



[NEWS](#) > Feature

THE ORIGINAL MAGIC RULEBOOK

Posted in **Feature** on December 25, 2004

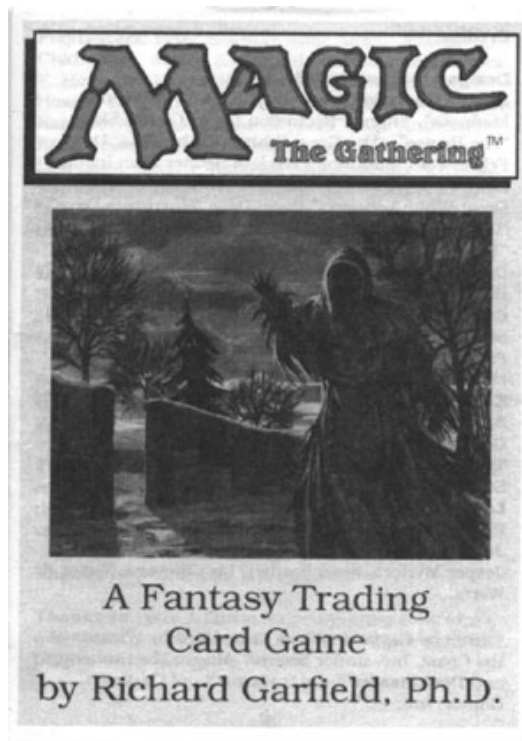


By John Carter

[Archive](#)

SHARE ARTICLE ▼

*This week, for that holiday nostalgia fix, please enjoy this transcription of the original rulebook (Alpha edition, with some Beta updates intermixed) that came with **Magic: the Gathering**. I hope you have as much fun reading this as I did – we've come a long way!*



Credits:

Design: Richard Garfield, Ph.D.

Design Contributions: Charles "Doc" Gwaltney, Matthew "The Gator" Rose, David "Doc" ...

We use cookies on this site to personalize content and ads, provide social media features and analyze web traffic. By clicking YES, you are consenting for us to set cookies.

[\(Learn more about cookies\)](#) No, give me more info

OK, I agree

No, thanks



Serpent Deck", "The 5 Color Deck" Reich; Bill Rose; Elliot Segal

Card Text: Richard Garfield, Peter D. Adkison, Lisa Stevens, Lisa Lowe, Len Case, George Lowe, Sean Prather, Tom Fontaine, Jim Lin, Chris Page, Jesper Myrfors, Mike Davis, Lily Wu, Elizabeth Zanger

Editing: Beverly Marshall Saling and Victor K. Wertz

Art Direction: Jesper Myrfors

Graphic Design: Jesper Myrfors and Lisa Stevens

Typesetting: Peter D. Adkison, David Howell, Lisa Stevens, Victor K. Wertz

Layout: Peter D. Adkison and Lisa Stevens

Printer Liaison: Luc Mertens

Jobs too numerous to mention: Peter D. Adkison, Jesper Myrfors, Sean Prather, Lisa Stevens, Victor K. Wertz

1993 by Garfield Games, Inc. Used by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. under license. *Magic: The Gathering* and **Deckmaster** are trademarks of Garfield Games, Inc.

-2-

Playtesters: Peter Adkison, Mike Albert, Mikhail Chkhenkell, Steven E. Conard, Jeff Goldman, James E. Hays, Jr., Robin Herbert, Karen Hibbard, Dave Howell, Dave Juenemann, Howard Kahlenberg, Ruthy Kantorovitz, Nets "Moose Slippers" Katz, Anthony Kosky, Sarath Kumar, Ethan Lewis, George Lowe, Lisa Lowe, Beverly Marshall Saling, Jesper Myrfors, Katherine K. Porter, Ron Richardson, Rick Saling, Lisa Stevens, Jean Pierre Trias, Lily "Snow White and the Eight Dwarves" Wu League Playtesting and Design: Charlie Canto, Skaff Elias, Don Felice, Howard Kahlenberg, Ethan Lewis, Joel Mick, Chris Page, Barry Reich, Bill Rose, Elliot Segal, Jean Pierre Trias Special thanks to the late night DRL deck construction crew: Mike Albert, Skaff Elias, Ruthy Kantorovitz, Chris Page, Dave Pettey, Barry Reich Thanks to Dave Petty for showing how nasty decks could get, to Charlie Canto for showing how bizarre they could get, and to Skaff Elias for stress testing every aspect of the game. Thanks to Beanies for late night coffee. Thanks to Peter Adkison for recognizing good ideas, while having them himself, and for recognizing good people, while being one himself.

-3-

Introduction

Worzel felt the telltale prickling at the back of her neck; her domain was being challenged! *It's someone old*, she thought. *Someone I know... Thomil!* It had been a long time since he had challenged her. Quickly, she called her vassals into action. She would need much mana for this duel, much indeed.

The last time Worzel fought with Thomil, he had focused on the destructive magic of the mountains. It had been a close fight; she still saw in her nightmares the brigade of firebreathers that had pushed her to the brink of submission. Since then, Worzel had learned from a specialist in white magic that there were ways to protect herself from the raw force Thomil loved. Unfortunately, the white magician had been unwilling to part with the knowledge in exchange for her offered artifact; she had been forced to coerce it out of him in other, more violent ways. It took a while, but

We use cookies on this site to personalize content and ads, provide social media features and analyze web traffic. By clicking YES, you are consenting for us to set cookies.

[\(Learn more about cookies\)](#) No, give me more info

OK, I agree

No, thanks



the ether were preventing her from making the necessary psychic bonds to any of those lands. She had precious little to draw on in the first place,

-4-

so it could take a while before she managed to get a link to the plains. *Just having the knowledge to protect yourself isn't enough, she thought. Well, let's see if I can't stall him with my friends of the forest in the meantime.*

Worzel resisted the temptation to invest herself in blue magic, in case the rumor that Thomil had taken to raising serpents had any truth. Now she began to regret the loss of the Glasses of Urza, which might have given her some clue where the focus of his attack would be.

Thomil countered her creatures with a legion of undead. *Black magic, she thought. Thomil! I wouldn't have expected that from you.* Thomil had always enjoyed displays of pure power, but she had regarded him as a relatively clean fighter. *At least, cleaner than most.*

A sudden sense of horror came over Worzel as she felt a large drain on the mana plane— an *enormous* drain, accompanied by a stink of sulfur and the grave. Something big was coming.

Learned some new tricks since we last met, eh? muttered Worzel, under her breath. *Well, so have I, dear Thomil, so have I.*

It was going to be a tough fight.

-5-

Playing Your First Game

You've just bought your first two decks of *Magic: The Gathering*, and you're ready to play. You should probably read through the rules first, and then come back to this page. Most of the basic information you need to play the game is right here. Page numbers in parentheses tell you where to go for more information on each topic.

You begin the game by shuffling your deck. Then, cut your opponent's deck, and turn over the top card as ante (p.7). Draw seven cards from your own deck for your hand, and determine who goes first (p. 7).

We use cookies on this site to personalize content and ads, provide social media features and analyze web traffic. By clicking YES, you are consenting for us to set cookies.

[\(Learn more about cookies\)](#) No, give me more info

OK, I agree

No, thanks



Now, see if you can play any other cards in your hand. Compare the casting cost (p.14) to the mana you can draw from your lands in play (p.13). If you can play an appropriate card, tap your land (pp.9-10) and put the card you're casting onto the table.

Generally, it's a good idea to summon creatures (p.21) as soon as you can. Once you summon a creature, you have to wait a turn before you can attack with it. You can also play any artifacts (pp.16-17), enchantments (pp.17-18), instants, interrupts, or sorceries (all p.19).

-4-

If you can cast a spell, you're doing well, If you can't, that's okay, too. It usually takes a few turns before you have enough mana to do anything. Meanwhile, you should figure out whether you need to discard (p.11). Then announce the end of your turn, and let your opponent have a go.

Remember to untap any tapped cards at the start of your next turn. After you do that, perform any upkeep (p.11), and draw a card.

If you managed to summon a creature last turn, you can now attack with it. To do this, tap the card and announce your attack. Your opponent must then decide whether and how to block your attacker (pp.24-25). Next, either or both of you may use fast effects (p.25). After all announcements have been made and all fast effects have been cast, damage is dealt (p.26). Any creatures that were damaged (p.23) and defeated should be placed into the graveyard (p.8). Keep track of any damage suffered by you or your opponent. If you are the first to reduce your opponent's life points from 20 to 0, you win!

Remember, *Magic* is a game of action and reaction, planning and improvisation. But in the beginning, it's simply a matter of doing what you can. You'll probably have to play through a duel or two before you get the hang of it. Once you figure it out, though, you'll see that the rules are simple; it's the interactions between cards that are complex and interesting.

-5-

Game Description

We use cookies on this site to personalize content and ads, provide social media features and analyze web traffic. By clicking YES, you are consenting for us to set cookies.

[\(Learn more about cookies\)](#) No, give me more info

OK, I agree

No, thanks



strengths with which you can barter between games. Sometimes winning a duel can be a lot less profitable than a successful trading session, and it is always more dangerous! Be especially on your guard when playing new opponents. They will likely have spells and artifacts you have never seen before, and they will certainly have unique deck mixes and styles of play. Also, watch out for old rivals -- anyone can have a magical encounter with a stranger and pick up some new surprises. No matter who your opponent is, never forget the possibility of learning a trick or two with the same old cards.

Equipment

To play, you need two decks of at least forty *Magic* cards each and at least twenty counters for each person. These counters represent life points. They can be pennies, poker chips, or whatever is convenient you can even keep track of life points on paper if you want to. It's also best to have a large, flat playing area on which to lay out the cards.

-6-

The Duel

One complete game of *Magic* is called a *duel*. A *set* is won by the first player to win three duels. A *match* is the best two of three sets. Players should agree before starting whether they are fighting a single duel, a set, a match, or some other competition. During the course of a single competition, players may never add or subtract any cards from their decks except those won or lost in the ante.

Setting Up

First, shuffle your deck thoroughly and cut your rival's deck. You may also ask to shuffle your rival's deck if you wish. Turn the top card of your rival's deck face up and have your rival do the same with yours. Set the turned-up cards aside. They will be the ante, which the winner of the duel will keep. Take twenty counters to represent the twenty points you begin the duel with. Your life will go up and down during the course of a duel, and you may end up with more than 20 points—if you're lucky.

Draw the top seven cards of your deck to form your hand, and set the remaining cards aside, face down, as your library. The loser of the previous game takes the first

We use cookies on this site to personalize content and ads, provide social media features and analyze web traffic. By clicking YES, you are consenting for us to set cookies.

[\(Learn more about cookies\)](#) No, give me more info

OK, I agree

No, thanks

Explore Litigation Insights

Docket Alarm provides insights to develop a more informed litigation strategy and the peace of mind of knowing you're on top of things.

Real-Time Litigation Alerts



Keep your litigation team up-to-date with **real-time alerts** and advanced team management tools built for the enterprise, all while greatly reducing PACER spend.

Our comprehensive service means we can handle Federal, State, and Administrative courts across the country.

Advanced Docket Research



With over 230 million records, Docket Alarm's cloud-native docket research platform finds what other services can't. Coverage includes Federal, State, plus PTAB, TTAB, ITC and NLRB decisions, all in one place.

Identify arguments that have been successful in the past with full text, pinpoint searching. Link to case law cited within any court document via Fastcase.

Analytics At Your Fingertips



Learn what happened the last time a particular judge, opposing counsel or company faced cases similar to yours.

Advanced out-of-the-box PTAB and TTAB analytics are always at your fingertips.

API

Docket Alarm offers a powerful API (application programming interface) to developers that want to integrate case filings into their apps.

LAW FIRMS

Build custom dashboards for your attorneys and clients with live data direct from the court.

Automate many repetitive legal tasks like conflict checks, document management, and marketing.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Litigation and bankruptcy checks for companies and debtors.

E-DISCOVERY AND LEGAL VENDORS

Sync your system to PACER to automate legal marketing.