal its damage. Then the defending player announces how each blocking creature will deal its damage. (See also rule 502.2, "First Strike.") A player may divide a creature's *combat damage* as he or she chooses among the legal recipients. Dividing combat damage is subject to the following restrictions:
- 310.1a Each attacking creature and each blocking creature will deal combat damage equal to its power.
- 310.1b An unblocked creature will deal all its combat damage to the defending player.

310.1c A blocked creature will deal combat damage, divided as its controller chooses, to the creatures blocking it. If no creatures are currently blocking it (if, for example, they were destroyed or removed from combat), it will deal no combat damage.

310.1d A blocking creature will deal combat damage, divided as its controller chooses, to the attacking creatures it's blocking. If it isn't currently blocking any creatures (if, for example, they were destroyed or removed from combat), it will deal no combat damage.

310.2. All announcements of combat damage go on the stack as a single entry. Then the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

310.3. Assigning combat damage isn't a spell or ability, so it can't be countered.

310.4. When the combat damage resolves, it's dealt as originally assigned. This happens even if the creature dealing damage is no longer in play or has its power changed or if the creature receiving damage has left combat. (Note that the source of the damage is the creature as it currently exists, or as it most recently existed if it is no longer in play.) If a creature that was supposed to receive damage is no longer in play, the damage assigned to it isn't dealt.

### 311. End of Combat Step

311.1. All "at end of combat" abilities trigger and go on the stack. (See rule 404, "Triggered Abilities.") Then the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

### 312. End Phase

312.1. The end phase consists of two steps: *end of turn* and *cleanup*.

### 313. End of Turn Step

313.1. All "at end of turn" abilities trigger and go on the stack. (See rule 404, "Triggered Abilities.") Then the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities.

### 314. Cleanup Step

314.1. The cleanup step proceeds in the following order.

314.1a First, if the active player's hand contains more cards than his or her *maximum hand size* (normally seven), he or she discards enough cards to reduce the hand to that number. This action doesn't go on the stack.

314.1b Then, simultaneously, all damage is removed from permanents and all "until end of turn" and "this turn" *effects* end. This action doesn't go on the stack.

314.1c Then, only if the conditions for any *state-based effects* exist or if any abilities have triggered, the active player receives priority to play spells and abilities. Once the stack is empty, another cleanup step begins. Otherwise, no player receives priority and the step ends.

## 4. Spells, Abilities, and Effects

### 400. General

400.1. The difference between an ability and an effect is that text in a card's text box is an ability (except for text setting characteristics), and following the instructions of that text generates an effect. Text itself is never an effect.

### 401. Spells

401.1. A spell is a nonland card played from the hand. As the first step of being played, the card becomes a spell and goes on the stack. (See rule 217.6, "Stack.") It stops being a spell when it resolves (see rule 413.2) or is countered (see rule 414).

401.2. Each card type other than land has a corresponding spell type. For example, a creature card is a creature spell until it resolves.

401.3. As the final part of an instant or sorcery spell's resolution, the card is put into its owner's graveyard. As the final part of an artifact, creature, or enchantment spell's resolution, the card becomes a permanent and is put into the in-play zone. If any spell is countered, the card is put into its owner's graveyard as part of the resolution of the countering spell or ability. (See rule 413, "Resolving Spells and Abilities.")

### 402. Abilities

402.1. An instruction in a card's text is an ability. The result of following such an instruction or of following a spell's text is an effect. (See rule 416, "Effects.")

402.2. Abilities can be beneficial or detrimental—for example, "<This creature> can't block" is an ability.

402.3. Text on a card stating that the card "is" or "counts as" a particular type or color isn't an ability. Such statements apply no matter what zone the card is in and aren't removed by effects that cause a permanent to lose its abilities.

402.4. An additional cost or *alternative cost* to play a card isn't an ability of the card.

402.5. An ability isn't a spell and therefore can't be countered by anything that counters only spells.

402.6. Once *activated* or *triggered*, an ability exists independently of its *source* (the card on which it's printed). Destruction or removal of the source after that time won't affect the ability. Note that some abilities make a source do something (for example, "Prodigal Sorcerer deals 1 damage to target creature or player.") rather than the ability do the something directly. In these cases anything that cares about characteristics of the source will check the source's characteristics at the ability's resolution or the last known characteristics if the source is no longer in play.

402.7. A card may have several abilities. Aside from certain defined abilities that may be strung together on a single line (see rule 502, "Keyword Abilities"), each paragraph break in the card's text marks a separate ability. A card may also have multiple copies of the same ability. Each copy functions independently. This may or may not produce more effects than a single copy; refer to the specific ability for more information.

402.8. Abilities function only while the permanent with the ability is in play unless the ability states otherwise.

**EXAMPLE:** *Black spells and abilities can target a card with protection from black when it's in a library or graveyard.*

402.9. Some cards have abilities that can be played when the card's not in play. These are clearly marked; for example, "Play only when <this card> is in your graveyard." They're not abilities of any class of permanent, just card abilities—cards not in play aren't permanents.

402.10. There are three general types of abilities: *activated*, *triggered*, and *static*.

### 403. Activated Abilities

403.1. An activated ability can exist in one of three places: on a permanent; on a card outside the in-play zone with the text "Play this ability only if <this card> is in <zone>; or as a delayed ability. An activated ability that isn't from a delayed ability is written as "cost: effect." The activation cost is everything before the colon (:). An activated ability that's from a delayed ability is written as "<Player> may pay <cost> to <effect>." In both cases the activation cost must be paid to play the ability.

403.2. Only a permanent's controller can play its activated ability unless the card specifically says otherwise.



403.3. If an activated ability has a restriction on its use (for example, “Play this ability only once each turn”), the restriction continues to apply to that permanent even if its controller changes.

## 404. Triggered Abilities

404.1. A triggered ability begins with the word “when,” “whenever,” or “at.” The phrase containing one of these words is the trigger condition, which defines the *trigger event*.

404.2. Triggered abilities aren’t played. Instead, they automatically “trigger” each time their trigger event occurs. Once an ability has triggered, it goes on the stack the next time a player receives priority.

## 405. Static Abilities

405.1. A static ability does something all the time rather than being activated or triggered. The ability isn’t played—it just “is.”

## 406. Ability Subtypes

### 406.1. Mana Abilities

406.1a A mana ability puts mana into a player’s mana pool when it resolves. It can generate other effects at the same time it produces mana.

406.1b Spells that put mana into a player’s mana pool aren’t mana abilities. They’re played and resolved exactly like any other spell.

406.1c A mana ability exists even if the game state doesn’t allow it to produce mana.

**EXAMPLE:** *A card has an ability that reads, “c : Add G to your mana pool for each creature you control.” This is still a mana ability even if you control no creatures.*

406.1d A mana ability can be activated or triggered. However, the rules for playing and resolving mana abilities differ slightly from those for other abilities. See rule 411 for details.

406.1e The ability resolves immediately, without going on the stack. (See rule 408.2, “Actions That Don’t Use the Stack.”) Abilities that trigger on playing mana abilities do go on the stack, however.

### 406.2. Delayed Abilities

406.2a An effect may create a *delayed ability* that can do something at a later time. Delayed abilities can be activated or triggered.

406.2b If a delayed ability is triggered, the trigger event is irrelevant until the ability actually exists. Other events that happen earlier may make the trigger event impossible.

**EXAMPLE:** *Part of an effect reads, “When this card leaves play,” but the named card leaves play before the spell or ability generating the effect resolves. In this case, the delayed ability never triggers. If an effect reads, “When this card becomes untapped” and the named card becomes untapped before the effect resolves, the ability waits for the next time that card untaps.*

406.2c A delayed ability that refers to a particular permanent still affects it even if the permanent changes characteristics.

**EXAMPLE:** *An ability reading, “At end of turn, destroy that creature” will destroy the permanent even if it’s no longer a creature during the end of turn step.*

406.2d A delayed ability that refers to a particular permanent will fail if the permanent leaves play (even if it returns again before the specified time). Similarly, delayed abilities that apply to a card in a particular zone will fail if the card leaves that zone.

**EXAMPLE:** *An ability reading, “At end of turn, remove this creature from the game” won’t do anything if the creature card leaves play before the end of turn step.*

## 407. Adding and Removing Abilities

407.1. Effects can add or remove abilities of permanents. If two or more effects add and remove the same ability, in general the most recent one prevails. (See rule 418.5, “Interaction of Continuous Effects.”)

407.2. A characteristic of a permanent as the result of an effect is different from an ability granted by an effect. When a permanent “gains” or “has” an ability, it can be removed by another effect. If an effect defines a characteristic of the permanent, it’s not granting an ability.

**EXAMPLE:** An effect reads, “Enchanted creature gains flying.” This confers an ability that can be removed by effects that remove flying. “Enchanted creature is unblockable” simply defines a property of the creature and can’t be removed by effects that cause permanents to “lose” abilities.

407.3. Effects that remove an ability remove all copies of it.

**EXAMPLE:** If a creature with flying is enchanted with *Flight*, it has two copies of the flying ability. A single effect that reads “Target creature loses flying” will remove both.

## 408. Timing of Spells and Abilities

### 408.1. Timing, Priority, and the Stack

408.1a Spells and abilities can be played only at certain times and follow a simple set of rules for doing so.

408.1b Spells and activated abilities are played by players (if they choose) using a system of priority, while other types of abilities and effects are automatically generated by the game rules.

408.1c The active player has priority at the beginning of most phases and steps. (The exceptions are the untap step and the cleanup step.) The player with priority may either play a spell or ability, or pass. If he or she plays a spell or ability, the player again receives priority; otherwise, his or her opponent receives priority. If both players pass in succession, the top spell or ability on the stack resolves and the active player receives priority. If the stack is empty when both players pass in succession, the phase or step ends.

408.1d A player may play a spell or activated ability only when he or she has priority. Spells other than instants can be played only during a player’s main phase, when that player has priority, and only when the stack is empty.

408.1e When a spell or ability is played, it goes on top of the stack.

408.1f Triggered abilities can trigger at any time, including during the playing or resolution of a spell or another ability. However, nothing actually happens at the time the abilities trigger. Each time a player receives priority, all abilities that have triggered but that haven’t been put on the stack go on the stack before the player with priority may play spells or abilities.

408.1g Combat damage goes on the stack once it’s been assigned. For more information, see rule 310, “Combat Damage Step.”

408.1h Static abilities aren’t played—they continuously affect the game. Priority doesn’t apply to them. (See rule 418, “Continuous Effects” and rule 419, “Prevention and Replacement Effects.”)

### 408.2. Actions That Don’t Use the Stack

408.2a Effects don’t go on the stack. When a spell or ability resolves, its instructions are executed immediately.

408.2b Static abilities continuously generate effects and don’t go on the stack.

408.2c *State-based effects* (see rule 420) resolve whenever a player receives priority as long as the required game condition is true.

408.2d Playing a land is a special action consisting of putting that land into play. (See rule 214.9, “Lands.”)

408.2e Mana abilities of permanents resolve immediately. If an activated or triggered ability produces both mana and another effect, both the mana and the other effect resolve immediately. (See rule 406.1, “Mana Abilities.”)

408.f Card text that isn’t an ability, such as “<This card> counts as a forest,” is simply read and followed as applicable.

## 409. Playing Spells and Activated Abilities

409.1. Playing a spell or activated ability follows the steps listed below, in order. (If partially through the step a player determines that he or she is unable to comply with the steps listed below, see rule 422, “Handling Illegal Actions.”) No announcements or payments can be altered after they’ve been made. Playing a spell or ability that alters costs won’t do anything to spells and abilities that are already on the stack.

409.1a The player announces that he or she is playing the spell or ability. It goes on the stack and remains there until it’s countered or resolves. Spell cards are physically placed on the stack. For abilities, a pseudospell with the text and color of the card generating the ability goes on the stack.

- 409.1b If the spell or ability is *modal* (uses the phrase “Choose one —”), the player announces which mode he or she is using. A few spells and abilities allow the player’s opponent to choose the mode. That choice is also made at this time. If the spell or ability has a variable mana cost (indicated by “ X”), the player announces the value of X when he or she plays the spell.
- 409.1c If the spell or ability specifies any targets, the player announces these. It can’t be played unless the required number of legal targets are chosen. A few spells or abilities allow the player’s opponent to choose the target. That choice is also made at this time.
- 409.1d If the spell or ability affects several targets, the player announces how it will apply to each. The same target can’t be chosen multiple times.
- 409.1e If the spell or ability divides an effect (such as damage or counters) among a variable number of targets, the player announces the division as he or she plays the spell. Assigning 0 damage to a creature doesn’t target it unless the spell or ability permits multiple targets and specifies a number.
- 409.1f The player pays all costs. Partial payments aren’t allowed. Usually this is just the mana cost (for spells) or activation cost (for abilities). Some cards list additional or alternative costs in their text, and some effects may increase or reduce the cost to pay. The player announces choices for any variable or alternative costs at this time. Costs may include paying mana, tapping cards, sacrificing permanents, discarding cards, and so on. The total cost is the mana or activation cost, plus all cost increases and minus all cost reductions. If the cost includes mana, mana abilities can be played at this time (see rule 411).
- 409.2. Activated abilities that read “Play this ability any time you could play <spell type>” or “Play this ability only if you could play <spell type>” mean follow the timing rules for that spell type, though the ability isn’t actually of that spell type.
- 409.3 An activation cost for a creature’s ability that includes tapping ( c ) can’t be played unless the creature was continuously under the player’s control since the most recent start of his or her turn.

## 410. Handling Triggered Abilities

- 410.1. When a phase or step begins, all abilities that trigger “at the beginning of” that phase or step go on the stack. Because they aren’t played, triggered abilities can trigger even when it isn’t otherwise legal to play spells and abilities, and effects that prevent abilities from being played don’t affect them.
- 410.2. Whenever a game event matches the trigger event of an ability, that ability “triggers.” The ability doesn’t do anything when it triggers but automatically puts a pseudospell (see rule 217.6b) on the stack as soon as a player gets priority. The controller of the ability usually controls the pseudospell, regardless of who controls the permanent that generated it, unless the card’s rules text specifies otherwise. If the ability offers both players a choice, it generates one pseudospell per player.
- 410.3. If multiple abilities trigger simultaneously, pseudospells controlled by the active player go on the stack first, in any order he or she chooses, then those controlled by the opponent in the same way.
- 410.4. When a triggered ability goes on the stack, the controller of the pseudospell makes all required choices, following the rules for activated abilities (see rule 409). If no legal choice can be made (or if a rule or a continuous effect otherwise makes the ability illegal), the pseudospell is simply removed from the stack.
- 410.5. A triggered ability that gives a player a choice of actions (denoted with the word “may”) is treated as modal: “Choose one — Do nothing; or play this ability.”
- 410.6. An ability triggers only once each time its trigger event occurs. However, it can trigger repeatedly if one event contains multiple occurrences.  
**EXAMPLE:** *A permanent has an ability whose trigger condition reads, “Whenever a land is put into the graveyard from play, . . . .” If someone plays a spell that destroys all lands, the ability will trigger once for each land put into the graveyard during the spell’s resolution.*
- 410.7. An ability is triggered only if its trigger event actually occurs. An event that’s prevented or replaced won’t trigger anything.  
**EXAMPLE:** *An ability that triggers on damage being dealt won’t trigger if all the damage is prevented.*
- 410.8. Triggered abilities with a condition [for example, “When(ever) <trigger>, if <condition>, <event>”] check for the condition to be true as part of the trigger event; if it isn’t, the ability doesn’t trigger. The ability checks the condition again on resolution. If it’s not satisfied, the ability does nothing. Note that this mirrors the check for legal targets.
- 410.8a Some triggered abilities watch for a game state, such as a player’s life total or the number of cards in play, rather than an event. These abilities trigger as soon as the game state matches their condition (even if it’s not

otherwise legal to play a spell or ability at that time). These are called “state triggers.” (Don’t confuse state triggers with state-based effects.)

410.8b State-triggered abilities don’t trigger again until the initial condition has resolved or been countered. Then, if the permanent with the ability is still in play and the game state still matches its trigger condition, the ability will trigger again.

**EXAMPLE:** *A permanent’s ability reads, “When your hand is empty, draw a card.” If its controller plays the last card from his or her hand, the ability will trigger just once. If its controller plays a spell that reads, “Discard your hand, then draw the same number of cards,” the ability will trigger during the spell’s resolution because the player’s hand was momentarily empty.*

410.9. Some abilities trigger when creatures block or are blocked in combat. (See rules 306–311 and section 5, “Additional Combat Rules.”) They may trigger once or repeatedly, depending on the wording of the ability.

410.9a An ability that reads “Whenever <name> blocks” or “Whenever <name> becomes blocked” triggers only once each combat for that creature, even if it blocks or is blocked by multiple creatures. An effect that causes the creature to become blocked (if the creature wasn’t already blocked) will also trigger such abilities.

410.9b An ability that reads “Whenever <name> blocks a creature” triggers once for each attacking creature the named creature blocks.

410.9c An ability that reads “Whenever a creature blocks <name>” triggers once for each creature that blocks the named creature. It won’t trigger if the attacking creature becomes blocked by an effect rather than a blocking creature.

410.10. Trigger events that involve cards or permanents changing zones are called “zone-change triggers.” Many abilities with zone-change triggers attempt to do something to the card after it changes zones. During resolution, these abilities look for the card in the zone that it moved to. If the card leaves the specified zone before the ability resolves, that part of the ability will fail to do anything. (This rule applies even if the card leaves the zone and returns again before the ability resolves.) The most common types of zone-change triggers are comes-into-play triggers and leaves-play triggers.

410.10a *Comes-into-play* abilities trigger when a permanent enters the in-play zone. These are written, “When <this card> comes into play, . . .” or “Whenever a <permanent type> comes into play, . . .” Each time an event puts one or more permanents into play, all permanents in play (including the newcomers) are checked for any comes-into-play triggers that match the event.

410.10b Continuous effects that modify card characteristics do so as cards come into play. They don’t wait for the card to enter play and then change it.

**EXAMPLE:** *If an effect reads, “All lands are creatures” and a land card is played, it comes into play as a creature and triggers abilities that depend on a creature coming into play. Conversely, if an effect reads, “All creatures lose all abilities” and someone plays a creature card with a comes-into-play triggered ability, it comes into play with no abilities, so the printed ability won’t trigger.*

410.10c *Leaves-play* abilities trigger when the card on which they are printed leaves the in-play zone. These are written, “When(ever) <this card> leaves play, . . .” or “When(ever) <this card> is put into a graveyard from play, . . .” An ability that attempts to do something to the card that left play checks for it only in the first zone that it went to.

410.10d Leaves-play triggers have to be treated specially because the permanent with the ability is no longer in play after the event. The game has to “look back in time” to resolve them. Each time an event removes one or more permanents from play, all the permanents that were in play just before the event (with continuous effects that existed at that time) are checked for any leaves-play triggers that match what just left play.

**EXAMPLE:** *Two creatures are in play along with an artifact that has the ability “Whenever a creature is put into a graveyard from play, you gain 1 life.” Someone plays a spell that destroys all artifacts, creatures, and enchantments. The artifact’s ability triggers twice, even though the artifact goes to the graveyard at the same time as the creatures.*

“Leaves play” triggers are zone-change triggers, even if the trigger condition doesn’t care what zone the permanent is going to. If they attempt to do something to the card that left play, they will look for it only in the first zone that it went to after leaving play.

410.10e Some permanents have text that reads “<This permanent> comes into play as <specified characteristic>” or “<This permanent> comes into play with <specified number of counters>.” Such text isn’t a triggered ability. It happens as part of the event that puts the permanent into play.

## 411. Playing Mana Abilities

411.1. To play a mana ability, the player announces that he or she is playing it and pays the activation cost. It resolves immediately and doesn’t go on the stack. (See rule 408.2e.)

411.2. A player may play an activated mana ability whenever he or she has priority and whenever a rule or effect asks for a mana payment, even in the middle of playing or resolving a spell or ability.

411.3. Triggered mana abilities trigger when activated mana abilities are played and add additional mana to a player's mana pool. These abilities resolve immediately after the mana ability that triggered them, without waiting for priority. If an activated or triggered ability produces both mana and another effect, both the mana and the other effect resolve immediately.

**EXAMPLE:** An enchantment reads, "Whenever a player taps a land for mana, that land produces one additional mana of the same color." If a player taps lands for mana while playing a spell, the additional mana is added to the player's mana pool immediately and can be used to pay for the spell.

## 412. Handling Static Abilities

412.1. A static ability may generate a *continuous effect* or a *prevention* or *replacement effect*. These effects last as long as the permanent with the static ability remains in play.

412.2. Many local enchantments have static abilities that modify their enchanted permanent, but those abilities don't target that permanent. If a local enchantment is moved to a different permanent, the ability stops applying to the original permanent and starts modifying the new one.

## 413. Resolving Spells and Abilities

413.1. Each time both players pass in succession, the top spell or ability on the stack resolves, creating one or more effects. (See rule 416, "Effects.")

413.2. Resolution may involve several steps but is treated by the game as a single indivisible action. These steps are followed in the order listed below.

413.2a If the spell or ability specifies targets, it checks whether the targets are still legal. A target that's removed from play, or from the zone designated by the spell or ability, is illegal. A target may also become illegal if its characteristics changed since the spell or ability was played or if an effect changed the wording of the spell or ability. If all targets are now illegal, the spell or ability is countered. If some but not all targets are illegal, the spell will resolve normally, affecting only the targets that are still legal. The effect on the remaining legal targets is the same as it would have been if all targets had remained legal.

413.2b The controller of the spell or ability follows its instructions in the order written. However, replacement effects may modify these actions. In some cases, later text on the card may modify the meaning of earlier text (for example, "Destroy target creature. It can't be regenerated" or "Counter target spell. Put it on top of its owner's library instead of into its owner's graveyard.") Don't just execute the instructions step by step without thinking in these cases—read the whole card and apply the rules of English to the text.

413.2c If the instructions offer any choices other than mode and target, the player announces these while carrying them out. The player can't choose an option that's illegal or impossible. If the instructions provide an optional action with a consequence for not doing so, the player can't choose that action unless he or she can meet all requirements.

**EXAMPLE:** A spell's instruction reads, "You may sacrifice a creature. If you don't, you lose 4 life." A player who controls no creatures can't choose the sacrifice option.

413.2d If an instruction requires both players to make choices or take actions, the active player makes and announces his or hers first, then his or her opponent does (knowing the first player's choices). This is called the "active player rule." Then, the actions are processed simultaneously.

413.2e If an instruction gives a player the option to pay mana, he or she may play mana abilities as part of the action. No other spells or abilities can be played during resolution.

413.2f If an instruction requires information from the game (such as the number of creatures in play), the answer is determined when the player carries out that instruction. The instruction uses the current information of a specific permanent if that permanent is still in play; otherwise, the instruction uses the last known information the permanent had before leaving play. If the ability text states that a permanent does something, it's the permanent as it exists (or most recently existed) that does it, not the ability.

413.2g An instruction that refers to characteristics of a permanent checks only for the value of the specified characteristics, regardless of any related ones the permanent may also have.

**EXAMPLE:** An effect that reads, "Destroy all black creatures" destroys a white-and-black creature, but "Destroy all nonblack creatures" doesn't.

413.2h A spell card is put into play (for a permanent) or is put into the graveyard (for instants and sorceries) as the final step of resolution.

## 414. Countering Spells and Abilities

414.1. To counter a spell is to move the spell card from the stack to its owner's graveyard. Countering an ability removes its pseudospell from the stack. Spells and abilities that are countered don't resolve.

414.2. The player who played the countered spell or ability doesn't get a "refund" of any costs that were paid.

## 415. Editing a Spell or Ability

415.1. A few effects can "edit" a spell or ability after it goes on the stack, changing its target, rules text, or other characteristics.

415.2. The target of a spell or ability can change only to another legal target. If the new target is illegal when the change resolves, the original target is unchanged.

415.2a Modal spells may have different targeting requirements for each mode. Target changing can't change the mode.

415.2b The word "you" in a card's text isn't a target. A spell that affects only its player can't be retargeted.

415.3. If an effect edits any characteristics of a spell that becomes a permanent, the effect continues to apply to the permanent when the spell resolves.

**EXAMPLE:** *If an effect changes a black creature spell to white, the creature is white when it comes into play and remains white for the duration of the effect changing it.*

## 416. Effects

416.1. When a spell or ability resolves, it creates one or more effects. There are three main types: *one-shot effects*, continuous effects, and replacement and prevention effects. Effects of a fourth category, state-based effects, are generated by specific states of the game.

416.2. Effects apply only to cards in play unless the instruction's text states otherwise or they clearly can't apply to another zone.

**EXAMPLE:** *An effect that changes all lands to creatures won't alter land cards in the players' graveyards.*

416.3. If an effect attempts to do something impossible, it does only as much as possible.

**EXAMPLE:** *If a player is holding only one card, an effect that reads "Discard two cards" causes him or her to discard only that card. If an effect moves cards out of the library (as opposed to drawing), it moves as many as possible.*

## 417. One-Shot Effects

417.1. A one-shot effect does something just once and doesn't have a duration. Examples include damage dealing, destruction, and moving cards between zones.

417.2. Some one-shot effects instruct a player to do something later in the game (usually at a specific time) rather than when they resolve. Their effects actually create a new ability that waits to be activated or triggered. (See rule 406.2, "Delayed Abilities.")

## 418. Continuous Effects

418.1. A continuous effect modifies permanents or the rules of the game for a fixed or indefinite period. A continuous effect may be generated by the resolution of a spell or ability or by a static ability of a permanent.

418.2. Continuous effects that modify characteristics of permanents do so as the permanents come into play. They don't wait for the permanent to enter play and then change it.

418.3. Continuous Effects from Spells or Abilities

418.3a A continuous effect generated by the resolution of a spell or ability lasts as long as stated by the spell or ability creating it (such as "until end of turn"). If no duration is stated, it lasts until the end of the game.

418.3b The set of permanents subject to continuous effects from a spell or ability is chosen either when the spell or ability is played (if it targets the permanents) or when it resolves (if it's not targeted). After resolution, this set won't change. Note that this differs from continuous effects from permanents.

**EXAMPLE:** An effect that reads "All white creatures get +1/+1 until end of turn" gives the bonus to all permanents that are white creatures when the spell or ability resolves—even if they change color later—and doesn't affect those that come into play or turn white afterward.

418.3c If the spell or ability creating a continuous effect is variable, the effect is determined only once, on resolution. A numeric change other than simple addition or subtraction (for example, double or half) converts to a simple +X or -X at resolution. It isn't recomputed if the initial value changes later.

**EXAMPLE:** A spell that reads "Target creature gets +X/+X until end of turn, where X is the number of cards in your hand" counts the number of cards in the controller's hand when the spell resolves and grants that bonus for the rest of the turn, even if the hand size changes.

418.3d If an effect's duration expires before the spell or ability creating it resolves, then the effect does nothing—it doesn't start and immediately stop again, and it doesn't last forever.

#### 418.4. Continuous Effects from Permanents

418.4a A continuous effect generated by a static ability of a permanent isn't "locked in"; it applies at any given moment to whatever its text indicates.

418.4b The effect applies at all times that the permanent generating it is in play.

**EXAMPLE:** A permanent with the static ability "All white creatures get +1/+1" generates an effect that continuously gives +1/+1 to each white creature in play. If a creature becomes white, it gets this bonus; a creature that stops being white loses it. A creature spell that would normally create a 1/1 white creature instead creates a 2/2 white creature. The creature doesn't come into play as 1/1 and then change to 2/2.

#### 418.5. Interaction of Continuous Effects

418.5a Sometimes the results of one effect determine whether another effect applies or what it does. For example, one effect might read, "All white creatures get +1/+1" and another, "Enchanted creature is white."

418.5b An effect is said to "depend on" another if applying the other would change the text or the existence of the first effect, what it applies to, or what it does to any of the things it applies to. Otherwise, the effect is considered to be independent of the first effect.

418.5c Whenever one effect depends on another, the independent one is applied first. If several dependent effects form a loop, or if none depends on another, they're applied in the order they came into play. This is called "timestamp order."

418.5d A continuous effect can override another.

**EXAMPLE:** Two enchantments are played on the same creature: "Enchanted creature gains flying" and "Enchanted creature loses flying." Neither of these depends on the other, since nothing changes what they affect or what they're doing to it. Applying them in timestamp order means the one that was generated last "wins." It's irrelevant whether an effect is temporary (such as "Target creature loses flying until end of turn") or global (such as "All creatures lose flying").

### 419. Replacement and Prevention Effects

419.1. Replacement and prevention effects are similar to continuous effects. They watch for a type of event and replace it with a different one, modify it in some way, or prevent it from happening. These effects act like "shields" around whatever they're affecting. Replacement effects use the word "instead," while prevention effects use "prevent."

419.2. Replacement and prevention effects apply continuously as events happen—they aren't locked in ahead of time.

419.3. There are no special restrictions on playing a spell or ability that generates a replacement or prevention effect. Such effects last until they're used up or their duration has expired.

419.4. Replacement or prevention effects must exist before the appropriate event occurs—they can't "go back in time" and change something that's already happened. Usually spells and abilities that generate these effects are played in response to whatever would produce the event and thus resolve before that event would occur.

**EXAMPLE:** A player can play a regeneration ability in response to a spell that would destroy a creature he or she controls.

419.5. If an event is prevented or replaced, it never happens. Instead of a replaced event, a modified event occurs, which may in turn trigger abilities. A prevented event is simply ignored—no abilities trigger.

#### 419.6. Replacement Effects

419.6a A replacement effect doesn't invoke itself repeatedly and gets only one opportunity for each event.

**EXAMPLE:** *A player controls two copies of a permanent with an ability that reads, "Instead of dealing their normal damage, creatures you control deal double that damage." A creature that normally deals 1 damage will deal 4 damage—not just 2, and not an infinite amount.*

419.6b Regeneration is a damage-replacement effect. The key word "instead" doesn't appear on the card but is implicit in its definition. "Regenerate <permanent>" means "Instead of destroying <permanent>, remove all damage from it, tap it, and (if it's in combat) remove it from combat."

#### 419.7. Prevention Effects

419.7a Prevention effects usually apply to damage that would be dealt.

419.7b Some prevention effects refer to a specific amount of damage—for example, "Prevent the next 3 damage to target creature or player this turn." These work like ablative shields. Each 1 damage that would be dealt to the "shielded" creature or player instead reduces the shield by 1. Once the shield has been reduced to 0, any remaining damage is dealt normally. Such effects count only the amount of damage; the number of events or sources dealing it doesn't matter.

419.7c Some prevention effects apply to damage from a specified source—for example, "The next time a red source of your choice would deal damage to you this turn, prevent that damage." The source is chosen when the spell or ability resolves. A source can be a card or a token. If the player chooses a permanent or a permanent spell, the prevention will apply to the next damage from that card, regardless of whether it's from one of that permanent's abilities or combat damage dealt by it. It's possible for the source to be out of play by the time the spell or ability resolves.

#### 419.8. Interaction of Replacement or Prevention Effects

419.8a If two or more replacement or prevention effects are attempting to modify the same event in contradictory ways, the player who controls the affected permanent (or who is being affected) chooses the order to apply them.

**EXAMPLE:** *Two cards are in play. One is an enchantment that reads, "If a card would be put into a graveyard, instead remove it from the game" and the other, a creature that reads, "If <this card> would be put into a graveyard, instead shuffle it into its owner's library." The controller of the creature that would be destroyed decides which replacement to apply first; the other does nothing.*

419.8b Two or more replacement effects can interact without contradicting one another.

**EXAMPLE:** *One effect reads, "For each 1 life you would gain, instead draw a card" and another, "Instead of drawing a card, return target card from your graveyard to your hand." Both effects combine (regardless of the order they came into play): Instead of gaining 1 life, the player puts a card from his or her graveyard into his or her hand.*

419.8c If multiple replacement effects create a loop, the affected player or the controller of the affected permanent or zone decides where to break the loop. (See rule 421, "Handling 'Infinite' Loops.")

#### 420. State-Based Effects

420.1. State-based effects are a special category that applies only to those conditions listed below. Abilities that watch for a specified game state are triggered abilities. (See rule 410.8.)

420.2. State-based effects are always active and are not controlled by either player.

420.3. Whenever a player has priority to play a spell or ability (see rule 408, "Timing of Spells and Abilities"), the game checks for any of the listed conditions for state-based effects. All applicable effects resolve as a single event, then the check is repeated. This check is also made during the cleanup step (see rule 314); if any of the listed conditions apply, the active player receives priority.

420.4. Unlike triggered abilities, state-based effects pay no attention to what happens during the resolution of a spell or ability.

**EXAMPLE:** *A player controls a creature with the ability "This creature has power and toughness each equal to the number of cards in your hand" and plays a spell whose effect is "Discard your hand, then draw seven cards." The creature will temporarily have toughness 0 in the middle of the spell's resolution but will be back up to toughness 7 when the spell finishes resolving. Thus the creature will survive when state-based effects are checked. In contrast, an ability that triggers when there are no cards in the hand goes on the stack after the spell resolves, because its trigger event happened during resolution.*



420.5. The state-based effects are as follows:

420.5a A player with 0 or less life loses the game.

420.5b A creature with toughness 0 is put into its owner's graveyard. Regeneration can't replace this event.

420.5c A creature with *lethal damage* is destroyed. Regeneration does replace this event.

420.5d A local enchantment that enchants an illegal or nonexistent permanent is put into its owner's graveyard.

420.5e If two or more *Legends* or *Legendary* permanents with the same name are in play, all except the one with the earliest timestamp are put into in their owners' graveyards. This is called the "Legend rule." In the event of a tie for earliest timestamp, each Legend with the same name is put into its owner's graveyard.

420.5f A token in a zone other than the in-play zone ceases to exist.

## 421. Handling "Infinite" Loops

421.1. Occasionally the game can get into a state where a set of actions could be repeated forever. The "infinity rule" governs how to break such loops.

421.2. If the loop contains one or more optional actions and one player controls them all, that player chooses a number. The loop is treated as repeating that many times or until the other player intervenes, whichever comes first.

421.3. If the loop contains at least one optional action controlled by each player and actions by both players are required to continue the loop, the active player chooses a number. The nonactive player then has two choices. He or she can choose a lower number, in which case the loop continues that number of times plus whatever fraction is necessary for the active player to "have the last word." Or he or she can agree to the number the active player chose, in which case the loop continues that number of times plus whatever fraction is necessary for the nonactive player to "have the last word." (Note that either fraction may be zero.)

**EXAMPLE:** *The active player controls a creature with the ability "o0: <This creature> gains flying." The nonactive player has an ability "o0: Target creature loses flying." The rule ensures that regardless of which player initiated the gain/lose flying ability, the nonactive player will always have the final choice and therefore be able to determine whether the creature has flying. Note that this assume that the active player attempted to give the creature flying at least once.*

421.4. If the loop contains only mandatory actions, the game ends in a draw. (See rule 102.6.)

421.5. If the loop contains at least one optional action controlled by each player and these actions don't depend on one another, the active player chooses a number. The nonactive player can either agree to that number or choose a higher number. Note that this rule applies even if the actions could exist in separate loops rather than in a single loop.

## 422. Handling Illegal Actions

422.1. If a player realizes that he or she can't legally take an action after starting to do so, the entire action is reversed and any payments already made are canceled. No abilities trigger as a result of an undone action. If the action was playing a spell, the spell card returns to the player's hand. He or she may also reverse any legal mana abilities played while making the illegal play.

422.2. When reversing illegal spells and abilities, the player who had priority retains it and may take another action or pass. Otherwise, the player may redo the reversed action in a legal way or take any other action allowed by the rules.

## 5. Additional Combat Rules

### 500. Legal Attacks and Blocks

500.1. Some abilities and continuous effects restrict declaring attackers or blockers in combat. (See rule 308, “Declare Attackers Step,” and rule 309, “Declare Blockers Step.”)

500.2. The active player checks each creature declared as an attacker for any restriction on attacking when combined with the rest of the proposed attack. Likewise, he or she checks each creature not declared as an attacker for any attacking requirements that don’t conflict with the rest of the proposed attack. If either of these is the case, that set of attackers is illegal, and the active player must propose another attack. Similar restrictions apply to declaring blockers.

**EXAMPLE:** A player controls two creatures, each with a restriction that states “<This creature> can’t attack unless another creature attacks.” It’s legal to declare both as attackers. If one creature “attacks if able” and an effect states “Only one creature may attack each turn,” it’s legal to declare either creature as an attacker but illegal to attack with both or neither.

### 501. Evasion Abilities

501.1. *Evasion abilities* restrict what can block an attacking creature. These are static abilities that modify the declare blockers step of combat.

501.2. Evasion abilities are cumulative.

**EXAMPLE:** A Wall without flying can’t block a creature that can be blocked only by Walls and by creatures with flying.

501.3. Some creatures have abilities that restrict how they can block. As with evasion abilities, these modify only the rules for the declare blockers step of combat.

### 502. Keyword Abilities

502.1. Most creature abilities describe exactly what they do in the card’s rules text. Some, though, are very common or would require too much space to define on the card. In these cases, the card lists only the name of the ability as a “keyword”; sometimes reminder text summarizes the game rule.

#### 502.2. First Strike

502.2a *First strike* is a static ability that modifies the rules for the combat damage step.

502.2b During the combat damage step, if at least one attacking or blocking creature has first strike, creatures without first strike don’t assign combat damage. Instead of proceeding to end of combat, the phase gets a second combat damage step to handle the remaining creatures.

502.2c Adding or removing first strike after the first combat damage step won’t prevent a creature from dealing combat damage or allow it to deal combat damage twice.

502.2d Multiple copies of first strike on the same creature are redundant.

#### 502.3. Flanking

502.3a *Flanking* is a triggered ability that modifies the declare blockers step.

502.3b Whenever a creature with flanking is blocked by a creature without flanking, the blocking creature gets -1/-1 until end of turn.

502.3c If a creature has multiple copies of flanking, each triggers separately.

#### 502.4. Flying

502.4a *Flying* is an evasion ability.

502.4b A creature with flying can’t be blocked by creatures without flying. A creature with flying can block a creature with or without flying.

502.4c Multiple copies of flying on the same creature are redundant.

#### 502.5. Haste

502.5a *Haste* is a static ability.

502.5b A creature with haste can attack or use activated abilities whose cost includes tapping the creature even if it hasn't been controlled by the player continuously since the most recent beginning of that controller's turn.

502.5c Multiple copies of haste on the same creature are redundant.

#### 502.6. Landwalk

502.6a *Landwalk* is a generic term; a card's rules text usually names a specific type of land (such as in "islandwalk" or "swampwalk").

502.6b Landwalk is an evasion ability. A creature with landwalk is *unblockable* as long as the defending player controls at least one land of the specified type.

502.6c Landwalk abilities don't "cancel" one another.

**EXAMPLE:** *Controlling a creature with forestwalk doesn't let a defending player block a creature with forestwalk if he or she controls a forest.*

502.6d Multiple copies of the same type of landwalk on the same creature are redundant.

#### 502.7. Protection

502.7a *Protection* is a static ability, written "Protection from <quality>." This quality is usually a color (as in "protection from black") but can be any characteristic, such as a permanent type.

502.7b A permanent with protection can't be targeted by spells or abilities and can't be enchanted by enchantments that have the stated quality. In addition, any damage that would be dealt to it from sources having that quality is prevented. If it attacks, it can't be blocked by creatures having that quality.

502.7c Multiple copies of protection from the same quality on the same permanent are redundant.

#### 502.8. Shadow

502.8a *Shadow* is an evasion ability.

502.8b A creature with shadow can't be blocked by creatures without shadow, and a creature without shadow can't be blocked by creatures with shadow.

502.8c Multiple copies of shadow on the same creature are redundant.

#### 502.9. Trample

502.9a *Trample* is a static ability that modifies the rules for assigning an attacking creature's combat damage. A creature with trample has no special abilities when blocking or dealing noncombat damage.

502.9b The controller of an attacking creature with trample first assigns damage to the creature(s) blocking it. If all those blocking creatures receive lethal damage, any remaining damage is assigned as its controller chooses among the blocking creatures and the defending player. The controller need not assign lethal damage to all blocking creatures but can't assign any damage to the defending player in this case.

502.9c If all the creatures blocking an attacking creature with trample are removed from combat before the combat damage step, all its damage is assigned to the defending player.

502.9d An attacking creature with trample ignores any blocking creatures that can't have damage assigned to them.

502.9e Assigning damage from a creature with trample considers only the actual toughness of a blocking creature, not any abilities or effects that might change the final amount of damage dealt.

502.9f When there are several attacking creatures, it's legal to assign damage from those without trample so as to maximize the damage of those with trample.

**EXAMPLE:** *A 2/2 creature with an ability that enables it to block multiple attackers blocks two attackers, one 1/1 with no special abilities and the other 3/3 with trample. The active player could assign 1 damage from the first attacker and 1 damage from the second to the blocking creature and 2 damage to the defending player from the creature with trample.*

502.9g Multiple copies of trample on the same creature are redundant.

# Glossary

## Ability

“Ability” and “effect” are often confused with one another. An instruction in a *permanent’s* text is an ability. The result of following such an instruction, or of a spell, is an effect.

A permanent may have one or more abilities or no abilities at all. For more information, see section 4, “Spells, Abilities, and Effects.”

## Activated Ability

An activated *ability* is written as “*activation cost: effect.*” By *paying* the activation cost, a player may *play* such abilities whenever he or she has *priority*. See rule 403, “Activated Abilities.”

## Activation Cost

The activation cost of an *activated ability* is everything before the colon in “*activation cost: effect*” and must be *paid to play* the ability. For example, the activation cost of an ability that reads “*2, c : Gain 1 life*” is two *mana* of any *color* plus *tapping* the *permanent*. See rule 403, “Activated Abilities.”

## Active Player

The active player is the player whose turn it is. The active player gets *priority* at the start of each *phase* or *step* and after any *spell* or *ability* (except *mana abilities*) *resolves*.

Whenever both players are instructed to make choices at the same time, the active player makes all his or her choices first, then the nonactive player.

## Additional Cost

Some *spells* or *abilities* have additional costs listed in their text, which are *paid* at the same time as the player pays the *mana cost*. See rule 409, “Playing Spells and Activated Abilities.”

## Alternative Cost

The rules text of some *spells* reads, “You may <action> to *play* <name> instead of *paying its mana cost.*” These are alternative costs. Other spells and *abilities* that refer to a spell’s *mana cost* don’t consider any alternative cost. If an *effect* requires paying *additional costs* to play a spell, they still apply to the alternative cost.

## Ante (Obsolete)

The **Magic** game once included an optional ante rule. When using this rule, at the beginning of the game each player puts one random *card* from his or her *deck* into the *ante zone*. At the end of the game, the winner becomes the owner of all cards in the *ante*.

## Artifact

An artifact is both a *card* and a *permanent type*. Artifact *spells* can be *played* only during the *active player’s main phase* when the *stack* is empty.

## Artifact Creature

This *permanent* is a combination of *artifact* and *creature*, subject to the rules for both. See rule 214, “Permanent Type.”

## Attack

A *creature* attacks when it is declared as an attacker during the *combat phase*. See rule 308, “Declare Attackers Step.”

## Attacking Creature

A *creature* becomes an attacking creature when declared as an attacker during the *combat phase*. It remains an attacking creature until it’s removed from combat, it stops being a creature, its *controller* changes, or the combat phase ends. Attacking creatures don’t exist outside of the combat phase. See rule 308, “Declare Attackers Step.”

## Banding, Bands with Other (Obsolete)

Banding is a *static ability* that affects the *combat phase*. “Bands with other” is a specialized version of the *ability*.

## Basic Land

There are five basic *lands*: plains, island, swamp, mountain, and forest. Every basic land has an intrinsic *mana ability*. See rule 214.9, “Lands.”

## Becomes

Some *trigger* events use the word “becomes”; for example, “becomes *tapped*” or “becomes *blocked.*” These trigger only at the time the named event happens—they don’t trigger if that state already exists or retrigger if it persists. For example, “becomes *tapped*” triggers once, and only when a *permanent’s* status changes from *untapped* to *tapped*.

## Beginning of Turn

An *ability* that *triggers* on “beginning of turn” goes on the *stack* the first time a player has *priority*—normally, the beginning of the *upkeep step*. See rule 410, “Handling Triggered Abilities.”

## Beginning Phase

The beginning phase is the first *phase* of the turn. It has three *steps*: *untap*, *upkeep*, and *draw*. See rule 301, “Beginning Phase.”

## Block

A *creature* blocks when it’s declared as a blocker during the *combat phase*. See rule 309, “Declare Blockers Step.”

## Blocked Creature

An *attacking creature* becomes a blocked creature when another *creature* *blocks* it or an *effect* causes it to *become* blocked during the *combat phase*. It remains a blocked creature until it’s removed from combat, it stops being a creature, its *controller* changes, or the combat phase ends. A blocked creature doesn’t become unblocked if the blocking creature is later removed from combat. Blocked creatures don’t exist outside of the combat phase. See rule 309, “Declare Blockers Step.”

## Blocking Creature

A *creature* becomes a blocking creature when it *blocks* an *attacking creature* during the *combat phase*. It remains a blocking creature until it’s removed from combat, it stops being a creature, its *controller* changes, or the combat phase ends. Blocking creatures don’t exist outside of the combat phase. See rule 309, “Declare Blockers Step.”

## Bury (Obsolete)

This is the act of putting a *permanent* into its *owner’s graveyard*. *Regeneration* can’t *replace* a “bury” *effect*.

## Buyback

Buyback is a *replacement ability*. When *playing* an *instant* or *sorcery spell* with buyback, the *controller* of the spell may pay an *additional cost* specified on the card. If he or she does, when the spell *resolves*, the card is put into its *owner’s hand* instead of into its *owner’s graveyard*.

## Cantrip (Informal)

This is a nickname for any *spell* that has “*Draw a card*” as part of its *effect*.

## Card

This is specifically a **Magic** card, and is always considered a card regardless of which *zone* it’s in. *Tokens* aren’t cards. See section 2, “Cards.”

## Cast (Obsolete)

This is a synonym for *playing a spell*.

## Caster (Obsolete)

The *caster* of a *spell* is the player who *played* it.

## Casting Cost (Obsolete)

This is the old term for *mana cost*.

## Characteristics

A *card’s* characteristics are: *name*, *mana cost*, *color*, *type* and *subtype*, *expansion symbol*, *abilities*, *power*, and *toughness*. A *card’s* characteristics at any given time start with the *initial values*, then are adjusted by any *counters* (on a *permanent*), then by *continuous effects*. Characteristics don’t include other information about a card, such as being *tapped* or *untapped*, its *controller*, its *target*, and so on.

## Cleanup

Cleanup is the second and final *step* of the *end phase*. *Spells* and *abilities* may be *played* during this step only in response to a *state-based effect* or *triggered ability*. In that case, the step repeats. See rule 314, “Cleanup Step.”

## Color

The only colors in **Magic** are white, blue, black, red, and green. A *permanent* can be one or more of those colors or it can be *colorless*. “Colorless” isn’t a color; neither are “artifact,” “land,” “brown,” etc.

A *card’s* initial color is determined by the color(s) of the *mana symbols* in its *mana cost*.

*Spells* and *abilities* may change a *permanent’s* color temporarily or permanently.

## Colorless

A *card* with no *color* is colorless. *Lands* and *artifacts* are colorless.

## Combat Damage

Combat damage is dealt during the combat damage *step* of the *combat phase* by *attacking creatures* and *blocking creatures*. It doesn't include damage dealt by *spells* and *abilities* during the combat phase. See rule 310, "Combat Damage Step."

## Combat Phase

Combat is the third *phase* of the turn. The combat phase has five steps: beginning of combat, declare attackers, declare blockers, *combat damage*, and end of combat. See rules 306–311.

## Comes into Play

A *permanent* comes into play when the *card* or *token* representing it is moved into the *in-play zone*. A permanent whose *type* or *controller* changes doesn't "come into play."

Permanents come into play *untapped* and under the control of whoever controlled the *spell* or *ability* that created them. *Effects* that alter permanents coming into play do so as they come into play. For example, if an effect causes something to come into play *tapped*, it isn't put into play untapped and then tapped.

## Continuous Ability (Obsolete)

This is the old term for *static ability*.

## Continuous Effect

Continuous effects are usually active as long as the *permanent* with the associated *static ability* remains *in play*. A *spell* or *ability* can also create a continuous effect that doesn't depend on a permanent; these last for the specified time. See rule 418, "Continuous Effects."

## Control/Controller

Every *permanent*, *spell*, and *ability* has a controller.

When a permanent *comes into play*, its controller is whoever *played* the spell or ability that created it. Other *effects* can later change the controller.

Cards in *zones* other than *in play* or the *stack* have no controller. A spell or ability on the stack is controlled by whoever played it. A *triggered ability* is controlled by the controller of the permanent that generated it.

## Converted Mana Cost

The converted mana cost of a *card* is the total amount of *mana* in its *mana cost*, regardless of *color*. For example, Air Elemental has a mana cost of 3 U U and a converted mana cost of 5. See rule 203, "Mana Cost."

## Cost

*Playing spells* and *activated abilities* requires *paying* a cost. Most costs are in *mana*, but they also include paying *life*, *tapping* or *sacrificing permanents*, or *discarding cards*.

It's illegal to pay a cost without having the necessary resources. For example, a player with only 1 life can't pay a cost of 2 life, and a permanent that's already tapped can't be tapped to pay a cost. See rule 203, "Mana Cost," and rule 403, "Activated Abilities."

## Counter

1. To counter a *spell* or *ability* is to cancel it, removing it from the *stack zone*. A countered spell is put into its *owner's graveyard*.

2. A counter is a marker placed on a *permanent*, either modifying its *characteristics* or interacting with an ability. For example, some *creatures come into play* with a number of +1/+1 counters, increasing their *power* and *toughness*. Counters with the same *name* or description are interchangeable.

## Counts As

If a *card's* text states that it "counts as" something, then as far as the game rules and other cards are concerned the card is that thing. This isn't an *ability*; it applies even when the card's not *in play*. For example, a card that "counts as a forest" can be retrieved with a *spell* that searches the *library* for a forest card, and once in play it allows forestwalk.

## Creature

A creature is both a *card* and *permanent type*. The *active player* can *play creature spells* only during his or her *main phase* when the *stack* is empty. See rule 214.7, "Creatures."

## Cumulative Upkeep

Cumulative upkeep is an *upkeep-triggered ability*. "Cumulative upkeep — <cost>" means "At the beginning of your upkeep, put a cumulative upkeep *counter* on this *card*. You may pay <cost> for each cumulative upkeep counter on the card. If you don't, *sacrifice* it." See section 410, "Handling Triggered Abilities."

## Cycling

Cycling is an *activated ability* that affects a *spell's resolution*. "Cycling <cost>" means "Pay <cost>, discard this *card*: Draw a card. Play this ability only when this card is in your hand."

## Damage

Many *spells* and *abilities* deal damage to *creatures* and/or players. Creatures may also deal *combat damage* during the *combat phase*.

Damage dealt to a player is subtracted from his or her *life total*. Damage dealt to a creature stays on the creature. A creature with damage greater than or equal to its *toughness* has *lethal damage* and is *destroyed*. (See rule 420, "State-Based Effects.") During the *cleanup step*, all damage is removed from creatures.

*Costs* and *effects* that read "lose life" or "pay life" aren't damage and can't be *prevented* by damage-prevention effects.

## Damage-Prevention Ability

A damage-prevention ability is a *static ability* that generates a *damage-prevention effect*.

## Deck

The deck is the collection of *cards* each player starts the game with. When the game begins, each player's deck becomes his or her *library*.

## Delayed Ability

A delayed ability is an *activated* or *triggered ability* created by *effects* generated when some *spells* or *abilities* *resolve*. See rule 406.2, "Delayed Abilities."

## Destroy

To destroy a *permanent* is to move it from the *in-play zone* to its *owner's graveyard*. *Regeneration* or other destruction-*replacement effects* can replace this action. See rule 419, "Replacement and Prevention Effects."

## Discard

A player discards a *card* by putting the card from his or her *hand* into his or her *graveyard*. This may allow a choice (written "choose and discard") or not ("discard at random").

## Draw

1. A player draws a *card* by putting the top card of his or her *library* into his or her *hand*. A *spell* or *ability* may move cards from a player's library to the hand without "drawing" them; this makes a difference for abilities that *trigger* on drawing cards or that *replace card draws*.

2. A game ends in a draw if both players lose or win simultaneously.

## Draw Step

The draw step is the third *step* of the *beginning phase*, with a *triggered ability* that requires the *active player* to *draw* a card at the beginning of the step. A player may play *spells* and *abilities* during this step whenever he or she has *priority*. See rule 304, "Draw Step."

## Duel (Obsolete)

This is a synonym for a game of **Magic**. See also **Match**.

## During (Obsolete)

*Phase-triggered abilities* were sometimes written "During <phase>, . . ." These should be read as "At the beginning of <phase>, . . ."

## Echo

Echo is a *upkeep-triggered ability*. "Echo" in a *permanent's* rules text means "At the beginning of your upkeep, if this *card* came under your *control* since the beginning of your last upkeep, you may *pay* its *mana cost*. If you don't, *sacrifice* it."

## Effect

"Ability" and "effect" are often confused with one another. An instruction in a *permanent's* text is an ability. The result of carrying out such an instruction, or that of a *spell*, is an effect. See rule 416, "Effects."

When a *spell* or *ability* *resolves*, it creates an effect. There are three basic types: *one-shot*, *continuous*, and *replacement or prevention effects*.

Some effects may in turn create *delayed abilities* to be played later.

## Enchant World (Obsolete)

Enchant world is a category of *global enchantment* found only in out-of-print *cards*. Whenever two or more enchant world cards are in play, the oldest is put into its *owner's graveyard*. This is a *state-based effect*.

## Enchantment

An enchantment is both a *card* and a *permanent type*. The *active player* can play enchantment *spells* only during his or her *main phase* when the *stack* is empty. See rule 214.8, "Enchantments." See also **Global Enchantment, Local Enchantment**.

## End of Turn

This is the first *step* of the *end phase*. See rule 313, "End of Turn Step."

## End Phase

The end phase is the fifth and final *phase* of the turn. It has two *steps*: *end of turn* and *cleanup*. See rule 312, "End Phase."

## Evasion Ability

Evasion abilities restrict what *creatures* can *block* an *attacking creature*. These are *static abilities* that modify the declare blockers *step* of the *combat phase*. See rule 501, "Evasion Abilities."

## Event

Anything that happens in a game is an event. Multiple events may take place during the *resolution* of a *spell* or *ability*.

## Exchange

A *spell* or *ability* may instruct players to exchange something when it is played; for example, *life totals* or *control* of two *permanents*. When such a spell or ability *resolves*, if it can't exchange the chosen things, it has no *effect*. For example, if a spell attempts to exchange control of two *target creatures* but one of them is *destroyed* before it resolves, the spell does nothing.

When life totals are exchanged, each player gains or loses the amount of life necessary to equal the other player's previous life total. *Replacement effects* may modify these gains and losses, and *triggered abilities* may trigger on them.

## Expansion Symbol

The small icon printed below the right edge of the illustration on a **Magic card** is the expansion symbol, indicating in which set the card was published. Cards reprinted in the basic set receive its expansion symbol and no longer count as part of their original set. This is important only to *spells* and *abilities* that affect cards from a particular expansion. The first five editions of the basic set had no expansion symbol.

The expansion symbols to date are:

### Expansion and Editions

*Arabian Nights*® <symbol>

*Antiquities*® <symbol>

*Legends*® <symbol>

*The Dark*® <symbol>

*Fallen Empires*™ <symbol>

*Ice Age*™ <symbol>

*Homelands*™ <symbol>

*Alliances*™ <symbol>

*Mirage*™ <symbol>

*Visions*™ <symbol>

*Weatherlight*™ <symbol>

*Tempest*™ <symbol>

*Stronghold*™ <symbol>

*Exodus*™ <symbol>

*Urza's Saga*™ <symbol>



Urza's Legacy™ <symbol>

Classic™ (Sixth Edition) <symbol>

### Starter-Level Sets

Portal™ <symbol>

Portal Second Age™ <symbol>

Portal Three Kingdoms™ <symbol>

### Promotional Cards

DragonCon <symbol>

Magic novels <symbol>

Arena™ league cards <symbol>

### Reprints

Cards reprinted in *Chronicles™*, *Anthologies*, and other reprint sets have the same expansion symbol as the original cards. These cards are treated as belonging to the original set.

### Social-Play Sets

Unglued™ <symbol>

### Fast Effect (Obsolete)

This is an old term for *instant spells* and *activated abilities*.

### First Strike

First strike is a *static ability* that modifies the rules for the *combat phase*. *Creatures* with first strike deal their *damage* first, then surviving creatures without first strike deal their damage. See rule 502.2, "First Strike."

### Fizzle (Obsolete)

Older versions of **Magic** rules use the term "fizzle" when *spells* or *abilities* are *countered* due to missing or illegal *targets* on *resolution*.

### Flanking

Flanking is a *triggered ability* that modifies the declare blockers step of the *combat phase*. The word "flanking" in a *creature card's* rules text means "Whenever this creature *becomes blocked* by a creature without flanking, the blocking creature gets -1/-1 until end of turn." See rule 502.3, "Flanking."

### Flavor Text

This is text in *italics* appearing below the rules text on a *card*. It provides a mood or gives interesting background detail for the game world but has no effect on play.

### Flying

Flying is an *evasion ability*. A *creature* with flying can't be *blocked* by creatures without flying. A creature with flying can block a creature with or without flying. See rule 502.4, "Flying."

### Forestwalk

See **Landwalk**.

### Generic Mana Cost

A generic mana cost is represented by a number in a gray circle, such as 1. Any *color* of *mana*, as well as *colorless*, may be used to *pay* a generic mana cost.

### Global Enchantment

Global enchantments are a category of *enchantments*. They are labeled "Enchantment" and aren't attached to another *permanent* while they're *in play*.

### Graveyard

Each player's *discard* pile is his or her graveyard. *Countered spells, destroyed or sacrificed permanents, and discarded cards* are put into their *owner's* graveyard. See section 217, "Zones."

## Hand

The hand is the *zone* where a player holds *cards*. See section 217, "Zones."

## Haste

Normally a *creature* can't *attack* or use *activated abilities* whose *cost* includes *tapping* the creature unless it's been controlled by the player continuously since the most recent beginning of that controller's turn. Haste is a *static ability* that allows a creature to ignore this rule. See rule 502.5, "Haste."

## Hidden Information (Obsolete)

In earlier **Magic** rules, choices involved in playing *spells* and *abilities* were made during announcement, except *sacrifices* and certain categories of choices involving "hidden information" defined by complex rules. Under *Classic* rules, all choices except *mode* and *targets* called for by a spell or ability are made during *resolution* and are unknown to the opponent until then.

## If

A *triggered ability* may read "When(ever)/At . . . , if . . . , <action>." The *ability* checks for the stated condition to be true when the *trigger event* occurs. If it is, the ability triggers and goes on the *stack*. On *resolution*, the ability rechecks the condition. If the condition isn't true at either of those times, the ability does nothing.

## In Play

In play is the *zone* in which *permanents* exist. When an *artifact, creature, or enchantment spell resolves*, the *card* is put into the in-play zone as a permanent. *Tokens* and *lands* also exist in this zone. See rule 217, "Zones."

## Infinity Rule

There's no such thing as "infinity" in **Magic** rules. Occasionally the game can get into a state where a set of actions could be repeated forever. The "infinity rule" governs how to break such loops. See rule 421, "Handling 'Infinite' Loops."

## Initial Value

The initial values of a *card's characteristics* are printed on the card or in the rules text of the *spell* or *ability* that creates a *token*.

*Effects* that change a *card's type* change the initial values for one or more of its characteristics, not the current values. They don't override *continuous effects* that are changing those characteristics. See rule 214.5.

## Instant

An instant is a *card type*. A player may *play* instant *spells* whenever he or she has *priority*. Instant spells are put into their *owner's graveyard* as the last step of *resolution*. See rule 409, "Playing Spells and Activated Abilities."

## Interrupt (Obsolete)

An interrupt is a form of *instant* that *targets* a *spell* or *ability*.

## Islandwalk

See *Landwalk*.

## Land

Land is both a *card* and *permanent type*. Lands aren't *spells* and don't go on the *stack*; they are simply put *in play* from the *hand*. The *active player* may *play* a land once each turn during his or her *main phase* when he or she has *priority* and the stack is empty. See rule 214.9, "Lands."

## Landhome (Obsolete)

"Landhome" is a generic term; a *card's* rules text names a specific *type* of *land*, such as "islandhome." A *creature* with landhome can't be declared as an *attacking creature* during the *combat phase* unless the defending player *controls* at least one land of the specified type. If its controller controls no land of the specified type, the creature is put into its *owner's graveyard* as a *triggered ability*.

## Landwalk

"Landwalk" is a generic term; a *card's* rules text usually names a specific *type* of *land*, such as "islandwalk."

Landwalk is an *evasion ability*. A *creature* with landwalk is *unblockable* as long as the defending player *controls* at least one land of the specified type. See rule 502.6, "Landwalk."

## Leaves Play

A *permanent* leaves play when it moves from the *in-play zone* to any other zone. See rule 410.10c.

If a *token* leaves play, it ceases to exist. This is a *state-based effect*.

If a *card* leaves play and later returns, it's treated as an entirely new permanent with no "memory" of anything from its former existence.

### Legend/Legend Rule

A Legend is a special *permanent* subtype. Whenever two or more Legends with the same *name* are *in play*, all but the first played are put into their *owners' graveyards*. This "Legend rule" is a *state-based effect*.

### Legendary

The word "Legendary" in a card's text gives it the *Legend* subtype.

### Lethal Damage

Lethal damage is an amount of *damage* greater than 0 and greater than or equal to a *creature's toughness*. A creature with lethal damage is *destroyed*. This is a *state-based effect*.

### Library

The library is the *zone* from which a player *draws cards*. When a game begins, each player's *deck* becomes his or her library. See section 217.2, "Library."

### Life/Life Total

Life total is a sort of score. Each player starts the game with 20 life, and a player whose life total drops to 0 loses. This is a *state-based effect*.

### LIFO

An acronym for "Last In, First Out," LIFO is the order in which *spells* and *abilities* resolve after going on the *stack*. The last *played* is resolved first. See section 413, "Resolving Spells and Abilities."

### Local Enchantment

Local enchantments are a category of *enchantments*. They are labeled "Enchant <type>" and are attached to another *permanent* while *in play*. See rule 214.8, "Enchantments."

### Main Phase

The term "main phase" comprises the first main and second main phases, which precede and follow the *combat phase*, respectively. *Artifact*, *creature*, *enchantment*, and *sorcery spells* may be *played* only by the *active player* during his or her main phase, and only when the *stack* is empty. A player may also play one *land* each turn during his or her main phase.

### Mana

Mana is the energy used to *play spells* and usually is produced by *lands*. Mana is created by a spell or *mana ability* and can be used to *pay costs* immediately or can go into the player's *mana pool*.

Colored *mana costs*, represented by colored *mana symbols*, can be paid only with the appropriate *color* of mana. *Generic mana costs* can be paid with any color of, or with *colorless*, mana.

Specialized types of mana can exist. For example, an ability might produce mana that can be used only to play *creature* spells, or to pay *activation costs*.

### Mana Ability

This is an *ability* category and is either *activated* or *triggered*. A mana ability doesn't go on the *stack*—it *resolves* immediately.

A player may play a mana ability whenever he or she has *priority* and whenever a rule or *effect* asks for a mana payment. This is the only type of ability that can be played in the middle of playing or resolving a *spell* or ability. See rule 406.1, "Mana Abilities."

### Mana Burn

When a *phase* ends, any unused *mana* remaining in a player's *mana pool* is lost. The player loses 1 *life* for each one mana lost this way. This is called "mana burn."

### Mana Cost

The mana cost of a nonland *card* is indicated by the *mana symbols* printed on its upper right corner. The mana cost of a *land* card or a *token* is 0. See rule 203, "Mana Cost."

### Mana Pool

When a *spell* or *ability* creates *mana* that's not used immediately to pay a *cost*, the mana is stored in the mana pool, an imaginary area. From there, it can be used to pay for spells and abilities. The mana pool is cleared at the end of each *phase*. See also **Mana Burn**.

### Mana Symbol

The mana symbols are W, U, B, R, G, 0, numerals, and X.

Each of the *colored* mana symbols represents one colored *mana*: W white, U blue, B black, R red, and G green. Numeral symbols (such as 1) are *generic mana costs* and represent an amount of mana that can be *paid* with any color of, or *colorless*, mana.

The symbol X represents an unspecified amount of mana; when playing a *spell* or *activated ability* with X in its *cost*, its *controller* decides the value of X.

The symbol 0 represents zero mana and is used as a placeholder when a spell or activated ability costs nothing to play.

## Match

A match is a series of **Magic** games and is important only for tournament or league play. A match usually consists of the best two of three games, or sometimes the best three of five. For more information, consult the DCI™ Standard Floor Rules.

## Maximum Hand Size

Each player's maximum hand size is normally seven *cards*, though *effects* may modify this. At the beginning of the active player's *cleanup step*, if he or she has too many cards in his or her *hand*, that player chooses and *discards* as many cards as needed to reduce his or her hand to its maximum size (but no more than that). See rule 314, "Cleanup Step."

## Modal/Mode

A *spell* is modal if it offers a choice of *effects*. Its *controller* must choose the mode as part of *playing* the spell. On current *cards*, modal spells are always written "Choose one —."

## Mountainwalk

See **Landwalk**.

## Move

A *spell* or *ability* may instruct a player to "move" a *local enchantment* or a *counter* from one *permanent* to another. If the enchantment or counter no longer exists or the new permanent is no longer *in play* when the spell or ability *resolves*, nothing happens. Similarly, an *enchantment* that can't enchant the new permanent stays where it was.

A moved enchantment stops enchanting the previous permanent and starts enchanting the new one. Nothing else about the enchantment changes. The enchantment never left play, so no *comes-into-play* or *leaves-play triggered abilities* will trigger.

## Mulligan

A player can "mulligan" by *discarding* his or her *hand*, reshuffling the *library*, and *drawing* a new hand with one fewer *card* before taking the first turn. Any player dissatisfied with his or her starting hand may mulligan as often as he or she wishes, drawing one fewer card each time. See rule 101.5.

## Multicolored

A multicolored *card* has two or more *colors*. Multicolored cards are printed with gold frames to reinforce this.

A multicolored *permanent* is affected by anything that singles out any of its colors. For example, a black-and-green *creature* is *destroyed* by a *spell* that reads, "Destroy all green creatures." Something that can't affect a particular color won't affect a multicolored permanent with that color, so the above creature can't be *targeted* by a spell or *ability* that reads, "Destroy target nonblack creature."

## Name

The name of a *card* is printed on its upper-left corner. See rule 202, "Name."

## Nonbasic Land

Any land other than a *basic land* (plains, island, swamp, mountain, forest) is nonbasic. A nonbasic land that "counts as" a basic land has that *land's mana ability* and is subject to any *spells* or *abilities* that act on that land type, but it isn't a basic land.

## One-Shot Effect

One-shot effects are *effects* that do something only once and then end. See also *Continuous Effects*.

## Opponent

The word "opponent" in a *spell* or *ability's* rules text always refers to the opponent of the player *playing* the spell or ability.

In a team game, only members of the opposing team are opponents; teammates aren't opponents. In a free-for-all, all other players are a player's opponents.

## Owner

The owner of a *card* is the player who started the game with that card in his or her *deck*. (Legal ownership is irrelevant to the game rules.) The owner of a *token* is the *controller* of the *spell* or *ability* that created it.

A spell or ability can change a *permanent's* controller but never its owner.

A card is always put into its owner's *library*, *hand*, or *graveyard*, regardless of who currently controls the card.

## Pass

To pass is to decline to *play* a *spell* or *ability*. When a player passes, his or her *opponent* receives *priority*. If both players pass in succession, the last-played spell or ability on the *stack* *resolves*. If the stack is empty, the *phase* or *step* ends.

## Pay

Playing most *spells* and *activated abilities* requires paying *costs*.

Paying *mana* is done by either playing a *mana ability* or removing the indicated amount of mana from the player's *mana pool*. (Zero-mana costs can always be paid.) Paying *life* subtracts the indicated amount of life from the player's life total. A player can't pay more mana or life than he or she currently has.

To pay any other cost, the player carries out the instructions specified in the *card's* rules text. It's illegal to attempt paying a cost when unable to successfully follow the instructions. For example, a player can't pay a cost that requires *tapping* a *creature* if that creature is already tapped.

Each payment applies to only one spell or ability. For example, a player can't *sacrifice* just one creature to play activated abilities of two *permanents* that require sacrificing a creature as a cost.

## Permanent

A permanent is any *card* or token in the *in-play zone*. See rule 214, "Permanent Type."

## Permanently (Obsolete)

Some older *cards* use the word "permanently" to indicate *effects* with no expiration. For example, "Gain control of <name> permanently" grants *control* of it until something else changes the controller. It doesn't make the *permanent* immune to other control effects.

## Phase

Each turn is divided into five phases: *beginning*, first *main*, *combat*, second main, and *end*. See section 3, "Turn Structure."

## Phase Ability (Obsolete)

This is a term for *triggered abilities* written "During <phase>, . . ." These should be read as "At the beginning of <phase>, . . ."

## Phased Out (Obsolete)

The "phased out" *zone* is a special zone for *permanents* with *phasing* that are temporarily out of play.

## Phasing (Obsolete)

Phasing is a *static ability* that causes a *permanent* to leave play and later return, without losing its "memory."

## Plainswalk

See **Landwalk**.

## Play

The act of playing a *spell*, *land*, or *ability* involves announcing the action and taking the necessary steps to complete it.

Playing a spell or *activated ability* requires *paying* any *costs* and choosing any required *modes* and/or *targets*. The spell or ability then goes on the *stack*. See section 409, "Playing Spells and Activated Abilities."

Playing a land simply requires choosing a land *card* from the *hand* and putting it into play.

Playing a *mana ability* requires paying any costs, then immediately *resolving* the ability. See rule 411, "Playing Mana Abilities."

*Triggered abilities* and *static abilities* aren't played—they happen automatically.

## Play/Draw

At the start of a game, one player gets to choose the order of *play*. Whoever plays first can't *draw* a card during his or her first *draw step*. This is referred to as the "play/draw" choice. See rule 101, "Starting the Game."

## Power

The number before the slash printed on the lower-right corner of a *creature card* is the creature's power. A creature's current power is the *initial value* (the printed number), modified by any *counters* that adjust power and then by any *continuous effects*.

Creatures that *attack* or *block* deal *combat damage* equal to their power. (See rule 310, "Combat Damage Step.")

A few creature cards have power represented by "\*" instead of a number. This signifies that the creature has a *static ability* setting its power according to some stated condition. If a *spell* or *ability* attempts to read the power when the creature card isn't *in play*, the \* is equal to 0.

## Prevention

*Effects* that prevent something from happening replace it with "do nothing." (See rule 419, "Replacement and Prevention Effects.") These effects must be active before the *event* they're intended to prevent.

Effects that prevent a specific amount of *damage* act as "shields" and stay active until that amount of damage has been prevented or the turn ends. The damage doesn't have to be dealt by a single *source* or all at once.

Effects that prevent all damage from a specific source apply to the next damage dealt by that source, regardless of the amount. These effects expire when the turn ends.

### Priority

The player who has the option to *play a spell or ability* at any given time has priority.

Each time a spell or ability (other than a *mana ability*) *resolves*, and at the beginning of most *phases* or *steps*, the *active player* receives priority. When a player *passes*, his or her *opponent* receives priority. If both players pass in succession, the phase or step ends.

### Protection

Protection is a *static ability*. A *permanent* with protection from <quality> can't be *targeted* by <quality> *spells* or *abilities*, or enchanted by <quality> *enchantments*. If it *attacks*, it can't be *blocked* by <quality> *creatures*. In addition, all *damage* dealt to it from <quality> *sources* is reduced to 0. See rule 502.7, "Protection."

### Pseudospell

A pseudospell is an *activated* or *triggered ability* that goes on the *stack* like a *spell*.

### Rampage (Obsolete)

Rampage is a *triggered ability* that triggers in the declare blockers *step* of the *combat phase*. "Rampage <X>" means "When this *creature* becomes *blocked*, it gets +<X>/+<X> until end of turn for each creature after the first blocking it."

### Redirect (Obsolete)

To redirect *damage* is to deal it to a different player or *creature* than originally specified by the *spell*, *ability*, or *combat damage* assignment. This doesn't change the *source* or type of damage. A damage-redirecting ability creates a *replacement effect*, which must be active before the damage is actually dealt.

### Regenerate

Regeneration is a *damage-replacement effect*. "Regenerate <permanent>" means "Instead of *destroying* <permanent>, remove all damage from it, *tap* it, and (if it's in combat) remove it from *combat*." Because it's a replacement effect, it must be active before the attempted destruction *event*.

### Reminder Text

Reminder text appears after a keyword *ability* printed on a *card* and is italicized and in parentheses. This text provides a summary of the game rule but isn't itself considered rules text.

### Removed from the Game

A *card* removed from the game is out of play and can't be affected by *spells* or *abilities*. However, the spell or ability that removed it may specify a way for it to return. Some cards use the expression "set aside" for situations in which a card removed from the game can return to play. See rule 217.7, "Removed from the Game."

### Replacement Ability

A replacement ability is a *static ability* that generates a *replacement effect*.

### Replacement Effect

A replacement effect is a type of *continuous effect* that "watches" for a specified *event* and replaces it with a different one. See rule 419, "Replacement and Prevention Effects."

### Resolve

When the *spell* or *ability* on top of the *stack* resolves, its *controller* executes the instructions printed on the *card*, in the order written. See rule 413, "Resolving Spells and Abilities."

### Respond/Response (Informal)

A player can choose to *play an instant spell* or *activated ability* when something else is already on the *stack*, rather than waiting for the earlier spell or ability to *resolve* first. The spell or ability is said to be played "in response to" the earlier spell or ability.

### Reveal

To reveal a *card* is to show that card to all players. This is a *one-shot effect*; after all players have seen the card, it's returned to its former state.

### Saboteur (Informal)

This is a nickname for any *creature* with *abilities* that *trigger* when it's *unblocked* or that can be *played* only when it's *unblocked*.

## Sacrifice

To sacrifice a *permanent*, its *controller* moves it from the *in-play zone* directly to its *owner's graveyard*. If an *effect* instructs a player to sacrifice a permanent that he or she doesn't control, nothing happens.

## Set Aside

To set aside a card is to *remove it from the game*; however, there is a condition that allows the set-aside card to return to play. See also **Removed from the Game**.

## Shadow

Shadow is an *evasion ability*. *Attacking creatures* with shadow can't be *blocked* by creatures without shadow, and attacking creatures without shadow can't be blocked by creatures with shadow. See rule 502.8, "Shadow."

## Skip

To skip a *step*, *phase*, or turn is to proceed past it as though it didn't exist. Skipping is a *prevention* or *replacement* effect. "Skip <something>" is the same as "Prevent <something>" or "Instead of doing <something>, do nothing."

Once a step, phase, or turn has started, it can no longer be skipped—any skip effects will wait until the next occurrence.

Anything scheduled for a skipped step, phase, or turn won't happen. Anything scheduled for the "next" occurrence of something waits for the first occurrence that isn't skipped. If two effects each cause a player to skip his or her next occurrence, that player must skip the next two.

## Snow-Covered (Obsolete)

A *land* may be snow-covered in addition to its *land type*. This doesn't change its type or whether it's *basic* or *nonbasic*. For example, a snow-covered forest is still a forest. "Snow-covered" doesn't restrict the type and can't be chosen when a *spell* or *ability* specifies a land type.

*Effects* that change a land's type don't add or remove snow-covered status.

## Sorcery

A sorcery is a *card type*. Sorcery *spells* can be *played* only during their *controller's main phase* when the *stack* is empty. See rule 408, "Timing of Spells and Abilities."

## Source

The source of an *ability* or of *damage* is the *card* or *token* that generated it. If an *effect* requires a player to choose a source, he or she may choose either a *permanent* or a *spell* on the *stack* (including one that creates a permanent). The effect will apply to the next damage dealt by that spell or by that permanent (in *combat* or by one of its abilities).

## Spell

A nonland *card* becomes a spell when *played* and remains a spell until it is *countered* or *resolves*. Nonland cards can also be referred to as "spell cards." See rule 213, "Spell Type."

## Stack

A *spell* or *ability* goes on top of the *stack* when *played*. Whenever both players *pass* in succession, the top spell or ability on the stack *resolves* and the *active player* receives *priority* again. See rule 217.6, "Stack" and rule 408.1, "Timing, Priority, and the Stack."

## State-Based Effects

State-based effects continually "watch" the game for a particular state. At the start of each *step* or *phase* and whenever a player receives *priority*, state-based effects are checked and applied.

## Static Ability

Static abilities do something all the time rather than being *played* at specific times. Static abilities create *continuous effects*, which are active as long as the *permanent* with the ability remains in *play*. A *spell* or *ability* can also create a continuous effect that doesn't depend on a permanent; these may last a specified length of time or for the rest of the game. See rule 412, "Handling Static Abilities."

## Step

Some *phases* of the turn are further subdivided into steps. See section 3, "Turn Structure."

## Successfully Cast (Obsolete)

Any *ability* that's written as *triggering* when a *spell* becomes "successfully cast" should be read as triggering when the spell is *played*.

## Summon (Obsolete)

A summon *spell* is any *creature* spell that isn't an *artifact* spell. "Summoning a creature" is *playing* a nonartifact creature spell.

## Summoning Sickness (Obsolete)

This is an old term for a *creature's* inability to *attack* or *tap* to use *activated abilities* when it's just come under a player's *control* since that player's most recent *beginning of turn*. See also **Haste**.

## Swampwalk

See **Landwalk**.

## Tap

To tap a *permanent* is to turn the *card* sideways. The symbol  $\text{c}$  in an *activation cost* means "Tap this permanent"—a permanent that's already tapped can't be tapped again to *pay* the cost. *Creatures* that haven't been under a player's *control* continuously since his or her most recent *beginning of turn* can't use any ability with  $\text{c}$  in the cost.

## Target

Whenever the word "target" appears in the rules text of a *spell* or *ability*, the *controller* of the spell or ability chooses something that matches whatever follows that word. This may be as simple as "target *land*" or more complex, such as "target *tapped creature* one of your *opponents* controls." The choice is made when *playing* the spell or ability, which "targets" whatever was chosen.

## Text Box

The text box is printed below the illustration on a **Magic card** and contains rules and *flavor text*.

## Token

A token is an object *in play* representing a noncard *permanent* created by a *spell* or *ability*. Tokens can be *tapped* and *untapped* just like *cards*, though an alternative to rotation might be needed to distinguish their status. See rule 216, "Tokens."

## Total Casting Cost (Obsolete)

This is the old term for *converted mana cost*.

## Toughness

The number after the slash printed on the lower-right corner of a *creature card* is the creature's toughness. A creature's current toughness is the *initial value* (the printed number), modified by any *counters* that adjust toughness and then by any *continuous effects*.

A creature that's been dealt *damage* greater than or equal to its toughness (and greater than 0) has *lethal damage* and will be *destroyed* the next time any player receives *priority*. This is a *state-based effect*.

A few creature cards have toughness represented by "" instead of a number. This signifies that the creature has a *static ability* setting its toughness according to some stated condition. If a *spell* or *ability* attempts to read the toughness when the creature card isn't *in play*, the is equal to 0.

## Trample

Trample is a *static ability* modifying the *combat damage step* of the *combat phase*. It lets an *attacking creature* "trample over" *blocking creatures* and deal part of its combat damage to the defending player. See rule 502.9, "Trample."

## Trigger/Triggered Ability

Triggered abilities begin with the word "when," "whenever," or "at." Whenever the *trigger event* occurs, the *ability* goes on top of the *stack* the next time a player receives *priority*. See rule 404, "Triggered Abilities."

## Type

The word "type" by itself is ambiguous—it may mean the basic type of a *card*, *spell*, and so on, or a subtype (such as *creature* or *enchantment* type). See rules 212–215.

The card type (and subtype, if applicable) is printed directly below the illustration on a card. The spell type for a nonland card is the same as the card type, even if the rules text states it can be played "as" some other type (that is, following the timing rules for playing that other type). The *permanent* type for a card *in play* is the same as its card type. *Tokens* have no card or spell type but do have a permanent type.

When a spell or *ability* changes a permanent's type, the new type replaces all previous types. If the spell or ability is adding a type, it will say so.

A creature's type is printed after the word "creature" below the illustration on the card, or defined by the spell or ability that created a token. A creature may have multiple types. A noncreature card that's changed into a creature by a spell or ability has no creature type unless the spell/ability gives it one.

Categories of cards, such as *basic land* or *local enchantment*, aren't types and can't be named when a type must be chosen.

## Unblockable

If an *ability* states that an *attacking creature* is "unblockable," no *creatures* can *block* it.



## Unblocked Creature

An *attacking creature* becomes an unblocked creature after the declare blockers *step* of the *combat phase* if no *creature blocks* it. It remains an unblocked creature until a *spell* or *ability* causes it to *become* blocked, it's removed from combat, it stops being a creature, its *controller* changes, or the combat phase ends. Unblocked creatures don't exist outside of the combat phase or before the declare blockers step. See rule 309, "Declare Blockers Step."

## Untap

1. To untap a *tapped card* is to rotate it back to the upright position. See also *Tap*.
2. Untap is the first *step* of the *beginning phase* of the turn. All *permanents controlled* by the *active player* normally untap at this time. See rule 302, "Untap Step."

## Upkeep

Upkeep is the second *step* of the *beginning phase* of the turn. Some cards have abilities that *trigger* at the beginning of the upkeep step; such an ability is called an "upkeep *cost*" or an "upkeep *effect*." An upkeep cost is usually written in the form "At the beginning of your upkeep, you may <pay cost>. If you don't, *sacrifice* <this card>." See rule 303, "Upkeep Step."

## Vanguard Card

The *Vanguard™* supplements consist of oversized cards that modify the game. A *Vanguard card* is put into play before the game begins, adjusting a player's starting and *maximum hand size* and starting *life* total. Any *abilities* printed on a *Vanguard card* are *played* exactly like those of an *in-play Magic* card. However, it's not a **Magic** card, so it can't be affected by *spells* or abilities.

## Wall

A Wall is a *type of creature* that can't be declared as an *attacker*. In all other respects, it's the same as any other creature.

## X

If a *cost* has an " X" in it, the value of X must be announced as part of *playing* the *spell* or *ability*. While the spell or ability is on the *stack*, X in its *mana cost* equals that amount of *generic mana*. If a card in any other *zone* has X in its mana cost, the amount is treated as 0. In other cases X will be defined by the text of the ability. If X isn't defined, the controller of the spell or ability chooses the value of X. All Xs on a card have the same value.

## Yield Priority (Obsolete)

To yield priority is to *pass*.

## You/Your

The words "you" and "your" on a *card* always refer to its current *controller*.

## Zone

A zone is any place that **Magic cards** can be during a game. See rule 217, "Zones."

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