

How to play a game of Magic the Gathering

Magic the Gathering is a trading card game where players battle each other as powerful wizards- summoning creatures, casting sorceries, using swords, and enchantments. Magic the Gathering is the most popular trading card game played around the world. It can be played both casually and competitively. Within Magic the Gathering there are many different ways to play, but they all follow the same basic rule structure. This guide will show someone basic rules and knowledge on how to play Magic the Gathering so that they may succeed in any of the game modes they choose to play.

In Magic the Gathering, the goal of the game is to reduce your opponent's life total to 0 using creatures and other powerful spells. There are several types of cards that are played in Magic the Gathering.

- Lands: These cards are your resources that produce your magical energy resource, mana. 1 land = 1 mana of that color. There are 5 basic land types that each correlate with a color. Plains = White, Swamp = Black, Mountain = Red, Forest = Green, Island = Blue. Spells usually require specific colors in order to summon them. Then there are non-basic lands. Many of them are very different but they all describe what they do on the card. Common ones are dual lands(card with two colors and the player picks which one they want to use) You may play only 1 land per turn.



- Creatures: These are going to be your attackers and defenders. Each creature has a power/toughness on the bottom right hand of the card. This determines how much damage they give out and how much they can take before dying.



- Sorceries: This is a one time effect spell that can only be casted during your main phase. It will be casted, its ability will activate, then it will go to the graveyard.



- Instants: Very similar to sorceries except they can be casted at any time, even during other peoples turns.



- Artifacts: Magical items that have many different effects. The three main types of artifacts are regular artifacts, equipment, and vehicles. Equipment usually has an equip cost in addition to its casting cost. Vehicles require you to crew it in order to attack with it. In order to crew a vehicle you must assign a creature or creatures with power equal to or greater than its crew cost. It then behaves like a creature. If you go to attack, both the vehicle and the creature crewing it become tapped. If the vehicle were to be destroyed, the vehicle and the creature(s) crewing it are destroyed.



- Enchantments: A spell that stays on the battlefield and gives ongoing effects. The 3 most common types of enchantments are regular enchantments, auras, and sagas. A regular enchantment is casted onto the battlefield and is left alone to do its effect. An aura is specifically casted to be attached to a creature. Sagas have numbered chapters, each with an effect. When you cast a saga you put a counter on the first chapter and activate its effect. Then on your next turn, put the counter on the second chapter and activate it effect, and so forth for as many chapters that the saga has.



- Planeswalkers: A unique ally that has its own health that goes up and down depending on which abilities you choose.



Each of these spells(not including lands) have a mana cost. In order to use your lands to cast spells, you turn the land card 90 degrees to the right to signify you are using the land. This is called tapping. For each spell's mana cost you may see a number inside of a gray circle. This means you may use any color for this cost.



← Mana cost. Grey circle with number means you may use any color mana to cast this. The other colors mean you must use that color. This creature cost 2 mana of any color as well as one black mana and one green mana. This creature cost 4 mana in total.

← This is a creature's power and toughness. The left number is how much damage the creature gives, the right is how much damage it can take.

Now that you know the main card types it's time to learn what a turn might look like. In Magic the Gathering, each turn has 7 steps.

- 1. Untap:** This is when you turn all the permanent cards that you tapped last turn back up right
- 2. Upkeep:** Certain cards may have abilities that trigger during this step.(ex. At the beginning of your upkeep, this creature gets a +1/+1.)
- 3. Draw:** This is where you draw a card from your deck.
- 4. Main Phase:** You may play 1 land during this then you can cast spells or summon creatures.
- 5. Combat Phase:** This is where your creatures start attacking.
 - a.** At the beginning of your combat phase you must declare all your attackers that you wish to send, then you must say who you are sending them to. That defending player now has to declare all defenders. Attackers become tapped, blockers are not tapped.
 - b.** Now that blockers are declared, the creatures then deal damage to each other at the same time. A creature that goes unblocked will hit the player bringing his life total down. During combat if a creature is dealt damage equal or greater than its toughness, it will be destroyed and put into your graveyard.
- 6. Second Main Phase:** During this step you may cast more spells or activate any abilities from creatures or artifacts, or play a land if you haven't done so already.
- 7. End Step:** During this step, you declare that you are ending your turn. Certain triggers may happen at this step. All creatures are healed from any damage that they may have taken during the turn(given they are not dead). If another player wants to cast an instant or use a character ability before the start of the next turn, they may do so during this step.

Repeat these steps until someone wins.

Set Up

Things that are required to play the game-

- 40 - 100 card deck depending on what game mode you're playing
- Playmat (not required but recommended)
- life counter (this can be a 20 sided-die, a physical life counter, or an app)
- 6 sided dice for when creatures get stronger
- special token cards for when tokens are made
- something to look up rules and past rulings if you are unsure about something
- sleeves for cards (not required but recommended)

Once everyone has their deck, play area, life counter, and dice ready, shuffle your deck well and draw seven cards for your opening hand. Decide who goes first by rolling a die or flipping a coin. The first player skips their draw step on their very first turn. After that, each player takes

turns following the seven steps of a turn — untap, upkeep, draw, main phase, combat, second main phase, and end step — until one player's life reaches zero or they run out of cards in their deck.

Whether you're playing with friends at home or at your local game store, Magic: The Gathering is a great way to have fun, make friends, and enjoy endless new games. Shuffle up, draw your hand, and enjoy your adventure!

	Ability	Description
	Deathstroke	Any amount of damage this deals to a creature is enough to destroy it.
	Defender	This creature can't attack.
	Double Strike	This creature deals both first-strike and regular combat damage.
	First Strike	This creature deals combat damage before creatures without first strike.
	Flash	You may cast this spell any time you could cast an instant.
	Flying	This creature can't be blocked except by creatures with flying or reach.
	Haste	This creature can attack and tap as soon as it comes under your control.
	Hexproof	This creature can't be the target of spells or abilities your opponents control.
	Indestructible	Effects that say "destroy" don't destroy that permanent. A creature with indestructible can't be destroyed by damage.
	Lifelink	Damage dealt by this creature also causes you to gain that much life.
	Menace	This creature can't be blocked except by two or more creatures.
	Reach	This creature can block creatures with flying.
	Scry	Look at the top (number) cards of your library, then put any number of them on the bottom of your library and the rest on top in any order.
	Trample	If this creature would assign enough damage to its blockers to destroy them, you may have it assign the rest of its damage to defending player or planeswalker.
	Vigilance	Attacking doesn't cause this creature to tap.

