# The Alchemical Art of Metalfoes: A Strategic Deep Dive into a Pendulum Powerhouse

## Section 1: The Metalfoes Philosophy: Forging Victory Through Destruction

### Introduction to the Archetype

The Metalfoes archetype, a cadre of FIRE Psychic-Type monsters, first emerged in the *The Dark Illusion* booster set, presenting a novel approach to the Pendulum mechanic.1 At its core, the archetype is a fusion of Pendulum and Fusion summoning strategies. However, its defining characteristic and enduring legacy lie in a unique strategic philosophy: constructive self-destruction. Unlike many Pendulum decks that prioritize overwhelming the opponent with a swarm of monsters, Metalfoes operates on a consistent, repeatable engine that deliberately destroys its own cards to generate advantage. This design has earned the archetype a reputation for being both an excellent entry point for players learning the complexities of Pendulum Summoning—due to the straightforward nature of its core monsters—and a formidable tool in the hands of a master, possessing a remarkably high skill ceiling.3

### The Central Engine: Value Conversion

The entire Metalfoes strategy is built upon a single, shared Pendulum Effect that is the lifeblood of the deck. Nearly every Metalfoes Pendulum monster, from the Level 2 Metalfoes Steelen to the Level 7 Metalfoes Volflame, possesses the following ability: "Once per turn: You can target 1 other face-up card you control; destroy it, and if you do, Set 1 'Metalfoes' Spell/Trap Card directly from your Deck".1 This effect is not a cost to be paid but rather the primary engine that propels every play. It establishes a direct conversion pathway, allowing the player to trade any face-up card on their field—be it another Pendulum Scale, a monster, or a continuous Spell/Trap—for a specific, powerful tool from their deck's arsenal. This mechanic grants the deck an unparalleled level of consistency, adaptability, and tactical flexibility, allowing it to pivot its strategy on demand.

The true power of this engine is revealed when it interacts with cards that gain value upon destruction. The Pendulum effect is not merely a one-for-one trade; it functions as a catalyst that transforms potential value into immediate, tangible advantage. For instance, the archetype includes cards like Raremetalfoes Bismugear and the Continuous Trap Metalfoes Combination, both of which have effects that activate when they are sent from the field to the Graveyard, allowing the player to search for a "Metalfoes" monster from their deck.3 When a Metalfoes Pendulum monster destroys one of these cards, the sequence of events becomes: destroy Card A to Set Spell/Trap B, which then triggers Card A's effect to search for Monster C. This simple action generates an immediate increase in card advantage. This principle is the reason for the archetype's legendary status as one of the most splashable engines in the game's history.7 When integrated into hybrid strategies, this effect becomes exponentially more powerful. Destroying a "Yang Zing" monster allows it to "float" and Special Summon another from the deck.8 Destroying a "Kozmo" spaceship triggers its effect to summon a pilot from the deck.7 In this way, the Metalfoes engine acts as a universal enabler, converting the latent potential of any card with a destruction-based effect into the kinetic energy of a decisive play.

## Section 2: Anatomy of the Archetype: The Core Components

To fully grasp the strategic depth of Metalfoes, a granular understanding of its individual components is essential. The archetype is composed of a synergistic suite of Pendulum monsters, a versatile toolbox of searchable Spells and Traps, and a powerful lineup of Fusion monsters that serve as the deck's primary win conditions.

### The Pendulum Engine: Scales and Monsters

The Main Deck monsters form the foundation of the Metalfoes engine. A key design choice is that the majority of them are Normal Monsters, which simplifies their function to being bodies on the field and scales in the Pendulum Zone, while also opening up synergies with generic Normal Monster support.3 Their most critical feature is their Pendulum Scales, which are exclusively 1 and 8. This range allows for the Pendulum Summoning of monsters from Level 2 through 7, encompassing nearly the entire in-archetype roster and a wide array of external support.3

The Effect Monsters within the archetype provide additional layers of utility. Raremetalfoes Bismugear, when destroyed, adds a "Metalfoes" monster from the deck to the hand during the End Phase, providing a delayed but valuable search.5 Parametalfoes Melcaster can be destroyed to add a face-up "Metalfoes" Pendulum Monster from the Extra Deck back to the hand, facilitating resource recursion.5 Finally, Metalfoes Vanisher is a powerful high-Level monster that can be Special Summoned from the hand by destroying two face-up cards and can banish an opponent's monster when summoned by a "Metalfoes" card's effect.5

| Card Name | Level | ATK | DEF | Pendulum Scale | Unique Monster Effect Summary |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Raremetalfoes Bismugear** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 | If destroyed: Add 1 "Metalfoes" monster from Deck to hand during the End Phase. 6 |
| **Metalfoes Steelen** | 2 | 0 | 2100 | 8 | (Normal Monster) 1 |
| **Metalfoes Silverd** | 3 | 1700 | 100 | 1 | (Normal Monster) 5 |
| **Metalfoes Goldriver** | 4 | 1900 | 500 | 1 | (Normal Monster) 5 |
| **Metalfoes Volflame** | 7 | 2400 | 2000 | 8 | (Normal Monster) 5 |
| **Parametalfoes Melcaster** | 7 | 2000 | 2500 | 1 | If destroyed: Add 1 face-up "Metalfoes" Pendulum from Extra Deck to hand. 6 |
| **Metalfoes Vanisher** | 9 | 2900 | 1900 | 1 | Can be Special Summoned from hand by destroying 2 face-up cards. If Special Summoned by a "Metalfoes" effect: Banish 1 monster your opponent controls or is in their GY. 5 |

### The Alchemical Arsenal: The Searchable Spell & Trap Toolbox

The primary reward for activating the Metalfoes Pendulum effect is access to a toolbox of powerful Spells and Traps. The ability to search for the exact card needed for any given situation is what makes the deck so consistently effective. These cards are not just support pieces; they are the strategic objectives of the core engine.

The three in-archetype Fusion Spells are a prime example of this toolbox design. They are not redundant but rather represent three distinct strategic approaches to resource management and tempo. Metalfoes Fusion is the engine for the long game; its graveyard effect to shuffle itself back into the deck to draw a card creates a sustainable resource loop that prevents the deck from exhausting its resources.3 Fullmetalfoes Fusion is the tool for disruption; as a Quick-Play Spell, it is designed to be used during the opponent's turn to summon a monster like Fullmetalfoes Alkahest, turning a passive board state into an interactive one.3 Parametalfoes Fusion is the card for recovery and extension; its unique ability to use monsters from the face-up Extra Deck as Fusion Material converts otherwise stranded resources into a powerful new monster, enabling explosive comebacks.3 Therefore, the choice of which Fusion Spell to set is a high-level decision that dictates the duel's pacing.

| Card Name | Card Type | Strategic Function |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Metalfoes Fusion** | Normal Spell | **Grind/Advantage:** Recycles itself from the GY for a draw, ensuring long-term resource availability. 3 |
| **Fullmetalfoes Fusion** | Quick-Play Spell | **Disruption/Tempo:** Enables Fusion Summoning on the opponent's turn for reactive plays. 3 |
| **Parametalfoes Fusion** | Normal Spell | **Extension/Recovery:** Uses monsters from the face-up Extra Deck as material, enabling powerful comeback plays. 3 |
| **Metalfoes Combination** | Continuous Trap | **Recursion/Search:** Revives a Metalfoes from GY after a Fusion Summon; searches a Metalfoes monster when sent from field to GY. 3 |
| **Metalfoes Counter** | Normal Trap | **Recovery/Extension:** Summons a Metalfoes from Deck when a card is destroyed; banishes from GY to add a Pendulum from Extra Deck to hand. 3 |

### The Fusion Vanguard: The Extra Deck Threats

The ultimate goal of the Metalfoes engine is to summon its powerful Fusion Monsters. Each one serves a distinct purpose, ranging from tactical disruption to overwhelming offensive force.

* **Disruption:** Fullmetalfoes Alkahest is a Level 1 Fusion monster that serves as the deck's primary form of interaction on the opponent's turn. Its Quick Effect allows it to target an opponent's Effect Monster and equip it to itself, effectively removing it from the field without destroying it.5
* **Recursion & Removal:** Metalfoes Mithrilium is the deck's central utility monster. Its effect can target two "Metalfoes" cards in the Graveyard and one card on the field; it shuffles the two targets from the Graveyard into the Deck and returns the targeted card on the field to the hand. This provides powerful, non-destruction removal while simultaneously recycling key resources. Furthermore, if Mithrilium is sent from the field to the Graveyard, it "floats" into another "Metalfoes" Pendulum Monster from the Graveyard or face-up Extra Deck.5
* **Offense & Board Wiping:** Metalfoes Orichalc is an offensive powerhouse. It grants all "Metalfoes" monsters the ability to inflict double piercing battle damage, punishing defensive boards. When sent from the field to the Graveyard, it can target and destroy any one card on the field, providing a final piece of removal.5
* **Boss Monsters:** Metalfoes Crimsonite and Parametalfoes Azortless are the high-ATK beatsticks of the archetype. Crimsonite is a generic Level 9 Fusion with 3000 ATK, while Azortless offers a destruction effect upon being summoned and can place itself into the Pendulum Zone if destroyed.5
* **Link Support:** The archetype also includes Link Monsters. Heavymetalfoes Amalgam can equip itself to a Metalfoes monster for a 1000 ATK boost or revive itself by destroying another "Metalfoes" card, extending the core loop.5 The currently Forbidden Heavymetalfoes Electrumite is arguably the most powerful piece of generic Pendulum support ever created, capable of generating immense advantage by manipulating the Extra Deck and providing free draws.6

## Section 3: The Fundamental Loop: Mastering the Flow of Advantage

The Metalfoes strategy is not defined by rigid, linear combos but by a fluid, cyclical flow of advantage. Mastering this fundamental loop is the key to piloting the deck effectively. The sequence is designed to be repeatable, allowing the player to consistently build their board, search for key pieces, and adapt to the opponent's strategy.

### The Core Sequence (Scale > Pop > Set > Pendulum > Fusion)

The deck's primary gameplay pattern can be broken down into a five-step process that converts cards in hand into a powerful board presence.

1. **Establish Scales:** The first step is to place a Metalfoes monster with a Pendulum Scale of 1 (e.g., Metalfoes Silverd) and a Metalfoes monster with a Pendulum Scale of 8 (e.g., Metalfoes Steelen) into the Pendulum Zones. This establishes the range needed to Pendulum Summon the majority of the deck's monsters.
2. **Pop for Advantage:** Activate the Pendulum Effect of one of the scales, targeting the other face-up scale for destruction. This clears a Pendulum Zone for a new scale while triggering the search effect.
3. **Set the Tool:** Upon the successful destruction of the targeted scale, the effect resolves, allowing the player to Set one "Metalfoes" Spell or Trap directly from the deck. The choice of which card to set is the most critical decision point in the turn, dictated entirely by the game state. Setting Metalfoes Fusion is a standard setup play, while setting Fullmetalfoes Fusion prepares for disruption on the opponent's turn.
4. **Replace and Repeat:** Place a new Metalfoes monster from the hand into the now-empty Pendulum Zone. This new scale can then use its own Pendulum Effect to destroy another face-up card, such as a monster on the field like Raremetalfoes Bismugear, to set a second Spell or Trap and trigger the monster's destruction effect for an additional search.
5. **Pendulum Summon:** With the scales re-established, conduct a Pendulum Summon. This allows the player to Special Summon multiple monsters simultaneously from their hand and any face-up Pendulum Monsters from their Extra Deck.
6. **Fusion Summon:** Finally, activate the Set Fusion Spell, using the newly summoned monsters as material to bring out a powerful Fusion Monster from the Extra Deck, such as Metalfoes Mithrilium or Fullmetalfoes Alkahest.

### Resource Management and Recursion

A key element that elevates Metalfoes is its robust system for resource management and recursion, ensuring the engine can continue to function over multiple turns.

* **The Metalfoes Fusion Loop:** The Normal Spell Metalfoes Fusion possesses a crucial Graveyard effect: once per turn, it can be shuffled back into the Deck to draw one card.3 This effect is a cornerstone of the deck's grind game. It ensures that the primary means of summoning the deck's boss monsters is never permanently depleted, and it thins the deck, increasing the probability of drawing into other essential cards.
* **Mithrilium's Recycling Power:** Metalfoes Mithrilium is the linchpin of the deck's resource loop. Its ability to shuffle two "Metalfoes" cards from the Graveyard back into the deck is not just a cost for its powerful bouncing effect; it is a vital tool for refueling the engine. It can recycle spent copies of Metalfoes Combination to be searched again or return Fusion Spells to the deck to be reused, all while removing a threat from the opponent's field.5
* **Combination and Counter as Recovery:** The two archetype traps provide powerful recovery options. Metalfoes Combination has two effects: it can revive a lower-Level "Metalfoes" monster from the Graveyard whenever a Fusion Monster is summoned, and if it is sent from the field to the Graveyard, it searches for any "Metalfoes" monster in the deck.3 Metalfoes Counter Special Summons a "Metalfoes" monster from the deck when a card on the field is destroyed. Additionally, it can be banished from the Graveyard to add a face-up "Metalfoes" Pendulum Monster from the Extra Deck back to the hand, providing a direct way to recover key scales or combo pieces.3

## Section 4: Strategic Blueprints: Combo Lines and End Boards

Unlike many modern decks that rely on long, predetermined combo sequences, Metalfoes is a more reactive and resource-oriented deck. Its plays are less about memorizing specific lines and more about understanding how to use the core engine to build the optimal board for the current situation.4 The following "blueprints" represent common strategic frameworks rather than rigid combos.

### Blueprint 1: Going First - The Alkahest Disruption

The primary goal when going first is to establish a board that can interact with and disrupt the opponent's plays during their turn. The most common way to achieve this is by setting up a live Fullmetalfoes Alkahest.

* **Goal:** End the turn with the ability to summon Fullmetalfoes Alkahest as a Quick Effect.
* **Typical Hand:** Two different Metalfoes scales (one Scale 1, one Scale 8) and at least one other monster.
* **Execution Framework:**
  1. Place the two Metalfoes monsters in the Pendulum Zones to establish the scales.
  2. Activate one scale's effect, targeting the other scale for destruction. Set Metalfoes Combination from the deck.
  3. Place a third Metalfoes monster from hand into the now-empty Pendulum Zone.
  4. Pendulum Summon the monster(s) from hand and the destroyed scale from the face-up Extra Deck.
  5. Activate a Pendulum Effect again, this time targeting a monster on the field for destruction. Set Fullmetalfoes Fusion from the deck. If the destroyed monster was Raremetalfoes Bismugear, its effect will trigger, netting a search in the End Phase.
* **Resulting End Board:** A typical end board for this strategy consists of two Metalfoes monsters on the field, a full set of scales, a face-down Fullmetalfoes Fusion, and a face-down Metalfoes Combination.
* **The Disruption:** During the opponent's Main Phase, the player can activate the set Fullmetalfoes Fusion. By using the two monsters on the field as material, they Fusion Summon Fullmetalfoes Alkahest. The summon of a Fusion Monster triggers the effect of Metalfoes Combination, which revives a Metalfoes monster from the Graveyard. The player can then immediately use Alkahest's Quick Effect to target and equip one of the opponent's key monsters, disrupting their combo at a critical moment.4

### Blueprint 2: Going Second - Breaking the Board with Orichalc and Mithrilium

When going second, the deck's focus shifts from setting up disruption to dismantling the opponent's established board and pushing for a potential One-Turn Kill (OTK).

* **Goal:** Utilize the deck's Fusion monsters to clear the opponent's board and inflict massive damage.
* **Execution Framework:**
  1. Use the core loop to establish scales and generate resources.
  2. Perform a large Pendulum Summon to fill the board with as many monsters as possible.
  3. Fusion Summon into Metalfoes Mithrilium. Activate its effect, shuffling two "Metalfoes" cards from the Graveyard back into the deck to return a key opponent's card (such as an Extra Deck monster or a floodgate) to their hand. This non-destruction removal is crucial for dealing with resilient threats.
  4. Activate a second Fusion Spell, using Mithrilium and another monster as material to summon Metalfoes Orichalc.
  5. When Mithrilium is sent to the Graveyard for this summon, its secondary effect triggers, Special Summoning another "Metalfoes" Pendulum Monster from the Graveyard or face-up Extra Deck.5 This provides an additional body for attacking.
* **The Payoff:** The resulting board will have Metalfoes Orichalc alongside several other Metalfoes monsters. Thanks to Orichalc's effect, all of these monsters will inflict double piercing battle damage, which can easily end the game against an opponent who has set up a board of defense-position monsters.5 This sequence allows the deck to generate a surprising and often lethal amount of damage.

## Section 5: The Art of the Hybrid: Synergistic Engines

The true testament to the power and flexibility of the Metalfoes engine is its unparalleled ability to be integrated into other archetypes. Its capacity to consistently destroy face-up cards makes it a perfect partner for any strategy that benefits from its own cards being destroyed.7

### Metalfoes Yang Zing - The Combo Powerhouse

This is arguably the most famous and historically potent Metalfoes hybrid. The synergy is direct and devastatingly effective.

* **Synergy Explained:** The Metalfoes Pendulum effect provides a consistent and repeatable method to destroy Yang Zing monsters on demand during one's own turn. Yang Zing monsters have effects that trigger when they are destroyed by battle or card effect, typically allowing the player to Special Summon another Yang Zing monster from the deck. The precise wording of the Metalfoes effect—"destroy it, and if you do, Set..."—ensures that the destruction and the setting are considered to happen simultaneously, preventing the Yang Zing monsters from "missing the timing" of their activation.16 This interaction allows the player to "float" through their deck, building a board of powerful Synchro monsters with ease.8
* **Key Interaction & End Board:** A standard combo begins with a Metalfoes scale and a Yang Zing monster. The Metalfoes destroys the Yang Zing, which summons Jiaotu, Darkness of the Yang Zing from the deck. Jiaotu can then discard two other Yang Zing cards to summon two more from the deck, initiating a long sequence of Synchro Summons.8 The goal is to end on a formidable board of multiple negations, often featuring monsters like Herald of the Arc Light, Baxia, Brightness of the Yang Zing for on-turn disruption, and the powerful Counter Trap Nine Pillars of Yang Zing.9

### Metalfoes Majespecter - The Control Variant

This variant shifts the deck's focus from explosive combos to resilient board control.

* **Synergy Explained:** Majespecter monsters are Pendulum monsters that share a common trait: they cannot be targeted or destroyed by an opponent's card effects. This makes them incredibly difficult to remove from the field. The Metalfoes engine provides the high and low scales necessary to consistently Pendulum Summon the Majespecters, while the Majespecters provide an untouchable lineup of monsters.19
* **Key Interaction & End Board:** The centerpiece of this variant is Majespecter Unicorn - Kirin, a powerful monster with a Quick Effect to target one of your Pendulum Monsters and one of your opponent's monsters and return them to the hand. The Metalfoes engine facilitates summoning Kirin and can even destroy Majespecter Spells and Traps to trigger their effects. The deck's end board focuses on control, typically featuring Majespecter Unicorn - Kirin alongside searchable Majespecter traps like Majespecter Tornado and the standard Metalfoes disruption package featuring Fullmetalfoes Alkahest, creating multiple layers of interaction that are difficult for the opponent to overcome.19

### Metalfoes True Draco - The Tribute Engine

This hybrid leverages a powerful interaction between the Metalfoes' continuous trap and the True Draco's summoning mechanic.

* **Synergy Explained:** True Draco monsters can be Tribute Summoned by tributing Continuous Spells or Traps in place of monsters. The Metalfoes archetype provides a searchable Continuous Trap card in the form of Metalfoes Combination, making it the perfect fodder for a Tribute Summon.7
* **Key Interaction & End Board:** The core play is to use a Metalfoes Pendulum effect to set Metalfoes Combination. Then, on a subsequent turn, the player can tribute Metalfoes Combination to summon a powerful boss monster like Master Peace, the True Dracoslaying King. When Combination is sent from the field to the Graveyard, its secondary effect triggers, allowing the player to search for any "Metalfoes" monster from their deck.12 This interaction turns the cost of a Tribute Summon into a direct gain in card advantage. The end board for this variant is typically a powerful, often immune Master Peace, backed by the recursive Metalfoes engine and additional True Draco traps for further disruption.24

## Section 6: Modern Metallurgy: Adapting to the Contemporary Meta (2024+)

Years after its release, the Metalfoes engine continues to prove its resilience by adapting to the modern, Link-centric era of the game. Its fundamental design is not tied to a specific game state but rather to the universal principle of converting on-field presence into card advantage, allowing it to integrate new and powerful generic cards into its core strategy.

### The Link Revolution

The introduction of Link Monsters, particularly those designed to support Pendulum strategies, has significantly enhanced the deck's capabilities.

* **Beyond the Pendulum:** This LINK-2 monster has become a cornerstone of modern Metalfoes builds. When Link Summoned, it allows the player to add one Pendulum Monster from their Deck to their face-up Extra Deck. This effect greatly increases the consistency of assembling a full Pendulum Scale. While it places restrictions on Pendulum Summoning and monster effects for the remainder of the turn, it is a vital combo starter that ensures the engine gets online.10
* **Cross-Sheep:** As a deck that frequently performs Fusion Summons, Metalfoes has a natural and powerful synergy with Cross-Sheep. If a Fusion Monster is Special Summoned to a zone Cross-Sheep points to, the player can Special Summon one Level 4 or lower monster from their Graveyard. This provides a simple yet effective way to extend combos, reviving a material used for the Fusion Summon to then be used for a Link Summon or another play.10
* **Generic Powerhouses:** The deck's FIRE attribute and its ability to easily generate multiple monsters for Link material make it an ideal home for modern staples. Promethean Princess, Bestower of Flames can revive a FIRE monster from the Graveyard, providing excellent recursion. S:P Little Knight offers powerful, non-destruction removal and disruption on the opponent's turn. These generic Link monsters elevate the deck's power ceiling and allow it to compete with contemporary strategies.10

The continued relevance of Metalfoes through multiple rule changes and metagame shifts is a testament to the strength of its core design. The "pop-and-set" mechanic was not fundamentally weakened by the introduction of Link Summoning or the initial restrictions placed on Pendulum Summoning. Instead, the engine proved flexible enough to adapt, first as a synergistic piece in hybrid decks and now, with the rules for Pendulum Summoning relaxed and a new suite of powerful Link monsters available, as a potent strategy in its own right. Archetypes with a flexible, self-contained, and advantageous core loop can adapt to nearly any metagame shift by integrating the powerful generic cards of the era into their existing, robust framework. The longevity of Metalfoes is proof that a well-designed engine is timeless.

### Sample Modern End Board

Reflecting these adaptations, a typical end board for a modern Metalfoes deck is a multi-layered field of interaction. It might consist of Beyond the Pendulum pointing to two Main Monster Zones, a full set of Metalfoes scales, a Fusion monster like Metalfoes Mithrilium for recursion, a set Fullmetalfoes Fusion for an Alkahest play, and a powerful generic Link monster like S:P Little Knight or Apollousa, Bow of the Goddess for multiple negations. Decklists from 2024 and beyond consistently show a reliance on these powerful Link monsters, alongside other generic staples like Magicians' Souls and Emergency Teleport, to maximize the deck's consistency and power ceiling.26

## Conclusion

The Metalfoes archetype stands as a masterclass in game design, a testament to the power of a simple, elegant, and highly synergistic core mechanic. Its central engine—a repeatable process of converting any face-up card into a specific tool from the deck—provides a level of consistency and adaptability that few archetypes can match. This "constructive destruction" philosophy is not merely a gimmick but the foundation of a deeply strategic and resource-intensive playstyle that rewards careful planning and foresight.

The analysis reveals that the deck's strength is multifaceted. Internally, it operates on a fluid and recursive loop, using its Pendulum monsters to search for a versatile toolbox of Spells and Traps, which in turn summon powerful Fusion monsters that can control the board, dismantle opposing setups, or push for a decisive victory. Externally, this same engine makes Metalfoes one of the most effective and splashable archetypes in the game's history, capable of forming potent hybrid strategies with archetypes like Yang Zing, Majespecter, and True Draco by acting as a universal catalyst for their destruction-based effects.

Even in the modern era, years after its debut, the fundamental design of Metalfoes has allowed it to adapt and thrive. By integrating powerful generic Link monsters and other contemporary support, the deck continues to be a viable and formidable strategy. Ultimately, Metalfoes is an archetype that is straightforward to learn but difficult to master, offering a high skill ceiling and a rewarding experience for any duelist willing to delve into the alchemical art of forging victory from destruction.

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