

ZTCG:HS Documentation

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1 About ZTCG:HS

ZTCG:HS (Zelda Trading Card Game: Hyrule Showdown) is a fan-made, non-profit intended, game engine which aims to emulate an environment for playing the card game of same name. The TCG have it's own rules, which will be explained with details eventually in the text.

While this Card Game contains some elements of it's own, one can perceive certain similarities in mechanics with other TCGs. Indeed, this TCG makes some homage to several existent TCGs within it's mechanics, game and card concepts: game setting from Maplestory iTCG^{®1}, concepts such as bonuses, modifiers, card lists from Yu-Gi-Oh^{®2} and many others homages from other sources.

Disclaimer The original card game, that promoted the development of this game engine, contains a set of 200 cards based of some concepts of one of Nintendo[®]'s bestsellers The Legend of Zelda[®]: Ocarina of Time[®]. These concepts, such as names and images, were "borrowed" from them and so must be credited to their respective owners.

The main objective on this card game is to lead your faction to victory, by defeating your oponent using many cards and delving many strategies to make up the point. The way one builds their deck beforehand and in-match builds the ability tree and employs their cards is of vital importance to reach great performance in the game.

By collecting cards and managing deck builds between the matches, one can almost constantly improve their deck and try new powerful combinations or game experiences.

¹"MapleStory[®] iTCG[®]", published and developed by Nexon[®] and Wizards of the Coast[®], PC, 2007.

²"Yu-Gi-Oh[®] Power of Chaos: Yugi the Destiny[®]", published and developed by Konami[®], PC, 28 nov. 2003

2 Menus

ZTCG:HS have interactive menus for creating new profiles and decks, rearranging existent decks with cards gained through matches and setting up new matches when ready.

2.1 Main Menu



Figure 1: Main Menu interface.

The first menu in the game, from here you can opt between start a match, manage profiles or visualize cards collected by a profile.

2.2 Profiles

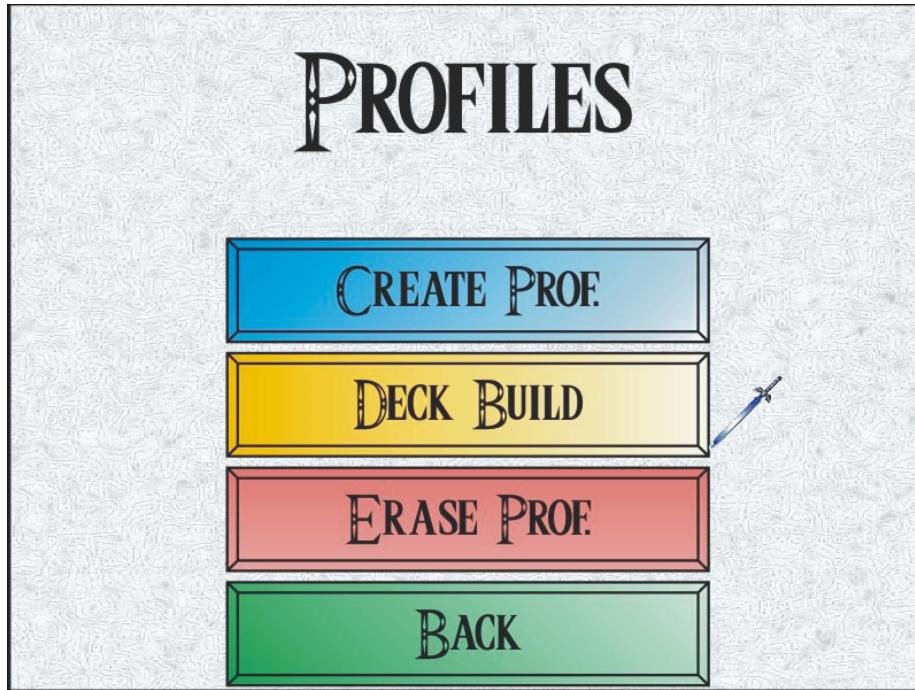


Figure 2: Manage Profiles interface.

This section guides the user to take 3 actions: create a new profile, draft a deck, or erase a existent profile. USE CAUTION when erasing a profile, deleted profile data is permanently destroyed!

2.2.1 Create Profile

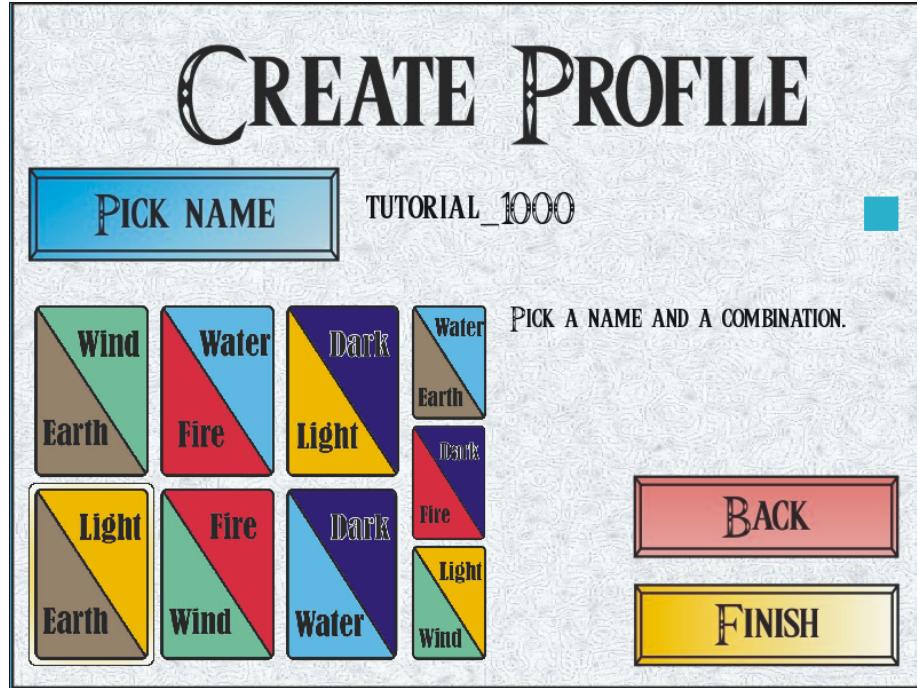


Figure 3: Create Profile interface.

Creating a new profile is simple, one must give an unique name and select one pair of elements which will define the initial deck class. Refer to the elements definition to get a glimpse about the available starter attributes.

To cancel this operation, hit Back.

Once the criteria has been matched and the Finish button has been pressed a full-fledged deck will then be generated, with cards given in such a way that card types and elements remains balanced within the deck.

Deck build:

- 2x Character, one for each element.
- 10x Mob of any element.
- 5x Cards from Type #¹³ of any element.

³Refer to elements for more information about element specialization.

- 5x Cards from Type #2 of any element.
- 1x Field of any element.
- 14x Any card (except Character) of any element.

2.2.2 Draft Profile



Figure 4: Draft Profile interface.

At this screen one can, with the cards earned through the matches played, move cards, make transactions and draft his/her deck to suit their needs. Let's take a look at the different Deck names the interface gives:

Main Deck The deck used to battle the opponents, there is a limit of 40 cards on this deck, and the number of copies of a card inside this deck is also limited, accordingly to the rarity of the card.⁴

⁴Notice the Green box at the figure above: a GREEN box signalizes the swap from one deck to the other is permitted; a RED box signalizes prohibition, whether because the limit of 40 has been reached, or because the limit of copies of this card has been reached.

Side Deck This place contains all the cards earned throughout the matches. Eventually one would like to swap best suited cards from the Side Deck to the Main Deck, or keep there unique cards as a collection. There are no restrictions to this deck.

Character Deck As the name suggests, only Characters are permitted on this deck. There are no limits here.

Shop One of the big features of this game, the Shop permits one to buy and sell desired cards. Cards present at the Side Deck can be sold easily, however at much lower price. Eventually, new cards appears at the shop to be bought, at prices varying accordingly to the user's profile level. Players can find rare or high-leveled cards expensive at first (mainly if they try to buy it at lower levels), however such prices will become accessible over the level progression.⁵

To swap cards, left-click a card (it will appear to be selected afterwards) and hit Swap button. You can select one card of each side and hit Swap, causing a two-way swapping between be decks. Buying and selling cards also uses this mechanic.

Finally, having enough cards to do this process, one can set the game to autogenerate decks based-off the cards they have available. Use the Element Pick feature to filter which types you want this deck to be. Once the filters have been chosen, hit Generate Deck.

Generated deck build:

- 1x One copy of each character of any element.
- 2x Fields of any element.
- 10x Mobs of any element.
- 28x Any card (except Character) of any element.

Note that, if the maximum cannot be reached, the system will try to fill out the rest with any card of the filtered elements that are available, observing the limitation of copies.

After everything is done, hit SAVE to successfully commit the changes of the profile. Card swapping and transactions only will be updated after SAVE. Hit Cancel to exit without saving.

⁵Use caution, though Sold cards cannot be re-obtained, and if you are collecting cards, make sure you have ANOTHER of this card before selling and losing ownership.

2.2.3 Erase Profile

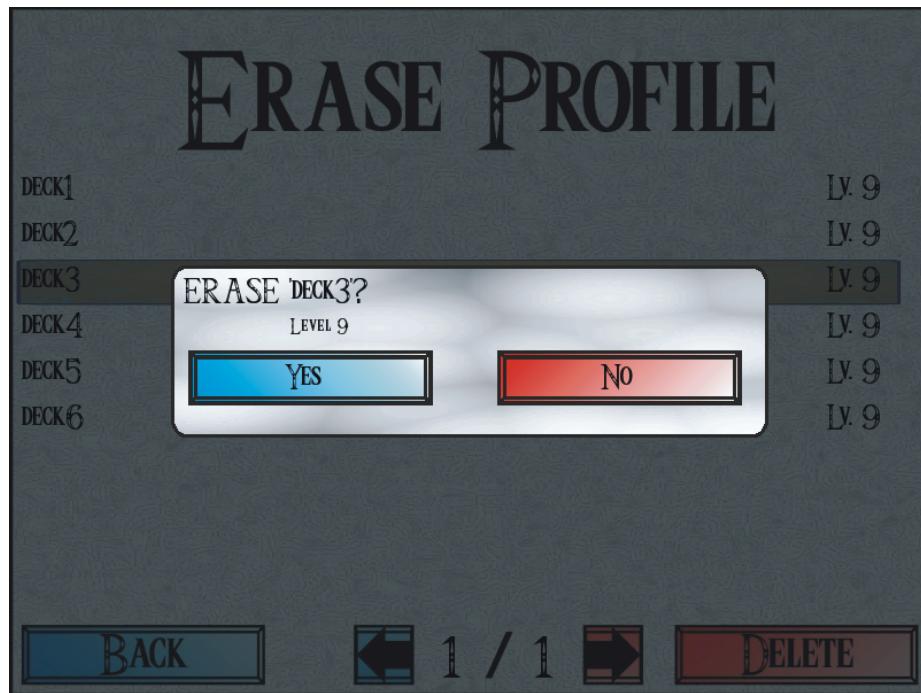


Figure 5: Erase Profile interface.

Use this screen to remove permanently profile data. Once deleted, there are no means to recover a profile, so use this thoughtfully.

2.3 Card List



Figure 6: Card List interface.

By browsing this section, one can easily see what cards a profile contains. The revealed cards shows that the selected profile contains at least one of this card at the Main Deck or the Side Deck.

Select a card to read it's description, by either left-pressing the rollbar buttons or moving the mouse wheel.

The cards are sorted by Type tabs, which can be toggled at the top of the screen. Inside a tab, cards are sorted by Element and finally alphabetically.

Once properly loaded, Custom Cards are too displayed on this screen.

Use Select Profile button to alternate between existent profiles and Quit to return to the Main Menu.

2.4 Play Game

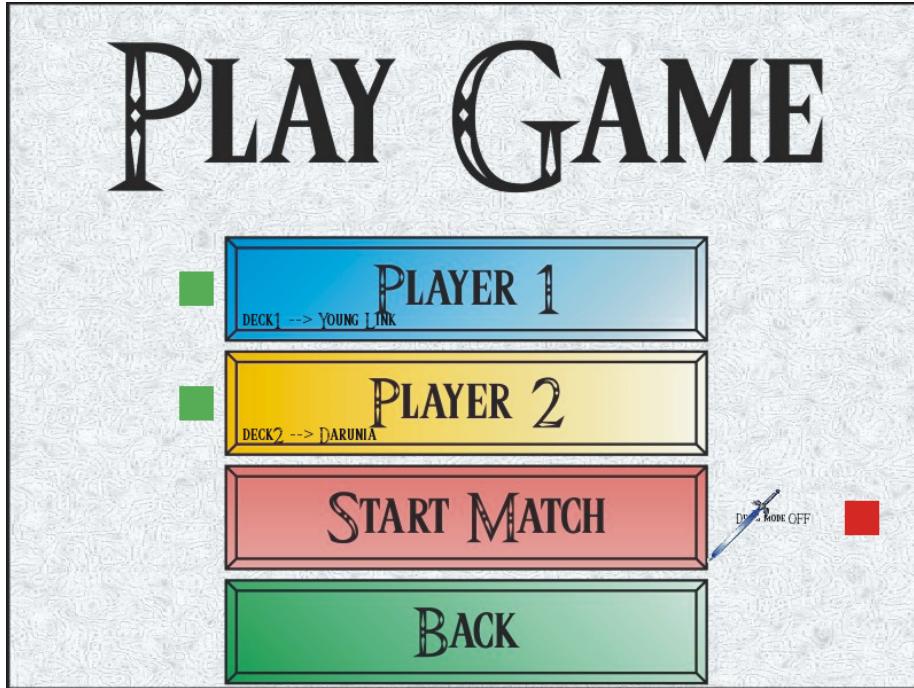


Figure 7: Play Game interface.

Match set-up screen. Select 2 different profiles, with characters loaded, to start a match. When both profile sockets get the GREEN box, signalizing that they are ready, hit the Start Match button to initialize a game. Refer to the game rules for more detailed information about the match gimmicks.

3 Game Elements

3.1 Profile Features

A profile is a data structure which holds every information about a player's current deck. It holds things such as current Main Deck, Side Deck, Character Deck, profile Level & Exp, cash, and many other informations. After each match, values are updated accordingly to the player progression.

3.1.1 Decks

Refer to deck informations for details.

3.1.2 Level & Experience

Metrics that defines how well-confirmed a player is in the game. Higher levels means that the player already participated on many matches, and by that attained many privileges from playing, such as new cards at disposal and, consequently, better odds to have powerful deck combinations.

3.1.3 Rupees

In-game cash. Used for transactions with the Shop.

It is worthy to note that the game does some judgement about one's performance in a match, and rewards players with Exp and Rupees accordingly at the end of the match. At least one card is guaranteed for each player at the end of the match, and a booster pack when leveling up the profile.

3.2 Card Type

This attribute defines the nature of a card as well as its behavior in the game.



Character: entity representing the player. Unit with the highest importance, if it dies the player loses the match. Grows in the match after learning new abilities as the turns goes on.



Mob: secondary entities which actively helps their owner once deployed. There is no need to maintain these units alive until the end of the match, however their constant presence ensures good performance in the match. Their unique trait is: if they remain alive at the start of the owner's turn, they fully recover their HP.



Equipment: tools which assist the character on the skirmishes. They cannot be directly targeted if there are mobs at the frontline, however given such space one can opt to target the equipment for minimal damage over targeting directly the character for a given damage.



Rapid Action: instant actions. Usually, these cards have great impact at the flow of the game, permitting even astounding roundabouts on a seemingly hopeless or so-called decided matches.



Field: card that gives some advantages to one party (owner's) or both parties (provided that the opponent of the field's owner does not placed a field yet). Can not be targeted by common means.



Jr. Boss & Boss: special mobs. These cards usually have a huge impact on the match once played, however they don't refresh HP every turn, like common mobs, but they do hoard considerable amount of HP. Only one Jr. Boss or Boss mob can stay deployed for each party at a time, and by no means two or more can stay at the same side at the same time.

3.3 Card Element

This attribute defines the elemental essence of a card.



In order to deploy a card in the match, your character must have at the build tree at least one card with the same element. In other words, to play a card one must have leveled up beforehand the card's element.

It is worthy to note that a multi-diversed deck can be of interest to the player. A deck having such traits can become potentially stronger, however one which uses too many elements becomes more of a hindrance than a boon. One must take it in consideration when drafting a deck.

3.4 Card Layout

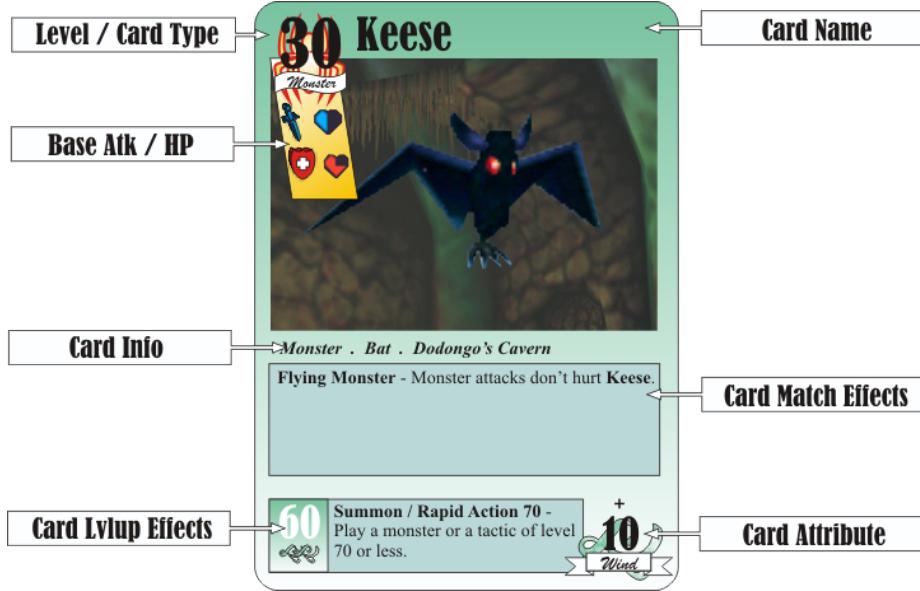


Figure 8: Card details.

As depicted at the figure above, the greater portion of the cards of the game follows the presented design. Card level and type at the top-left corner, followed by the name and image of the card. Some stats (mob-based) and card informations at the middle area. And finally, at the bottom there is the level-up effect (except for Boss-type) and the element.

Card Name & Image Attributes that identifies the card in the game, for aesthetics purposes.

Card Level Value which defines how simple or tricky it is to call a card to the match. Usually higher-leveled cards are trickier to get played but, once deployed, have the potential to change the flow of the match.

Base Atk/HP Only on mob-type cards, it depicts the initial value of attack output and Health Points of a mob. These values can be changed during gameplay.

Card Info Conveys general information, such as the type of the card, subcategories⁶ and other additional data.

⁶Subcategories are used inside matches, isolating cards into niches (e.g. 'Weapon' equip, 'Recovery' tactic, 'NPC' mob).

Match Effects Defines rules for when a card is deployed and/or remains active on the field. Such effects are mitigated (does not activate or remains active) while the card is found under the state of silence.

Level-up Effects Defines rules that empowers the character's abilities. See build tree section for more information.

3.5 Build Tree

At the start of every turn, the player is given the opportunity to use up one card from his/her hand to level up the character. Every levelup requires one card from the player, and grants these bonuses (taking place first, card effects takes place right after these bonuses were given):

- Increases the current level by 10.
- Verify if HP + 20 surpass MaxHP value:
 - Increases HP and MaxHP by 40, if $(HP + 20 > MaxHP)$.
 - Increases HP by 20, if not.
- Slide the card used to levelup to the bottom of the Build Tree (under the character).



If the card effect is a one-shot (), activate the effect immediately. This effect will not be activated during the character action phase.



Figure 9: Character ability tree.

What we can read from the image:

- Link is the character selected.
- Currently at level 30, Link will pass to 40 after leveling up with the sliding card.
- At level 30, he could use only his 3 natural skills (level 30, with 2 EARTH and 1 WIND attributes).
- Now he is level 40, with 2 EARTH and 2 WIND attributes.
- Now he can use Refresh and Stab abilities, in addition to his natural skills.
- Mercy was a One-shot skill, therefore it is simply ignored during Character Actions phase.
- Combo Hit requires the character to be at least level 80 and have at least 2 EARTH attributes.

3.6 Character Level and Attributes Learned

Level Represents the stage in which the character finds itself on the game. Depending on the level and the attributes learned through the Build Tree, some abilities can be unlocked.

Attributes Represents which elements the character unlocked and their respective level within the Build Tree.

3.7 HP & MaxHP

HP stands for both Health Points or Hit Points, and every unit in the game has both these values.

MaxHP Is the top value a unit can reach with its HP. To have higher HP values one must improve the MaxHP first.

HP Current health value. If it reaches zero, the unit is destroyed and must be sent to the Graveyard. If a character reaches zero HP, the game is over and the one with HP higher than zero is the winner. If both characters reaches zero HP at the same time, a tie occurs.

3.8 Hand, Deck and Graveyard

Hand Set of cards visible only for the owner, on which one can analyze it and delve a strategy.

Deck Pile of cards disposed in such a way that none of the players can see their contents (cards face-down, and drawing from the top of the pile). One deck for each player.

Graveyard Pile of cards visible for both players, containing cards that were once used in the match and then discarded by the match rules. Each player has their own Graveyard.

3.9 Table Layout

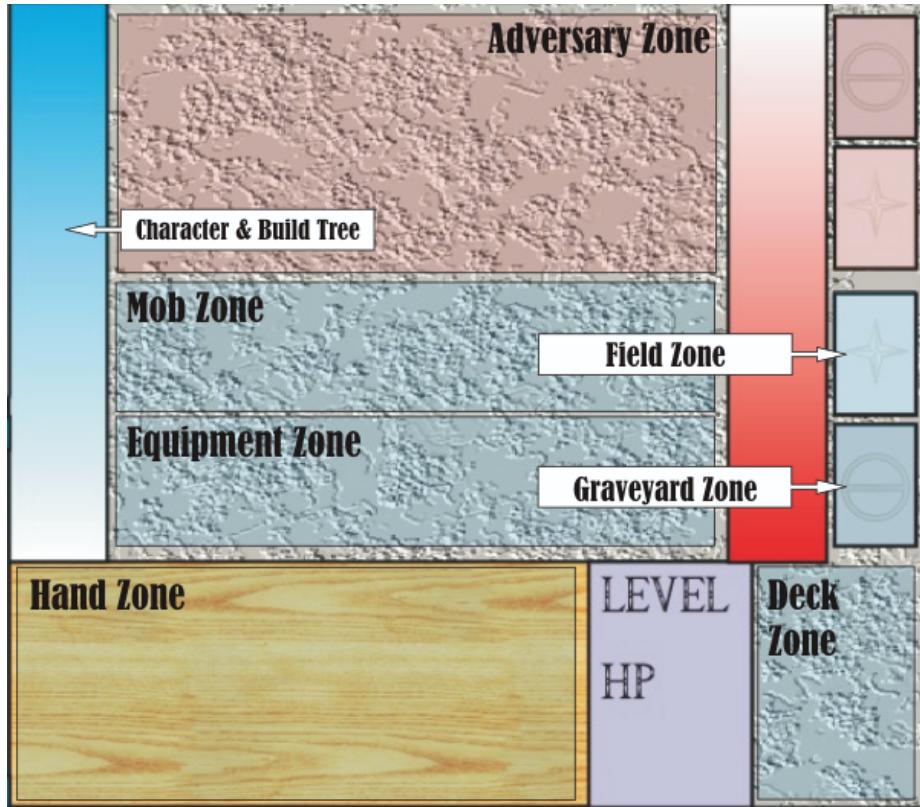


Figure 10: Table layout.

Your character is located at the left corner of the table, and immediately under the character is its ability tree. Likewise, your opponent's character is located at the right corner with its ability tree. At the center of the table, both parties share the section, with the player using the bottom section and the opponent the top section.

The ZTCG table supports these numbers of concurrent cards for each side, separated by type:

7x Mob-like cards.

7x Equipment cards.

1x Field card.

1x Character card, filled from the start and remains there for all the match duration.

4 Game rules

4.1 Match Setup

To start a match, both players must have chosen a Character card and a deck to use up for all the match duration:

- Set the Character face-up on its place.
- Place the deck, with cards face-down, at the Deck pile location.
- Decide who starts the game. The first to go draws 5 cards and the second draws 6.

Both Characters starts with their HP and MaxHP values equals to the depicted by the card design, at level zero, with no cards under their characters.

4.2 End of a match

- The game ends when a character reaches zero HP, losing the match.
- Whoever remains alive at the end is declared the winner of the match.
- The match still goes on if the deck has been completely depleted.

4.3 Turn Phases

Like the most TCGs, this one is too turn-based. Said that, players must alternate control of the game between themselves sequentially, in order to receive feedback of the other side's actions and take proper decisions and countermeasures.

Every turn begins, follows sequentially a set of steps or objectives, and then finishes, passing control for the opponent to resume their game. Once the opponent finishes their actions, the control returns to the player, and so goes on until the end of the match. Each step of this set of actions is also called a Turn Phase.

4.3.1 Start phase

Takes place even before the Level-up phase. Here, no player command an action, only effects that takes place at the "start of the turn" may be unfolded. Also, the player's deployed mob-types (not Jr. Bosses or Bosses) refreshes their HP to the fullest at this stage.

4.3.2 Level-up phase

At this step, the player decides if they use a card from the hand to level up their character. Opting to level up a character brings many benefits for the player: improving MaxHP, unlocking new abilities, etc.

4.3.3 Onset phase

Again, the player does not make commands here. Effects listed to be used "after level-up phase" are played here.

4.3.4 Character Actions phase



The character abilities are to be read and played sequentially, from the top to the bottom. Taking as example this 2 EARTH, 2 WIND, level 40 Link, the following actions will be played this turn:

- Thrust
- Mission
- Summon X – read as Summon 40 in this case.
- Refresh
- Stab

Figure 11: Character ability tree.

4.3.5 Mob Actions phase

At this step, the player does not make commands. Every mob that does not specify a target phase for its actions, but their action is not deemed as a "continuous" effect (such as aura or attack prevention) defaults to play its action here.

4.3.6 Mob Attack phase

Finally, it's time for the mobs to help the player. Every mob deployed by the player can use their base attack value as damage output for an opponent character or mob. This right can be overridden by the match rules, alternatively a unit cannot attack at all if it is under the effect of stun.

4.4 Game Mechanics

4.4.1 Attack instances

Counts towards attack instances every command of attack in the game. They always have a targeting unit, but can have or not a source unit (e.g. DOT). They define too some flags that can modify some behaviors and interactions in the game:

- Prevent – Offers the target the opportunity to wear out an attack instance without receiving any damage.
- Block – Offers the target the opportunity to lower the damage received by an attack instance.
- Counter – Offers the target the opportunity to create a new attack instance as retaliation to being targeted.

Every attack instance that does not define flags are essentially preventable, blockable and counterable.

Sometimes, units receive boons that permit them prevent attacks a defined set of times. In these cases, it is possible to stack preventions from multiple sources, however from a same source this counter must be refreshed: new count is the maximum between the current value and the one to be applied.⁷

⁷Say a generic CHARACTER can prevent 2 attacks as a boon from MOB1 and 3 attacks as a boon from MOB2. In this case, CHARACTER can prevent up to 5 attacks. Now, MOB1 activates a new effect that permits CHARACTER to prevent 4 attacks! So, CHARACTER now can prevent 4 from MOB1 (instead of 2) and 3 from MOB2, making up to 7 attack preventions!

4.4.2 Damage Calculation

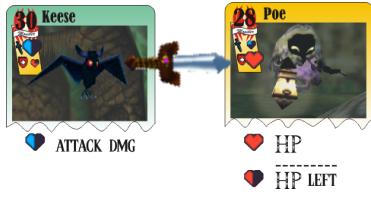


Figure 12: Attack calculation.

- No modifiers (auras, damage buffs, blocks) are being considered in this example.
- Keese has 20 attack damage, and Poe has 40 HP.
- Keese (Mob) declares attack on Poe (Mob).
- Poe will end up with 20 HP left. Keese used it's attack.

Damage instances on ZTCG:HS are attributes to source-types. This means that, if a equipment effect generates an attack instance, this attack comes FROM an equipment. Moreover, there can be disjointed attacks (e.g. DOT effects) that, although the DOT did come from an unit (let's say a Mob-type), it does not count towards a Mob attack but more like an "unknown" source attack; therefore, disjointed.

Similar to source-types, target-types are taken in consideration when evaluating an attack instance.

Notice that modifiers can come from a wide plethora of card effects throughout the game, in the shape of auras, one-turn effects (rapid actions), equipment effects, and much other sources.

One must observe these criteria when calculating the final damage output:

- Minimal damage dealt is zero.
- Maximal damage dealt is the current HP of the target.

Special traits for certain circumstances:

- Damaging a character



Figure 13: Attack calculation on characters.

- No modifiers (auras, damage buffs, blocks) are being considered in this example.
- Keese has 20 attack damage, and Sheik has 2 Mobs deployed.
- Keese (Mob) declares attack on Sheik (Character).
- Each Poe blocks 10 damage for Sheik, but does not suffer HP loss.
- Sheik remains unharmed. Keese used its attack.

• Direct Attack

Attack instances flagged as a direct attack does not work the same way as common attacks. They do identify types for source and target like common attacks, however the damage output is deemed fixed (no buffs or nerfs are calculated), and they cannot be prevented or counterattacked.

4.4.3 Stacking effects

As a TCG, unless stating otherwise, essentially every card in the game can have its effects stacked by any means. From auras to damage amplifiers, this is a nice feature for permitting awesome combos of card effects.

Exception to this rule is the number of turns left for the effects of stuns and silences. In this case, the number of turns is the greater value between the current value and the applicable.

4.4.4 Equipment targeting

In this TCG, equipment makes a major role in supporting a character with their effects. Due to this, one may find useful to get rid of the adversary gadgets before engaging their character.

Like characters or mobs, equipment too have HP (or durability if you feel like it). When the HP reaches zero, the equipment is destroyed (removed from the table and placed in the Graveyard).

Attacking an equipment has a different trait than attacking a character or a mob. While for characters or mobs one must calculate the final value of the damage, an attack to an equipment always deals (fixed) 10 damage, and acts like a direct attack.

- Equipments can be targeted whenever the opponent has no deployed mobs.
- Only attack instances that targets characters can target equipments too.
- Deals fixed 10 damage.
- Unpreventable, unblockable and unconquerable.

Targeting an equipment does not damage the character, as the equipment is treated as an individual target.

4.4.5 Card Mechanics

- Aura



Aura effect is defined as a continuous effect and lingers around while its source remains deployed and it is not under effect of silence. They can appear as many flavors, like bonus attributes, protections and of other natures.

Cards are not destroyed by auras changes during the match, rather stays with minimal HP (10) under these circumstances.

- Stun

Card affected with stun cannot create attack instances. In other words, unable to attack. Effect wears out:



- Over time in case of turn-based counter applied.
- The source of the effect is destroyed in cases where there is no turn count.

- Silence

Card affected with silence cannot activate their in-game card effects. Card effects becomes active again after lifting the silence effect. Effect wears out:



- Over time in case of turn-based counter applied.
- The source of the effect is destroyed in cases where there is no turn count.

- Damage-Over-Turn (DOT)

Cards affected with DOT keep losing HP every turn, while the DOT effect is active. One card can receive multiple DOT instances, however DOTs from same source are not stackable (if there is turn count, it is merely refreshed^a). Effect wears out:



- Over time in case of turn-based counter applied.
- The source of the effect is destroyed in cases where there is no turn count.

DOT effect takes place at the start of the opponent's turn.

^aNew turn count is the maximum between the current value and the one to be applied

- Swap

Cards affected with swap are meant to change sides (becomes controlled by the opponent) immediately. The target card uses a slot of the opponent side and frees the owner's slot. However, given impossibilities when moving sides (due to already having a Jr.Boss or Boss present or no slots available), one of these actions are taken accordingly to who is the card's owner:



- Changing to opponent's side – card is destroyed and sent to the owner's Graveyard.
- Changing to owner's side – card returns to the owner's Hand.

Effect wears out:

- Over time in case of turn-based counter applied.
- The source of the effect is destroyed in cases where there is no turn count.

- Withdraw character



Characters affected with withdraw are unable to create attack instances and can not be targeted by new attack instances. Still takes damage from indirect attacks, such as DOT. Effect wears out over time. Multiples withdraw effects from same source are not stackable and, like preventions and DOTs, they are refreshed^a when done again.

^aNew turn count is the maximum between the current value and the one to be applied

- Draw Card

Permits the player to draw one card from the top of the Deck to their Hand. Does nothing if the Deck is empty.

- Discard Card

Forces the player to choose and discard a card from their Hand to the Graveyard. Does nothing if the Hand is empty.

- Peek Card

Permits the player to see the next card of their Deck (does not reveal to the opponent, except if it is needed for validation purposes), then return it to the top of the Deck face-down. Does nothing if Deck is empty.

- Reveal Card

Turns public (visible for both players) a target card from one's Hand or Deck.

- Deposit Card

Cards in-game can contain other cards under them, similar to the build tree under a Character, as result of their effects. Cards "deposited" are not counted towards deployed, therefore their effects are not applicable yet in the game.

Whenever a deployed card containing deposited cards is destroyed or removed from the field, the deposited cards are sent back to their owner's Decks, at the bottom of the pile.

If a deployed card containing deposited cards changes side, all cards under changes side too (following the swapped card).