THE OFFICIAL RULES CODEX FOR

COMPILE

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Welcome to the Compile Codex. In this living document, find Rules Explanations, a list of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers, and finally a list of Clarifications, Rulings, and Errata for cards released for Compile. If you have any further questions, e-mail us at contact@greaterthangames.com

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Rules Explanations

The Draft

Compile starts with a draft. The youngest player drafts first, or the players may agree on another way to determine who drafts first. Then, drafting proceeds as follows:
- The first player chooses one protocol from the available protocols, placing it in their left protocol space.
- The second player chooses two protocols from the available protocols, placing them in their left and middle protocol spaces in the order they were drafted.
- The first player chooses two protocols from the available protocols, placing them in their middle and right protocol spaces in the order they were drafted.
- The second player chooses one protocol from the available protocols, placing it in their right protocol space.

Playing a Card

When playing a card, the player chooses the line in which the card is played and the orientation of that card. If the orientation of that card is face-up, the only line that card may be played into is the line with the protocol that matches that card. If the orientation of that card is face-down, it may be played into any line.

Some card effects allow you to play a card from an alternative source (i.e. playing the top of your deck). When doing so, follow all instructions on how and where to play those cards.

Card Text

All card text is treated as an effect, not a cost. If you cannot complete the text of a card (i.e. "You discard 1 card." when you have no cards in hand) the card is still played. If there is an "if" clause associated with a text you cannot complete (i.e. Fire 2 "Discard 1 card. If you do, return 1 card.") you do not gain the benefit without having completed the instruction.

Treat each sentence separately on a card. In the case of Fire 4 "Discard 1 or more cards. Draw the amount discarded plus 1." if you have no cards in hand and thus discard no cards, you still draw 1 card for the second sentence.

Unless the word "may" is used, all text must be resolved as much as possible (i.e. Water 4 "Return 1 of your cards" and Water 4 is the only valid selection, thus it returns itself). If the game state can be changed by a played or triggered effect, the game state must be changed.

Text Entering Play

When a card's text enters play by being played, flipped, or uncovered, the owner of that card decides how that text resolves.

Committed Cards

Cards entering play by being played from hand, top of deck, trash, or any other place as well as cards being shifted are considered "committed". Committed cards have an orientation and line that cannot be manipulated and cannot be selected for any effects while they are committed. Nothing can prevent a committed card from entering the field in the line and orientation that it was committed with.

If the committed card will cover a card with a "When this card would be covered: first…" text, the soon-to-be-covered card resolves its triggered effect and any other resulting triggers before the committed card enters the line. If, through the triggering of that "When this card would be covered: first…" effect, either player gains the ability to manipulate a card, the committed card IS NOT a valid selection.

More than one card can be committed to a line at a time. They will enter the line in the order they were committed, one at a time.

Selecting Cards for Effects

When flipping, deleting, shifting, returning, or revealing, you may only choose an uncovered card in the field, unless the text uses the words "covered" or "all". Covered cards cannot be manipulated other than by effects that use the words "covered" or "all". Unless a card specifies which player's card it is affecting (i.e. "Return 1 of your cards." or "Flip 1 of your opponent's cards."), effects may apply to any uncovered card in the field.

Rearranging Protocols

When rearranging protocols, the end state of that rearrangement must be different from the start state.

Shifting a Card

When a card is shifted, it is moved to a different line on the same side of the field. The card immediately under the shifting card is made the uncovered card, resolving any text that was activated as a result, and the shifting card is considered "committed". The shifting card cannot be selected for any effects until its shift is resolved. If there's already a stack in the line it moves to, the shifted card is made the uncovered card of that stack.

Changing Ownership

Cards may change ownership throughout the game. Recompiling a protocol is the most common way for this to happen. Cards can be played face-up into the line with the matching protocol, even if that protocol is your opponent's. Cards that have changed ownership retain their new ownership, even when they are put into the trash or shuffled into a deck.

Start and End Effects During Those Phases

When entering the Start phase on your turn, you activate any Start effects visible on cards in your stacks in an order of your choice. When entering the End phase on your turn, you activate any End effects visible on cards in your stacks in an order of your choice. If any Start or End effects become visible in your stacks as a result, do not activate them, as they were not visible at the beginning of that phase.

Running Out of Cards

If a player cannot Compile, draw cards, or play cards on their turn, they skip their Action step.

Public and Private Information

Players' decks are randomized at the start of the game and after any reshuffle, and the order and contents of each player's deck is secret. Players' hands are private information, only known by that player. All face-up cards in the field and in either player's trash are public information. Any player may look at the text of any face-up cards in the field and any cards in either trash at any time, as long as they preserve the card's placement and orientation. Any player may ask their opponent at any time the number of cards in their hand or deck, but not the contents of either.

The face-down cards in the field are all private information. When playing a card from the top of a deck face-down, you may not look at the face of that card before committing it to a line. A player may only look at face-down cards on their side of the field after they are in the field.

Clear Cache

Each turn, during the Check Cache phase, the active player checks to see if they have more than 5 cards in their hand. If they do, they discard down to 5 cards in hand. This discard action is called Clear Cache.

Compiling

When a player reaches the Check Compile phase of their turn, they check to see if they have 10 or more value in a stack, and more value than their opponent in that line. If they do, they meet the requirements for compiling in that line. If they meet the requirements for compiling in more than one line, they choose which line they want to compile. If a player can compile, they must compile.

When compiling, first, if the compiling player has the control component, they return it to its neutral state and may rearrange one player's protocols — either theirs or their opponent's.

Second, all cards in that line are deleted. This is an "all" effect, so those deletions happen simultaneously, not sequentially — no card text enters play or triggers.

Finally, flip that player's protocol in that line to its "Compiled" side. If the protocol is already on its "Compiled" side, that player instead draws the top card of their opponent's deck.

Once compiling has begun, if, through card effects, the value in the compiling stack is reduced to less than 10, or less than the opponent's value, the compiling still resolves.

Control Component

During the Control Phase, the active player checks to see if they have a higher value than their opponent in at least 2 lines. If they do, they gain the control component, either from the neutral position or from the other player. When the player with the control component compiles or refreshes, first the control component is returned to its neutral position and that player may rearrange one players' protocols — either theirs or their opponent's — then they complete their compile or refresh. Even if they choose not to rearrange protocols, the control component is still returned to its neutral position.

Exceptions

The rules of Compile may have exceptions based on the state of play and the text of cards in the field. If a card gives you permission to do a thing that is "against the rules", the card may break the rules.

FAQ

What do the "draw" and "discard" keywords mean?

"Draw X card(s)" makes the owner of the command take the top X card(s) from their deck and add them to their hand. If their deck does not have enough cards to fulfill the draw, the player shuffles their trash to make a new deck, then draws cards to complete their draw. The effect "draw 3 cards", is not the same as "draw 1 card, draw 1 card, draw 1 card" — you draw all three cards, then any effects that trigger off the drawing of cards activate. "Discard X card(s)" makes the owner of the command choose X cards from their hand and put them in their trash. The effect "discard 2 cards", is not the same as "discard 1 card, discard 1 card" — you discard 2 cards, then any effects that trigger off the discarding of cards activate.

What does the keyword "reveal" mean?

Reveal means to show both players in the game whatever information is being revealed, then return it to its previous state (i.e. Light 2 "...Reveal 1 face-down card. You may shift or flip that card." chooses an uncovered face-down card in play, shows both players the face of that card, then returns it to its face-down orientation. THEN, you may flip it in its current position, allowing its text to enter play, shift it to another line in its face-down orientation, or do neither.)

Can a card with a top command delete itself if it is covered?

Top command text is in play as long as the card is face-up. If a card with a top command would shift or delete itself, it does so even if it is covered. (i.e. Death 1 "...then delete this card" still deletes itself, even if it is covered.)

Am I allowed to look at cards I'm playing from the top of my deck face-down before I play them?

When playing the top card of your deck face-down, you cannot look at it until after it is in the field. You will not know what card it is until it is fully in play, but then you may look at it as normal.

If an effect discards a card from somewhere other than my hand, does it trigger Plague 1 or cards like it?

If an effect happens when someone discards cards, that includes both discarding from hand and discarding from the top of a deck, unless it says otherwise. If it uses the word "discard", it is a discard effect.

When I compile, do I trigger effects as cards are deleted from the stack?

No. The compiling effect deletes all cards in that line, then flips your protocol in that line to the "Compiled" side. When deleting "all" cards in a line, the cards are deleted simultaneously and they do not trigger as each one is deleted.

When do I refill my deck?

Unless a card's text specifies, the only way a player refills their deck is when it is empty and they would draw a card from it. When this happens, the player shuffles their trash face-down, makes it their deck, and then completes the draw. Effects that discard, play, or reveal the top card of the deck do nothing if there are no cards in the deck.

Is zero an even number?

0 is an even number.

What is the difference between "Line" and "Stack"?

A line is an area of play that is 1/3rd of the field, composed of 2 protocols that dictate which cards may be played face-up into that line. A stack is one player's portion of a line where they may play cards face-up that match either of the protocols. A line is made up of two stacks.

Do I have to use the control component when I compile or refresh?

When you compile or refresh while having the control component, it resets to the neutral position, even if you choose not to rearrange any protocols.

Does Plague 3's middle command flip covered face-up cards?

No. Plague 3 will only flip uncovered face-up cards. Because it does not use the word "covered" or "all", it will only affect uncovered cards.

What is the difference between "All" and "Each"?

"All" means that the effect affects cards matching its criteria simultaneously, regardless of their covered/uncovered status, all happening at once. "Each" affects any viable cards at the time that it is played, each effect happening in an order of the active player's choice, as discrete effects. It is unable to affect covered cards unless it says otherwise.

If I can compile, do I have to?

Yes. If you meet the requirements for compiling you must use your action to compile. All other phases of your turn happen as normal.

If I can compile more than one line, do I compile more than one?

No. You choose one line that meets the requirements for compiling and compile that line only this turn. If you still have met the requirements to compile another line on your next turn, you compile that line then.

Can I refresh when I have 5 or more cards in hand?

No. You must have fewer than 5 cards in hand to refresh.

Can I use End triggers that are revealed during the End phase?

No. Only End effects that are visible at the beginning of the End phase activate.

Can a covered card be uncovered while in a stack?

No. A covered card is only uncovered if it becomes the card with no other cards on top of it. The uncovered card in a stack is covering all cards in a stack. A stack only has one uncovered card at time.

Card Clarifications, Rulings, and Errata

Death 1

- **ERRATA(10/2024):** The top command should be: "Start: You may draw 1 card. If you do, delete 1 other card. Then, delete this card."

Fire 0

- **ERRATA(12/2024):** The bottom command should be: "When this card would be covered: First, draw 1 card. Then, flip 1 other card."

Life 0

- **ERRATA(10/2024):** The top command should be: "End: If this card is covered, delete this card." This card should have no bottom command.
- **CLARIFICATION:** Playing cards from the top of a deck does not force a shuffle if that deck is empty.

Light 0

- **CLARIFICATION:** The middle command reads "Flip 1 card. Draw cards equal to that card's value." When played, the card owner chooses one uncovered card, flips that card, and then resolves any triggered text. Then, they draw cards equal to the current value of the chosen card (e.g. Light 0 selects Fire 5. First, Fire 5 is flipped face-down. Then, Light 0 checks the current value of the card, which is now 2. As a result, the active player draws 2 cards.)
- **RULING:** If the chosen card is removed from play, it is still referred to directly by the "that card" text on Light 0. (e.g. Light 0 selects Metal 6. First, Metal 6's top command triggers: because it is about to be flipped, it deletes itself. Then, Light 0 checks the value of Metal 6, and its current value is 6 since all cards in the trash are face-up. The active player draws 6 cards.)

Light 3

- **CLARIFICATION:** The face-down cards shifted by Light 3 maintain the same relative positioning in their stacks and are all moved to the same line.

Metal 1

- **ERRATA(12/2024):** The middle command should be: "Draw 2 cards. Your opponent cannot compile on their next turn."
- **CLARIFICATION:** Metal 1 prevents your opponent from taking the compile action on their next turn, provided the text is visible. Since a player gets 1 action on their turn (compile, play, or refresh), they must either play or refresh on their next turn since they cannot compile.

Metal 6

- **CLARIFICATION:** When Metal 6 deletes itself because of its top command, if it is covering a card with text that would trigger, that text triggers before the committed card enters the field.
- **CLARIFICATION:** When Metal 6 deletes itself as a result of being flipped, the "flip" command is used up and cannot be used on another card, nor can it be used on Metal 6 in the trash, as all cards in trashes are always face-up.

Plague 3

- **CLARIFICATION:** The card text reads "Flip each other face-up card." This only affects uncovered cards, since it does not say "all".

Speed 2

- **CLARIFICATION:** When compiling, all cards in the line are deleted at the same time. When Speed 2 would be deleted this way, instead, you shift it to another line, preventing the delete of Speed 2 only, and not altering the compile.

Spirit 0

- **CLARIFICATION:** When you refresh as instructed, it is a normal refresh action, including spending the control component, if applicable.

Spirit 1

- **ERRATA(10/2024):** The top command should be: "When you play cards face-up, they may be played without matching protocols."

Water 1

- **CLARIFICATION:** Playing cards from the top of a deck does not force a shuffle if that deck is empty.

Hate 2

- **ERRATA(10/2024):** The middle command should be: "Delete your highest value uncovered card. Delete your opponent's highest value uncovered card."
- **CLARIFICATION:** If Hate 2 is the highest value card you own it deletes itself as a result of the first clause. Thus, the second clause no longer exists and does not trigger.