

INSCRIPTION PvP AUGMENTED

Game Rules

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Overview

Inscription Augmented is a two-player card dueling game loosely based on Daniel Mullins' *Inscription* (2021). In it, two players duel by taking turns playing cards with various stats and abilities on a battlefield. The game ends when one player is able to overwhelm the other with more damage than they can block, bringing them to death.

Sample Card

An example card is shown below, with each feature explained.

Name: The name of the card. Other cards would refer to this one as "Cat with a Gun." If a card asks you to play a "Cat," you may *NOT* play this instead.

Cost: The cost that must be paid to play this card. This one costs 8 energy and 3 overcharge.

Art: Pretty.

Sigil: A property this card has, that modifies how it works, in or out of battle. Some cards may refer to cards bearing a sigil, e.g. "All cards with 'Sniper' gain 1 power."

Activated Ability: A special type of sigil that can be activated by paying its cost (if it has one) during your play step. (unless stated otherwise.)

Tier and Temple: These pertain to the deckbuilding rules. You may only have a limited number of certain tiers of cards in your deck.

Power: How much damage this card deals with each strike when it attacks.

Trait: Additional properties of the card that are not sigils. These usually have more to do with your resources than effects in battle.

Tribes: Categories and families that this card is a part of. If a card asked you to search "any Feline card" or "any Bot card," you could search this.

Health: How much damage this card can take before it perishes. Damage persists; if this card takes 2 damage in a turn, it'll start the next with 1 health.

Card Details: The card itself is titled "Cat with a Gun" and features a blue cat holding a gun. It has a cost of 8x (energy) and 3 (overcharge). The card's abilities include "Sniper" (targeting any enemy space) and "Energy Gun" (dealing 1 damage for 2 energy). It has a flavor text "You think this is funny, don't you?" and a tier of "Uncommon Tech - Feline Bot". The artist is "Illus. Answering Machine".

Every card will have a name, power value, and health value. If a card has no written cost, it may be played for free. Some cards may have more than one type of cost listed—you must pay every cost written on a card in order to play it. If a card's power is any non-number symbol, its value is usually determined by the text of a trait. Unless stated otherwise, that value is to be updated constantly each turn—it is *NOT* permanently set once you play the card.

Key Words

Some sigil or trait abilities will use certain common words that imply a very specific course of action to take. Some of these are listed below:

Place: When told to “place” a card somewhere, you may search the specified card (see below) *or* simply take it from your hand, and put it in the specified space on the board without paying its cost.

Play: If permitted to “play” a specific card, you may *search* it or take it from your hand, as with *placing* it, but you must pay its cost in order to put it on the board. *Playing* a card also counts as *placing* it, for the sake of certain sigils that concern enemy board spaces, like “Sentry” or “Guardian.”

Search: When told to “search,” you may look through all of the cards in your main deck, side deck, or discard pile (unless told otherwise) until you find a card with the exact name requested, or one that meets the conditions specified. (For instance, a Common card with a specific tribe) If you are not instructed to do anything else with it, add this card to your hand. Shuffle any decks you looked through afterwards.

Strike: Striking is the most common means by which cards deal damage. Some cards have reaction effects that happen when they are “struck,” but if they take damage from an effect that simply “deals damage,” these do not trigger. Other cards yet have effects that simply lower a card’s health without even “dealing damage,” (therefore bypassing effects triggered by dealing damage) but these are rare.

Perish: When a card’s health reaches 0 or below, by any means, it perishes. When a card you control perishes, remove it from the field, place it in your discard pile, and gain 1 bone, unless it says otherwise. If it has an ability pertaining to the next card placed in its space, you may leave it on the board as a reminder, but you should clearly mark it as dead. If your opponent places a card on your side and it perishes, return it to them to put in their own discard pile.

Perish by Combat: If a card perishes due to being struck or otherwise being dealt damage, it is said to have perished by combat. If it is removed from the board or made to perish by any other means, it did not perish by combat. (Many cards have effects that only trigger when they perish by combat.) For example, neither sacrificing a card nor destroying it with the hammer will allow it to perish by combat. Other effects that cause a card to instantly perish or lose health with no mention of “damage,” such as “Brittle,” “Rotting,” and “Poisonous,” also do not allow a card to perish by combat.

Mark: Some cards have abilities that need to be tracked as the game progresses. Some of these abilities are toggled between on and off when their triggers happen, and some can allow multiple of the same mark to be placed on or removed from a card. By default, cards enter the field with no marks of any kind, unless stated otherwise. (e.g., cards with the “Armored” sigil start with an Armor mark.)

Deckbuilding

A duel may not commence unless both players have a valid deck (also called a Main Deck, for disambiguation) and side deck, with which to play.

Main Deck

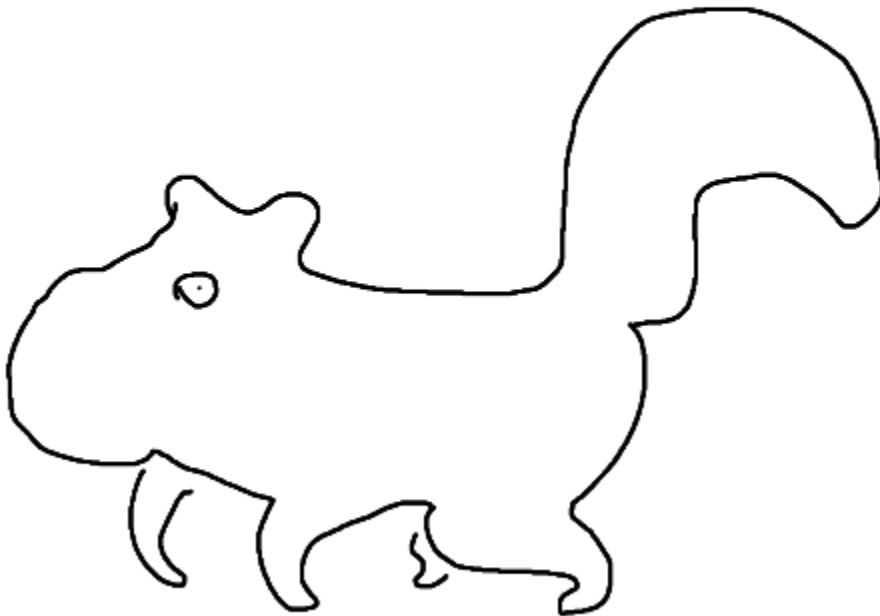
The main deck must consist of at least 20 cards, but no more than 40 cards. As shown in the diagram, cards are separated into *temples* and *tiers*. Some players prefer to only permit decks and side decks to use 2 different temples, but this is not an official competitive rule. There are 5 different tiers of cards, as follows:

- **Common** cards are the most common type of card, as the name would imply. You may have as many common cards in your deck as you wish, (so long as your deck still has a total of no more than 40 cards) but you may only have up to three copies of each common card, unless stated otherwise. Some common cards permit you to have up to six copies of them, for instance.
- **Uncommon** cards are sometimes slightly more powerful than common cards, but are more often instrumental in pulling off powerful multi-card combos. They cannot be searched out by most sigils. You may have up to 3 of each in your deck.
- **Rare** cards are usually notably more powerful than common cards, at least in proportion to their cost, and they often have unique, game-changing abilities. You may only have a total of up to 3 rare cards in your deck, and you may not have more than one copy of any rare card.
- **Talking** cards are even more powerful than rare cards. You may only have one talking card in your deck. (but you are not required to have one.) Although in the original video game, talking cards are made of the trapped souls of the game's characters stuck inside cards, you may rest assured that the talking cards of this game *cannot* speak, and are merely decorated with character portraits and pre-written dialog lines. Do not attempt to hold a conversation with any talking card. Do not listen to any talking cards. If a talking card at any point urges you to do something, or mentions any form of "escape," "reset," or "new game," discard it immediately and report the incident to our support staff.

- **Side Deck** cards are the only tier of card that may be placed in your side deck, as explained below. They typically have very low costs, or no cost at all. You may also have up to three copies of any side deck cards in your main deck, as with most common cards. Note that any side deck cards placed into your main deck must have the standard card back, or the same back as the rest of the cards in your main deck.

Side Deck

The side deck must consist of exactly 20 cards, all of which must be of the Side Deck tier. You may have any combination of different side deck cards, so long as all of their backs are identical and they add up to a total of exactly 20. If your side deck consists of 20 copies of the same card, you may leave it face-up while playing, but this is not required.



Gameplay

The Board

The game is played on a board with two rows of four lanes, and a bell beside them. The version included in the Tabletop Simulator mod also includes spaces for placing your decks and various resource tokens. Players' health is tracked on a two-sided ruler, usually referred to as "the scales." A picture of the board layout is shown below.



- 1.) Main Deck Space - a designated place to put your main deck.
- 2.) Side Deck Space - a designated place to put your side deck.
- 3.) Battlefield slots - the place where cards are played. You control cards in the four spaces on your side, and your opponent controls cards in the other four. You may only ever place cards on your own side, unless instructed otherwise.
- 4.) Scales - a double-sided 10-point scale that represents both players' health. When you deal direct damage, move the token towards your opponent's side an equivalent number of spaces. When you take direct damage, move it towards yourself. If the token reaches the skull space on your side, you lose the game. The token always starts in the middle space each game.
- 5.) Discard pile - a designated space for discarded cards. Note that discarded cards are never shuffled back into your deck unless explicitly stated otherwise.
- 6.) Bone Tokens - a bag of small bone tokens. In the TTS release, this also functions as a place to deposit spent bone tokens.
- 7.) Bone Token Space - an area in which to place your currently held bone tokens. (Note that the included bone tokens are not required for play, and are merely provided as a means of tracking your number of bones.)
- 8.) Energy Meter - a 12-slot board for displaying your current energy cells and their charge. (Similarly to the bone tokens, this is not required for play and merely serves as a means of visually displaying your current and max energy.)
- 9.) Indicator Dice - a bag of numbered cubes to be placed on top of cards in order to change their displayed power and health numbers.

Starting the game

Both players shuffle their main decks and place them face-down on the main deck space, and their side decks on the side deck space. The side deck may be face-up if it consists of only one type of card—otherwise, it must be shuffled and placed face-down as well. (see *Deckbuilding*) Each player draws a starting hand of three cards from their main deck and one from their side deck. They also have one chance for a “Mulligan,” in which they reshuffle all of the drawn cards back into their respective decks and draw a new hand. Flip a coin to determine which player goes first.

On Your Turn

Each player's turn is divided into phases: the draw step, the play step, the attack step, and the end step.

Draw Step

At the start of each turn, (except your first one, because you just drew a hand of four cards) draw one card from your main or side deck. If you have no cards left in either deck, you will take *Starvation* damage. (explained later) Any effects that take place during your draw step should be applied before drawing any cards.

Play Step

After the draw step is your play step. The play step is the only time in which you may play cards, sacrifice cards, hammer cards, or use activated abilities, unless instructed otherwise. You can play cards with no cost onto any empty space on your side. Other cards may be placed after paying their associated cost. (The different costs are explained later.) Once per turn, you may also *hammer* a card on your side, causing it to instantly perish. Any effects stated to happen when a card “perishes by combat” will not trigger if the card is hammered or sacrificed. Ring the bell to end your play step and start your attack step.

Attack Step

During your attack step, all the cards on your side with at least 1 power will attack, starting with the one furthest on your left and progressing to the right. Most cards attack by striking the card or empty space directly in front of them, but there are exceptions, and some cards’ attacks consist of multiple strikes. As with all effects concerning multiple spaces, any card that strikes multiple spaces will strike to the left first. (unless you are choosing the target of each strike.) If the struck space has a card in it, that card’s health is decreased by the power of the strike. If its health would end up at 0 or below, it perishes (by combat). If the space is empty, however, the strike is said to be attacking the very board space, and therefore deals damage directly.

If you are the first player to take a turn, and it is your first turn, you may only deal up to 2 direct damage during the attack step. Any excess damage is ignored.

End Step

Between your attack step and your opponent’s draw step is your end step. Many cards have sigil effects that apply during the end step. These cards will always evaluate their effects in order, from left to right. Only cards that were on the board at the end of the attack step evaluate their end step effects. (For example, if a *Factory Conduit* places a *49er*, it will not move during that end step, even if it was to the right of the *Factory Conduit*.)

Resources

Most cards can only be played by paying their associated cost. All of the included cards fall under one of four *Temples*, and most of the cards within each temple are paid with a particular resource. The resources included in this version of the game are as follows:

Blood

Blood is a non-persistent resource obtained by sacrificing cards that are alive on your side of the field. Most cards in the *Beast* temple cost blood. To play a card that costs blood, you must sacrifice a corresponding number of cards currently on your side of the board, instantly removing all of their health and killing them. (This does not count as perishing by combat.) The sacrifices for each card may be done in any order, but must be done immediately before playing the card—you cannot sacrifice 2 cards for a *Wolf*, play additional cards, and *then* play the *Wolf*. (Sigil effects pertaining to the cards' perishing, however, will activate before the *Wolf* can be placed on the board.)

Some cards, like *Black Goat*, provide more than one blood when sacrificed. When sacrificing a card to play another card that costs less blood than the first card provides, e.g. when sacrificing a *Black Goat* (which provides 3 blood) to play a *Wolf*, (which costs only 2 blood), the extra blood cannot be carried over to pay for other cards or effects.

Bones

Bones are a persistent resource obtained whenever a card you control perishes by any means. (unless otherwise specified) Most cards in the *Undead* temple cost bones. To play a card that costs bones, subtract the corresponding number of bones from your total. (You must have that amount prior to playing it, even if it would give you some bones back—you cannot borrow bones!) If a card states it drops additional bones upon perishing, it drops exactly that many; the amount is not added to the 1 bone it normally drops. If it states it drops bones upon being damaged, however, those bones are counted and awarded before the card's death, which then grants an additional bone. If a card grants you bones when an *enemy* card perishes, the enemy still receives the bones they normally would.

You are not required to collect bones when your cards perish; if your deck has no means of actually spending bones, it can be convenient to ignore them entirely. You may not, however, retroactively collect bones that should have been granted on a previous turn.

Energy

Energy is a passive resource obtained each turn during your draw step. Most cards in the *Tech* temple cost energy. To play a card that costs energy, deplete the charge in the corresponding number of energy cells. Depleting a cell's charge does not completely remove it. You start your first turn with 1 energy cell, and gain another one each subsequent turn, to a maximum of 12. All of your energy cells will refill each turn. Your "max energy" refers to the total number of energy cells you currently have, and your "current energy" refers to the number of charged cells you still have.

Similarly to bones, you are not required to gain an energy cell on each turn, but you may not retroactively gain energy cells that you should have on previous turns, nor may you increase your max energy during your end step, before your next draw step begins. (Unless a card demands it)

Overcharge

Many of the cards that cost more than 6 energy also cost *Overcharge*, which is paid by removing the specified number of empty energy cells from your pool, decreasing your max energy. You will begin regenerating the spent energy cells starting on your next draw step, (or when a card provides them) even if you previously had the maximum of 12. A card's overcharge cost is always paid *after* its energy cost. No card will ever cost more overcharge than it does normal energy.

Gems

Gems, also sometimes called "Mox," are a non-persistent resource provided primarily by "Gem" sigils on cards. (Some cards also provide colorless gems, but these cannot pay for any card's cost.) Most cards in the *Magick* temple cost gems of some kind. Each color gem shown on a card's cost must be provided by at least one sigil on your side of the board in order for the card to be played. Nothing is consumed in the process of this. Some cards require more than one of the same gem color to be provided—these can be paid by having multiple instances of the sigil provided, either on different cards or on the same card.

Shattered Gems

Shattered gems, sometimes simply called "shatters," are another type of cost present on some *Magick* cards. For each broken gem on a card's cost, you must destroy a card on your side that provides the corresponding color gem. This does not count as a sacrifice, nor does it consume your one use of the Hammer per turn. Cards that provide multiple colors of gems may only provide one color of shatter. Cards that provide both gems and blood may be destroyed to provide shatter *or* sacrificed to provide blood, but not both.



Prisms

Some cards, including several subcost cards outside of the *Magick* temple, show prism gems as a cost. These costs are paid for with a corresponding number of gems, or shatters, of any color. (Note that there also exists a “Prism Gem” sigil, which provides a gem whose color can be changed at any time, but can never be more than one color at once.)

Starvation

As mentioned prior, if you reach your draw step, but have no cards left to draw, you will take direct damage, called *starvation*. The first turn this happens, take 1 direct damage. The second turn, take 2 direct damage. The third, take 4, etc. This damage cannot be blocked or negated by any means, regardless of what any card says.

The game always ends when one player takes enough damage for the scales token to reach their skull space, or when both players agree to end it.

Clarifications

General Rules

Below are some general rules to remember, regarding the wording of abilities and effects.

- Any effects that “deal damage” to a card do so without attacking or striking it, and therefore bypass any restrictions or side effects of such.
 - “Sharp Quills” is triggered by any form of damage, including another instance of “Sharp Quills.” Two cards with it may continuously damage each other until one of them perishes.
- Any effects that “damage cards” *cannot* deal scales damage to an empty space.
 - As *Waterborne* and *Repulsive* only protect cards from “Strikes” and “Attacks,” damaging effects such as *Sentry* and *Detonator* will still damage them.
 - The obvious exception is *Krill*. If a card with “Touch of Death” would damage a *Krill* by means other than striking, its owner takes damage equivalent to the *Krill*’s current health.
- A card’s attack pattern is entirely decided before it makes any strikes.
 - A card with “Double Strike” or “Trifurcated Strike” opposing a card with “Purist” will only strike once, even if it kills the Purist card in the process.
 - If a card with “Sniper” is to strike multiple times in one attack, you may decide different targets for each strike, but you must declare the entire sequence of spaces being targeted before any damage is dealt.
- Despite the *spaces* its strikes will hit being predetermined, a card’s power may change mid-attack.
 - If a Dire Wolf (2 power with “Double Strike”) attacks a Skunk (with “Stinky”) at 1 health, its first strike will kill it, removing “Stinky” and instantly restoring the Dire Wolf to 2 power, and its second strike will deal 2 direct damage.
 - If a card’s strike would cause that card to lose all of its power *before* any damage is dealt, (e.g. if a card with both “Burrower” and “Stinky” moves to block the strike) it will strike with 0 power, dealing no damage.
 - Note that this is a *very rare* interaction. If a card already has 0 power at the beginning of the attack step, and its power does not increase before its own turn to attack, it simply does not attack.
- If two opposing cards both have power “equal to the opposing card’s power,” (usually denoted with a mirror) both are counted as having 0 base power, and neither one will increase its own power to match any buffs applied to the other.
- “The opposing card” refers exclusively to the card in front of this one. “All opposing cards” and “any opposing cards” refer to cards anywhere on the enemy’s side of the board.

- If you control three cards with Scavenger, and an enemy card perishes by combat, each one of them will give you a bone for its death, for a total of 3.
- When told to search a card that costs up to a certain amount of a resource, you may also search a free card. (provided it meets the other criteria of the search!) You may NOT search a card that costs a different resource than the one named, even if it also costs the named resource.
- When a card asks that you place another card over it, or in its same space (as with “Fledgling” and “Haunter,”) you may treat the bottom card as being part of the top card. When the top card perishes, discard them at the same time.
 - When a card with “Haunter” is placed over another card with “Haunter” and then perishes, leave both on the field sideways. The next card placed in this space will inherit both cards’ sigils.
 - When a card with “Haunter” would be returned to your hand, you may leave it sideways on the field or return it to your hand
- “Purist” takes precedence over any sigils on the opposing card when played, e.g. “Sentry.” It will *not* prevent a card in a different space with “Guardian” from moving to oppose it, however.
 - A card with “Burrower” or “Guardian” may move to oppose a card with “Purist,” but it may not move again until it no longer opposes the “Purist” card.
 - The “Purist” sigil is immune to itself. If two cards with “Purist” oppose each other, both are counted as having no sigils.