



Rulebook RULEBOOK

ver 6.0



Welcome to Arakiel

A fantastical realm where rival factions clash over territories to assert their faction's dominance. In this game, you take control of your Commander and their army, manage your Resources, and engage with your opponent by lowering their Commander's Health Points to 0!

This official rulebook is built to help you understand how to play the game if you're new to it. Knowing the rules will allow you to come up with the best strategies, so keep it in hand for your first couple of games.

You can also visit
www.soulmasterstcg.com



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1. Getting Started



Factions

Getting
Started

Soul Masters TCG features a wide variety of Factions that represent the army of your chosen Commander and nation. Factions determine which cards are available for deck-building and which can be played by your Commander.



Valkyrian



Wolven



Vampyrian

The Mercenary faction is a special group of cards that can be used with any Commander, but their inclusion is limited by your Commander's Mercenary Limit, which is located next to the Commander's health.



Mercenary

The Wanderer faction is a special group of cards that can be used with any Commander, following the same restrictions as any non-Mercenary card. These cards typically don't benefit from Commander-specific effects or support, sacrificing power and synergy for greater flexibility and unique Skills.



Wanderer



Rarities

Getting
Started

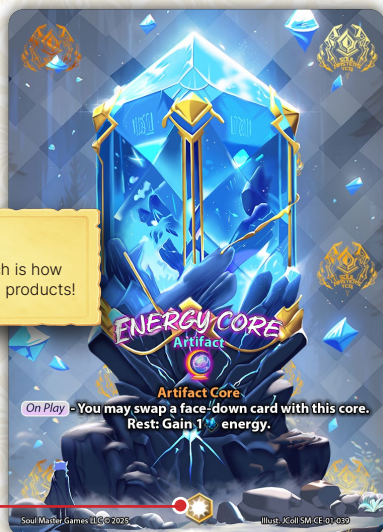
Each card in the Soul Masters TCG has a rarity, denoted by a symbol on the card. This rarity symbol represents how rarely the card appears in various sealed Soul Masters TCG products, and also limits the number of copies you can include in your Main Deck.

Note that these rarity limits only apply to cards in the Main Deck. You do not need to count cards in the Reserve and Resource Decks.



Rarity

Each card has a rarity which is how rare it is to get from sealed products!



Common

Maximum of 3 copies per card name in your deck



Uncommon

Maximum of 3 copies per card name in your deck



Rare

Maximum of 3 copies per card name in your deck



Epic

Maximum of 2 copies per card name in your deck



Legendary

Maximum of 1 copy per card name in your deck



Common

Include any number, up to the Core Energy limit specified by your Commander.



Uncommon

Maximum of 3 copies per card name in your deck



Rare

Maximum of 3 copies per card name in your deck



Epic

Maximum of 2 copies per card name in your deck



Legendary

Maximum of 1 copy per card name in your deck



Deck Building

Getting
Started

The first thing you need to do when playing the Soul Masters TCG is decide which Commander you'd like to play! This also influences the cards you can have in your Main Deck. To play the game, you'll need...



1 Base form Commander card and its Evolutions

These cards have red backs. Make sure the base form Commander card's name matches the evolution cards' names!



Main Deck (50 cards)

Cards for your main deck have black backs. Your deck may only contain cards from your Commander's faction unless they are from the Mercenary and/or Wanderers faction. It must include exactly 25 Unit cards. You may use Mercenary Units to meet or exceed this requirement, up to the Mercenary limit defined by your Commander.



The remaining 25 cards may include any combination of Spells, Abilities, or Mercenaries. This also must include a number of Artifact Core cards equal to the amount specified by your Commander's Core Energy denoted by the number in the blue hexagon.





Reserve & Resource Decks

Getting Started

In addition to your Commander and Main Deck, you'll need an 8-card Reserve Deck and a Resource Deck.



Reserve Deck (8 cards)

These cards have orange backs. Your Reserve Deck must contain the required number of cards for each Reserve subtype. Reserve cards cannot be countered by cards from your Main Deck!

Note

For non-tournament play, you may use 5 Reserves consisting of 1 Weapon, 1 Armor, 1 Battlefield, and 2 Feats.



2 Weapons

Weapon cards generally provide a damage bonus



2 Armors

Armor cards generally provide a defensive bonus



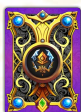
2 Battlefields

Battlefield cards generally provide an advantage to certain Faction subtypes



2 Feats

Feat cards are powerful Spells and Abilities that can change the tide of battle. They bypass card effects that prevent the card from being targeted by other effects, such as Resistance.



Resource Deck

These cards have purple backs. A smaller deck made up of a number of cards determined by your Commander. Commander-specific Resources must be included in the amount specified by your Commander.

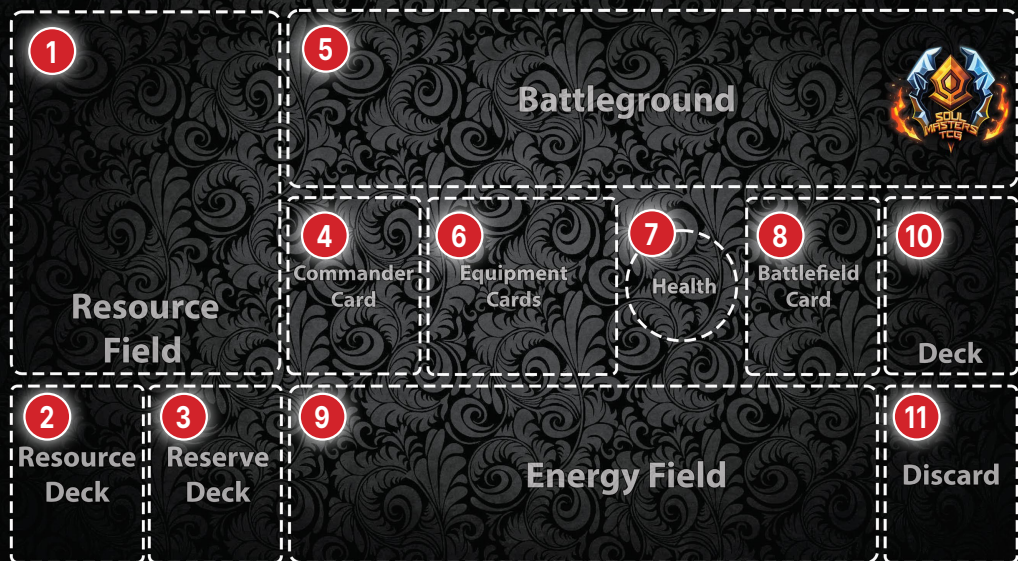




Gameplay Area

Getting
Started

The gameplay area helps organize your cards during gameplay.



1 Resource Field
Resource cards are placed here when generated.

2 Resource Deck Zone
Place your Resource cards face-up here; this is also where you generate Resources from.

3 Reserve Deck Zone
Place your Reserve cards here face-down.

4 Commander Zone
Place your Commander cards here.

5 Battleground Zone
Unit cards are placed here. A maximum of 5 Units can be in play at a time.

6 Equipment Zone
Equipment cards are placed here when played.

7 Health Chip Zone
Track your Commander's health here using health chips.

8 Battlefield Zone
Battlefield cards are placed here when played.

9 Energy Field
Place cards you plan to use as Energy here, face-down. Your Artifact Cores are also placed here, face-up or face-down, as generic Energy.

10 Deck Zone
This is where your Main Deck is placed.

11 Discard Zone
Cards that have been played or K.O'd Units are placed here. Cards are arranged in the order they arrive, and their order cannot normally be changed.



2. Card Types



Commander Cards

Card Types

Commanders are your chosen champions tasked with defeating the opposing player. Commander cards share some traits with Unit cards but possess the Conversion trait instead of Shield Energy.

They can convert Energy to Resources by paying the associated cost from the Energy Field to generate one Resource from the Resource Deck. The amount of Energy required varies depending on the Commander and their evolution stage.

Learn about evolutions on the next page!

Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Evolution Stage

Indicates the Commander's form and/or evolution stage.

Attack

The card's Attack Power. Typically, only Commanders and Units have an Attack value.

Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Shield

The number of cards a player can discard to use as Shields.

Resource Energy

This is the number of cards you must include in your Resource Deck. Each Commander has their own unique Resource—also called Faction Resources—such as Rage or Focus.

Armor

Reduces all instances of damage taken by the value determined (not all cards have armor).

Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Core Energy

This is the number of Artifact Cores you MUST include in your deck. It also determines the maximum number of cards you can place as Energy in the Energy Field.

Conversion Rate

This is the number of cards in the Energy Field a player can Rest to generate Resources. This can be done during either player's turn at Ability speed.

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Conjure

The amount of Resources generated when declaring an attack.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.

Health

This is the amount of Health on the card. When a card's Health is reduced to 0, it is KO'd. If possible, it then evolves into its next stage.

Mercenary Units

You may include up to this number of Mercenary Units in your deck.





Commander Evolution

Card Types

When you defeat a Commander, it evolves into its next stage. If the defeated Commander has no further evolutions, the game ends! Typically, Commanders have a maximum of two evolutions.

You can activate your Commander's conversion Ability during either player's turn at Ability speed. Note that the Energy cost changes with each evolution stage of the Commander.

Base form

Keshi's base form at the start of the game.



Evolution 1

When Keshi reaches 0 Health, she evolves!

Note

When your Commander evolves, draw 1 card and generate 1 Resource.



Evolution 2

When Keshi's evolution reaches 0 health she evolves into her final evolution.

Note

If your Commander evolves during combat due to a separate damage source, the Combat Step does not end, and the attack still continues toward the target (e.g., the Commander's next evolution).





Unit Cards

Card Types

Unit cards represent the Commander's loyal soldiers, led into battle. To play a Unit, Rest the required amount of Energy and play it from your hand onto the Battleground.

Unit cards in your hand can also be discarded to serve as Shield Energy, preventing damage to your Commander or other Units on the Battleground. The amount of damage blocked is determined by the card's Shield Energy value.

Units can only be played during your turn outside of combat and cannot attack the same turn they are summoned, unless otherwise specified. You may have a maximum of 5 Units on the Battleground at any time.

Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Faction Subtype

Indicates the army, clan, or guild the card belongs to.

Attack

The card's Attack Power. Typically, only Commanders and Units have an Attack value.

Casting Cost / Card Type

The amount of Energy required to cast the card.



Shield

The number of cards a player can discard to use as Shields.

Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.

Shield Energy

The amount of Shield Energy a card provides when discarded as a Shield. Each Shield Energy prevents 1 damage.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.

Health

This is the amount of Health on the card. When a Unit's Health is reduced to 0, it is K.O'd.





Spell cards represent the magical incantations conjured by your Commander. They can be discarded from your hand to serve as Shield Energy, preventing damage to your Commander or Units on the Battleground. The amount of damage prevented is determined by the card's Shield Energy value.

Spells can only be played while the stack is empty, outside of combat and you have priority during your Main Phase. Some spells remain on the play area (Hex) and can be activated later. Spell cards with the Unit attribute do not count toward your 25-Unit limit when deck building.

Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Specialization

These cards can only be played by the specified Commander.

Casting Cost / Card Type

The amount of Energy required to cast the card.

Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Shield Energy

The amount of Shield Energy a card provides when discarded as a Shield. Each Shield Energy prevents 1 damage.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.





Ability Cards

Card Types

Ability cards represent your Commander's unique prowess. They can be discarded from your hand to serve as Shield Energy, preventing damage to your Commander or other Units on the field. The amount of damage blocked is determined by the card's Shield Energy value.

Ability cards can be played at any time you have priority, including during your opponent's turn or in response to other Objects in the stack. However, they cannot be played during either player's Upkeep Phase.

Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Specialization

These cards can only be played by the specified Commander.

Casting Cost / Card Type

The amount of Energy required to cast the card.

Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Shield Energy

The amount of Shield Energy a card provides when discarded as a Shield. Each Shield Energy prevents 1 damage.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.





Artifact Core Cards

Card Types

Artifact Core cards allow you to retrieve face-down cards from the Energy Field back into your hand. When replacing a face-down card with an Artifact Core (when played face-up), the Core assumes the same position as the card it replaces. For example, if you swap a Rested Energy card for an Artifact Core, the Artifact Core enters the field Rested as well.

Artifact Cores can also be played directly into the Energy Field to generate Energy. They may be played face-up or face-down (as generic Energy, without retrieving a card).

If you have no available slots in the Energy Field—due to already controlling the maximum amount of Energy allowed by your Commander—you may still play an Artifact Core from your hand by using its *On Play* effect to swap it with a face-down card in the Energy Field.

Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Faction Subtype

Indicates the army, clan, or guild the card belongs to.

Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Card Rules Text

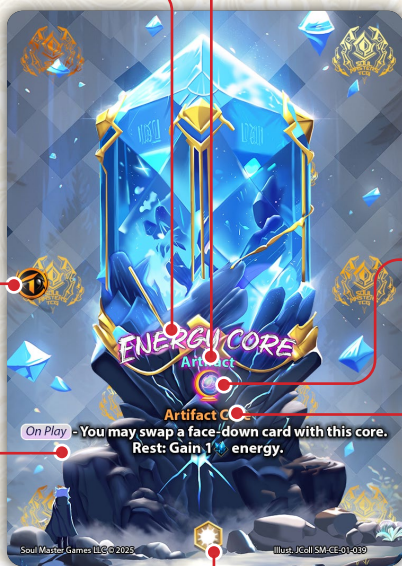
Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.



Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.



Artifact Golem Cards

Card Types

Artifact Golem cards function as Artifact Cores, but they may only be played to the Energy Field—never directly to the Battleground. However, they can be moved to the Battleground by specific card effects that allow it.

When an Artifact Golem is moved from the Energy Field to the Battleground, it is classified as a Unit. At that point:

- It loses its Energy Generation Skill.
- It becomes targetable by card effects that target Units.

In summary, Artifact Golems:

- Can only be played into the Energy Field.
- Can become Units only via card effects that permit movement to the Battleground.
- Function as full Units once moved, including being targetable and losing their Core functionality.

Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Faction Subtype

Indicates the army, clan, or guild the card belongs to.

Attack

The card's Attack Power. Typically, only Commanders and Units have an Attack value.

Casting Cost / Card Type

The amount of Energy required to cast the card.

Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Shield Energy

The amount of Shield Energy a card provides when discarded as a Shield. Each Shield Energy prevents 1 damage.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.

Shield

The number of cards a player can discard to use as Shields.

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.

Health

This is the amount of Health on the card. When a Unit's Health is reduced to 0, it is K.O'd.





Mercenary Cards

Card Types

Mercenary Units can be used to meet the 25-Unit requirement in your deck, or to bypass this limit depending on the Mercenary limit set by your Commander.

For example, if you only include 23 Units from your Commander's faction, you can add 2 Mercenary Units to meet the 25-Unit minimum. Alternatively, if you already have 25 faction Units, you may still add Mercenary Units to go beyond the limit—as long as you do not exceed the allowed Mercenary limit.

E.g., with Keshi, if the Mercenary limit is 2, you could run 25 faction Units and 2 Mercenary Units for a total of 27 Units.



Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Faction Subtype

Indicates the army, clan, or guild the card belongs to.

Attack

The card's Attack Power. Typically, only Commanders and Units have an Attack value.

Casting Cost / Card Type

The amount of Energy required to cast the card.



Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)

Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.

Shield Energy

The amount of Shield Energy a card provides when discarded as a Shield. Each Shield Energy prevents 1 damage.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.

Shield

The number of cards a player can discard to use as Shields.

Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.

Health

This is the amount of Health on the card. When a Unit's Health is reduced to 0, it is K.O'd.





Reserve Cards

Card Types

Reserve cards, identified by the red icon, can be cast from your Reserve Deck during your turn. To cast a Reserve card, pay its cost by discarding the required amount of generated Resource from your Resource Field back to the Resource Deck. You may play only one Reserve card per turn, and they cannot be played during your first turn.

Reserve Weapons, Armors, and Equipment cards can only target cards on the controller's side of the field, unless otherwise stated (e.g., 'Target enemy Unit' or 'Target enemy Commander').



Card Name

Every card needs a name!

Faction Subtype

Indicates the army, clan, or guild the card belongs to.

Casting Cost / Card Type

The amount of Energy required to cast the card.



Edition Mark

1st Edition Symbol (Unlimited editions have no symbol)



Card Rules Text

Card effects, triggers, and/or special traits are displayed here.



Faction

This symbol represents the faction associated with the card.

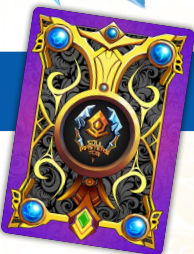
Attributes

These are the special traits a card possesses.

Rarity

Card rarity symbol and color.





Resource Cards

Card Types

Resource cards are used to pay the costs of card Skills and casting Reserve cards. Resources are generated into the Resource Field by your Commander—typically through attacking (Conjure), casting a Spell, Ability, or as otherwise specified on the card.

Resources can be generated, spent to pay for effects, and used in other ways at Ability speed during either player's turn.



Bleed

Vampyrian Commanders use Bleed as a Resource.



Rage

Wolven Commanders use Rage as a Resource.



Focus

Valkyrian Commanders use Focus as a Resource.

...more Resources to come!



3. Playing The Game



Getting Started

Playing The Game

These are the steps to prepare to play the game. Make sure you have all of the supplementary items you may need, such as dice, coins, or counters.

- 1 Greet your opponent. Shuffle your Deck, present it for your opponent to cut, then cut theirs in return. Place your Deck in the Deck Area. Handle your opponent's cards with care.



- 2 Place your Main Deck in the Deck Area.



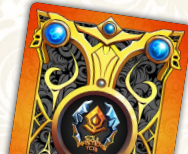
- 3 Place your Resource deck in the Resource Area face-down.



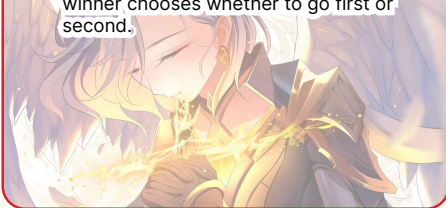
- 4 Place your Commander card and its Evolutions in the Commander Area face-up.



- 5 Place your Equipment, Battlefield, and Feat cards face-down in the Reserve area.



- 6 Decide who goes first by rolling a die, flipping a coin, or another method. The winner chooses whether to go first or second.



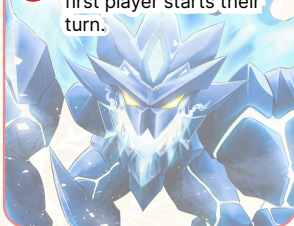
- 7 Draw 5 cards from your deck.



- 8 Each player may return any number of cards from their hand to the bottom of their Deck, then draw the same number of cards from the Main Deck. Shuffle and cut the deck afterward. This option can only be used once. This is known as the Mulligan.



- 9 The game begins. The first player starts their turn.



Card text takes precedence over rulebook text when there is a conflict.



How to Play

Playing The Game

These are the steps to prepare to play the game. Make sure you have all of the supplementary items you may need, such as dice, coins, or counters.

Victory Conditions

The game ends immediately when a player wins or when the game results in a draw. These are the various conditions to win the game:

Your opponent's last Commander's Health Points reach 0.

Your opponent cannot draw a card when required from their Main Deck.

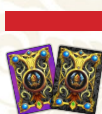
You win by fulfilling a card's specific conditional effect.

Commander Evolution

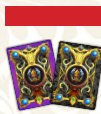
When a Commander's Health reaches 0, it evolves to its next stage. When this happens, the controlling player generates 1 Resource card and draws 1 card from the Main Deck. Commanders have a base form and up to two evolutions, called Evol. 1 and Evol. 2.



0 Health



0 Health



Card Positions

Units, Reserve, and Artifact Core cards are normally cast in the Ready state unless stated otherwise. When you perform an action—such as attacking or using Defender to intercept—rotate the cards sideways 90° to show they are Rested and have completed their action. During the Upkeep Phase, all Rested cards return to the Ready state if able. Some conditions, such as Shock, may prevent cards from becoming Ready.



Ready



Rested

Playing Costs

To cast Spells, Abilities, or summon Units, you must pay the casting cost by Resting the required amount of Energy from the Energy Field. When you play a Reserve card or activate a card's effect, pay its cost by discarding the specified number of Resource cards from the Resource Field and returning them to the Resource Deck. When casting a card, you must have valid targets to resolve it. You can't cast a card unless you have valid targets for all of its required choices. Damage must be present in the stack in order to cast a card that prevents damage, for example.



Game Flow

Playing The Game

A game progresses in a series of turns which are divided into Phases.

1 Initial Setup

Set up the game as referenced on "Setting up the Game" on pg. 19.

2 1st Player's turn

Whomever is going first begins their turn.

A Upkeep Phase

This is the first phase of the turn! All Rested cards become Ready, and any Upkeep triggers and effects activate during this phase.

B Draw Phase

Draw 2 cards.

C Main Phase

The Main Phase is where the player plays most of their cards.

D Combat Step

This is a step that happens each time you declare an attack with a Unit or Commander during the Main Phase where players do battle!

E End Phase

This is the last Phase of a turn.

3 2nd Player's turn

Now the other player begins their turn. The game flow repeats.



Phases

Playing The Game

Upkeep Phase

This is the first Phase of the turn. The active player resets all Rested cards back to their Ready state and pays any upkeep costs. During this Phase, you may choose the order in which to resolve each upkeep trigger and effect. Neither player may activate or play cards during this Phase unless specifically allowed. The player who goes first skips this Phase since no cards or upkeep costs apply yet.

Draw Phase

The active player draws 2 cards from their Deck and adds them to their hand. If a player cannot draw a card because their Deck is empty, they lose the game.

Main Phase

During the Main Phase, the player performs most actions in any order, with some restrictions (e.g., no attacking on the first turn):

- **Place Energy Cards**

The active player may place up to 2 cards from their hand into the Energy Field. Artifact Core cards are placed face-up or face-down, while non-Artifact Core cards are placed face-down. When playing an Artifact Core from the hand, the player may choose to replace one of their face-down Energy cards with the Artifact Core. The player who goes first may only place 1 Energy card on their first turn.

- **Play Reserve Cards**

You may play up to 1 card from your Reserve Deck by paying its Resource cost. Reserve cards cannot be played on either player's first turn.

- **Cast Unit Cards**

Cast Unit cards from your hand to the Battleground by paying their cost, Resting the required Energy cards, and placing the Unit in the Ready state. Units cannot attack the turn they are cast unless a card effect states otherwise. You may have no more than 5 Units on the Battleground.

- **Cast Ability and Spell Cards**

Cast Ability and Spell cards by paying their costs and placing them in the Field Area. Resolve their effects, then place them in the Discard Pile.

- **Use Activated Card Skills**

Use the Skills of cards in their Ready state, such as Commanders, Units, Reserves, and Artifact Core cards. Card Skills may be activated and/or triggered at Ability speed during either player's turn.

- **Enter Combat Step**

The Combat Step is the most complex part of the Main Phase and is explained on the following page.

**Learn about
the Combat
Step on the
next page!**

End Phase

This is the last Phase of the turn. During this Phase, either player may play Ability cards or activate Skills if allowed, before the turn ends. Any End of Turn effects are also resolved here. Once all cards and effects have been resolved, your turn ends, and your opponent's turn begins, following the same Phases outlined above.



Combat Step

Playing
The Game

Combat Step

This is where combat happens! Players can't perform this step on their respective first turns.

1 Attack Declaration Step

When the **active player** chooses a Ready Unit or Commander to attack with.

A Select a Unit or Commander

The **active player** declares an attack with a Ready Unit or Commander they control and **Rests** it.

B Select a target

Select one of your opponent's Rested Units or their Commander—regardless of whether the Commander is Ready or Rested—as the attack target.

C Place Attack Triggers on the Stack

Any "**When attacking**" or similar triggered effects from both players are placed on the stack.

1. The **active player** places their triggers on the stack in any order they choose.
2. The **non-active player** then places their triggers on top of the stack, also in the order they choose.
3. After all triggers are placed, the game proceeds to the **Pre-Defender Step**.



Continued
on next
page!



Combat Step (cont.)

Playing
The Game

2 Pre-Defender Step

During the Pre-Defender Step, both players may add an **Object** to the stack or pass (take no action).

A Active Player Has Priority

1. After all attack-related triggers are placed on the stack, the **active player** receives **priority first**.
2. The **active player** may choose to:
 - **Pass** (take no action), or
 - **Place one Object** onto the stack.
3. Priority transfers to the **non-active** player.
4. The **non-active** player may choose to:
 - **Pass** (take no action), or
 - **Place one Object** onto the stack.

B Automatic Priority Transfer

- Once a player **either places one Object on the stack or passes, priority automatically transfers** to the other player.
- This sequence repeats until both players pass in succession, at which point the top **Object** on the stack begins to resolve.
- After an **Object** resolves, players may respond starting with the **active player**.
- If you resolve an effect that **negates** the incoming attack or K.O.'s the attacking or defending Unit, the Combat Step ends after the stack resolves, and then you return to the Main Phase.
- Once the stack is empty and both players pass in succession, the game proceeds to the Defender Step.



Continued
on next
page!



Combat Step (cont.)

Playing
The Game

3 Defender Step

During the Defender Step, the non-active player has full priority. Each Object resolves immediately upon activation and does **not** use the stack. **Priority does not transfer when an Object resolves** — the non-active player retains full control throughout this step. You can respond by...

A Intercepting The Attack

Units with the **Defender Keyword Skill** may be activated during this step.

B Activating Skills

- Only Skills with the **Defender** activation bubble or Units with the **Defender Keyword Skill** may be activated during this step.
- If you resolve an effect that **negates** the incoming attack, the Combat Step ends, and then you return to the Main Phase.

C You Act Until Passing

After you resolve your Skills and finish acting during the Defender Step, you must explicitly end the step. This advances the game to the Post-Defender Step.



Continued
on next
page!



Combat Step (cont.)

Playing
The Game

4 Post-Defender Step

During the Post-Defender Step, both players may add an **Object** to the stack or pass (take no action).

A Active Player Has Priority

1. After the Defender Step ends, the **active player** receives **priority first**.
2. The **active player** may choose to:
 - **Pass** (take no action), or
 - **Place one Object** onto the stack.
3. Priority transfers to the **non-active** player.
4. The **non-active** player may choose to:
 - **Pass** (take no action), or
 - **Place one Object** onto the stack.

B Automatic Priority Transfer

- Once a player **either places one Object on the stack or passes, priority automatically transfers** to the other player.
- This sequence repeats until both players pass in succession, at which point the top **Object** on the stack begins to resolve.
- After an **Object** resolves, players may respond starting with the **active player**.
- If you resolve an effect that **negates** the incoming attack or K.O.'s the attacking or defending Unit, the Combat Step ends after the stack resolves, and then you return to the Main Phase.
- Once the stack is empty and both players pass in succession, the game proceeds to the Damage Calculation / Resolution Step.

Continued
on next
page!



Combat Step (cont.)

Playing
The Game

5 Damage Calculation / Resolution Step

Combat damage is now calculated and resolved. Shield Energy and other modifiers are applied, and final damage is assigned. No further actions may be taken during this step.

A1 When a Commander is Attacked

- Damage is subtracted from the Commander's current Health.
- If the damage exceeds their remaining Health, any **excess damage is lost**, and the Commander **advances to its next Evolution** (this does not end the turn).
- If the Commander has no remaining Evolutions, the **game ends**.

A2 When a Unit is Attacked

- If the Attack is equal to or greater than the target's Health, the Unit is K.O'd and sent to the Discard Pile.
- If the Attack is less than the target's Health, the Unit blocks the attack and takes no damage.

B After the damage is calculate and resolved

The game proceeds to the End Of Combat Step.



Continued
on next
page!



Combat Step (cont.)

Playing
The Game

6 End of Combat Step

During the End of Combat Step, any effects that trigger at the end of combat—or similar triggered effects—are placed onto the stack. After all triggers have been placed, both players may add an Object to the stack or pass (take no action). Once the stack has fully resolved and both players pass in succession, the game returns to the Main Phase.

A Place Triggers on the Stack

Any **On K.O.** or similar triggered effects from both players are placed on the stack.

1. The **active player** places their triggers on the stack in any order they choose.
2. The **non-active player** then places their triggers on top of the stack, also in the order they choose.

B Active Player Has Priority

1. After all triggers are placed on the stack, the **active player** receives **priority first**.
2. The **active player** may choose to:
 - **Pass** (take no action), or
 - **Place one Object** onto the stack.
3. Priority transfers to the **non-active** player.
4. The **non-active** player may choose to:
 - **Pass** (take no action), or
 - **Place one Object** onto the stack.

C Automatic Priority Transfer

- Once a player **either places one Object on the stack or passes, priority automatically transfers** to the other player.
- This sequence repeats until both players pass in succession, at which point the top **Object** on the stack begins to resolve.
- After an **Object** resolves, players may respond starting with the **active player**.
- Once the stack is empty and both players pass in succession, the game proceeds to the Main Phase.

D Return To Main Phase

Once the stack has resolved, the active player returns to their Main Phase and continues playing until they end their turn.





4. Additional Rules



Damage Types: Combat vs. Non-Combat

Additional Rules

Damage in the game is divided into two categories: **Combat Damage** and **Non-Combat Damage**. Each type follows its own rules for how damage is applied.

Combat Damage

Commander

- When a Commander is dealt combat damage, that damage is subtracted from their **Health**.
- If a Commander evolves after taking combat damage, any **excess damage is cleared** and does not carry over.

Unit

When a Unit is dealt combat damage:

- **If damage is lower than the Unit's Health:** The Unit blocks the attack and takes no damage.
- **If damage is equal to or greater than the Unit's Health:** The Unit is **K.O'd** and sent to the Discard.

Note

Combat and non-combat damage can be prevented by Shield Energy or other damage-prevention effects.

Note

Combat damage can be modified during the Combat Step. The final damage amount is locked in during the **Damage Calculation Step** before it is applied.

Non-Combat Damage

Commander

- When a Commander is dealt non-combat damage, it is subtracted instantly from their **Health**, even during combat.
- If a Commander evolves after taking non-combat damage, any **excess damage is cleared** and does not carry over, even during combat.

Unit

When a Unit is dealt non-combat damage:

- **If damage is lower than the Unit's Health:** The Unit is **not K.O'd**. The Unit's Health immediately resets to its full value, even during combat.
- **If damage is equal to or greater than the Unit's Health:** The Unit is **K.O'd** and sent to the Discard, even during combat.

Additional Rules for Non-Combat Damage

- Non-combat damage does **not accumulate over time** or across the stack.
- Non-combat damage is an immediate effect (**an instant damage source**).
- It is applied at the moment the source resolves on the stack.
- You normally cannot modify non-combat damage. If an effect specifies otherwise, follow its rules text.

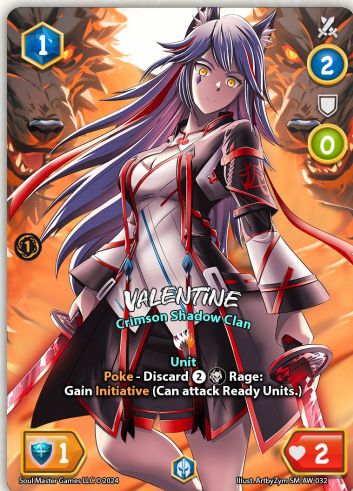


Types of Skills

Additional
Rules

Skills are special effects that cards can have, influencing gameplay in a variety of ways. Here's a summary of the main types of Skills:

Activated Skills



How they work

You activate them by paying the cost. Activate only if you choose to.

Format on card

Cost: Activated Skill Effect

Example

Discard 2 cards: Draw 2 cards.

Tip

Look for a colon (:).

Triggered Skills



How they work

Automatically trigger when a specific event occurs. They may also include an activation cost, which is paid when the effect resolves. If you choose not to pay, the effect does not occur.

Format on card

Trigger condition, effect.

Example

Attacking Discard 2 cards: Draw 2 cards.

Tip

Common words are "When", "Whenever", "At".

Types of Skills (cont.)

Additional
Rules

Static Skills



How they work

Always "on" as long as the card is in the right zone.

Format on card

Effect is continuous, not triggered or activated.

Example

Target Unit or Commander gains +1 armor.

Keyword Skills



How they work

These are shorthand for commonly used rules.

Format on card

They can be static, triggered, or activated depending on the keyword.

Example

Taunt (When declaring attacks, opponents must target a Rested Unit with Taunt before choosing other valid targets. If the Unit with Taunt is Readied, this Restriction does not apply. Taunt Restricts target selection but does not compel your opponent to attack.)



Types of Skills (cont.)

Additional
Rules

Energy Generation Skills



How they work

A subset of activated or triggered Skills and/or effects that produce Energy.

Special Rule

Energy Generation Skills do not use the stack and resolve immediately when activated or triggered. Players cannot respond to Energy Generation Skills.

Example

Rest: Gain 1 Energy





Objects

Additional
Rules

An **Object** is any game element that exists in the game state or can be added to the stack. The following types of Objects can appear on the stack:

What uses the Stack

- **Units** (when cast)
- **Reserves** (when cast)
- **Spells** (when cast outside of combat, while the stack is empty, and you have priority during your Main Phase)
- **Abilities** (when cast anytime you have priority)
- **Skills** (all types)
- **Shield Energy** (in response to incoming damage)
- Other stackable effects as defined by card text or game rules.

Things that do not go on the stack (not Objects in this context):

- Playing a card to the Energy Field.
- **Energy Generation Skills** (they resolve immediately)
- Conjure Keyword Skill (it resolves immediately when declaring an attack)
- **Static Skills** (like Haste or Resistance — these are always “on” and don’t use the stack)
- Some **state-based actions** (e.g., a Unit getting K.O'd from lethal damage without an **On K.O.** trigger).

Objects may represent **permanent elements** (such as Units or Resources) or **temporary stack-based effects** (such as Skills or Shield Energy).

Not all Objects use the stack—only those specifically designed to resolve through stack timing.





The Stack

Additional Rules

The **Stack** is a game zone where **Objects** wait to resolve. It creates interactive gameplay by allowing players to respond to each other's actions before they take effect.

Think of the Stack like a pile: each new effect goes on top, and the Stack resolves in **last-in, first-out order**.

How it works

1. When a player casts a **Spell, Ability, Unit, Reserve**, a **Skill** activates or adds **Shield Energy** (to incoming damage), it goes on the Stack.
2. **As soon as a player adds one Object to the Stack (outside of Triggered Skills), priority immediately transfers to the other player.**
3. That player may respond by adding their own Object to the Stack. If they do, **priority returns** to the first player after their response.
4. If multiple players have simultaneous effects activating, the **active player** places their effects on the Stack first in any order, followed by the non-active player.
5. If both players pass (take no action) without adding anything new, the Stack resolves from **top to bottom** (last-in, first-out).
6. After each resolution, priority starts again with the **active player**.

Step-by-Step: After an Effect Resolves

1. **Effect Resolves**
The top item on the Stack resolves (e.g., damage dealt, card drawn, etc.).
2. **Priority Transfers**
The active player gains priority.
3. **Taking Action Transfers Priority**
If the active player adds any Objects to the Stack (outside of Triggered Skills) or passes (take no action), priority immediately transfers to the next player.
4. **Back-and-Forth Responses**
Each time a player responds with an Object, the other player gets a chance to respond in turn.
5. **Next Resolution**
If both players pass (take no action) in succession, the next item resolves.



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on next
page!



The Stack (cont.)

Additional
Rules

Stack Resolution Example

1. You cast a damage-dealing **Spell** → it goes on the Stack.
2. Your opponent responds with a **damage prevention Ability** → it goes on top of the Stack.
3. No further responses → the Stack begins to resolve:
 - First, your opponent's **Ability** resolves and prevents damage.
 - Both players pass (take no action).
 - Then, your original **Spell** resolves (but is now prevented).

Second Example

1. You cast a spell that draws 2 cards → goes on the Stack.
2. No one responds → the spell resolves; you draw 2 cards.
3. You regain priority → you cast another spell.
4. That new spell goes on the Stack → opponent now may respond.

Timing and Priority

- After any **Object** on the Stack resolves, the **active player** gets **priority** first.
- Players may respond by adding **Objects** before the next item resolves.
- If all players pass (take no action) in succession, the next **Object** resolves (or the game proceeds if the Stack is empty).

What Doesn't Use the Stack

Some automatic or passive game actions bypass the Stack entirely:

- Drawing a card during the Draw Phase
- Declaring attackers
- Paying costs
- Turning a **Nulled** face-down Unit face-up
- Resting a card from the Energy Field to generate Energy

These actions **cannot** be responded to.

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The Stack (cont.)

Additional
Rules

Rules to Remember

- You **can't respond** during an **Object's** resolution—only **after** it fully resolves.
- After each resolution, all players get a chance to respond.
- This system allows for dynamic, strategic responses.

Is there a “prompt” to respond to attackers after the stack is empty?

- ✓ **Yes** — after attackers are declared, **all players get priority before damage is dealt**, even if the stack is empty. This is the window where you can respond to attackers with an Object (like buffs, combat tricks, or removal Abilities).

If it's not combat damage, but a Spell that deals damage, is there a prompt or chance to respond before the damage is dealt?”

- ✓ **Yes** — before the Spell resolves
- ✗ **No** — after the damage is dealt (once the Spell resolves)



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The Stack (cont.)

Additional
Rules

What happens if an Object is removed from the Stack/Play Area due to an effect?

If an **Object** (a Unit, in this example) is K.O'd **while there are effects or triggers still on the stack**, the game handles it using the **stack-based resolution system & Last Known Information (LKI)**. Here's a breakdown of what happens:

1. The Stack Still Resolves Normally

Even if a Unit is K.O'd while its skills are on the stack:

- **The stack continues resolving in order**, top to bottom.
- Effects that reference that Unit will **only work if it's still on the battleground when they resolve**.

2. If the Object Was the Source of an Effect

If the Object (a Unit, in this example) **had an activated Skill or triggered Skill** on the stack, and then it is K.O'd before the Skill resolves:

- The Skill still resolves unless it specifically requires the Unit to be on the battleground when it resolves.
- For Example:
 - **"Rest: Deal 1 damage to target Unit or Commander"** — the damage still happens, even if the Unit dies in response.
 - **"Target Unit gains Haste until end of turn"** — the target still gains Haste, even if the source Unit is K.O'd.

3. If the Object Was the Target of an Effect

If the **Object** (a **Unit**, in this example) is **K.O'd before an effect targeting it resolves**, then:

- The effect **fizzles** (is countered by the game's rules) if it no longer has legal targets.
- If there are **multiple targets**, and one is still valid, it **partially resolves** for the valid targets.

4. Resolving an Effect with Multiple Parts

If the **Object** (a **Unit**, in this example) has the **triggered Skill**:

"When attacking, target unit gains +1 Attack until end of turn, and you draw a card."

- When the skill resolves, it checks whether its **target unit** is still a legal target.
- If the target is **valid**, it gets +1 Attack.
- If the target is **invalid** (e.g., K.O'd, Resistance, untargetable), that part **fails**.

Partial Resolution is Allowed

- If **one part** of the skill fails (e.g., invalid target), **other parts still happen** as long as the skill resolves.
- Drawing a card does **not** depend on the target being valid.

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The Stack (cont.)

Additional
Rules

5. K.O. Triggers

If the **Object** (a Unit, in this example) has an **"On K.O." trigger**:

- That **trigger goes on the stack** after the Unit is K.O'd, during the next time state-based actions are checked.
- It will resolve **after everything above it on the stack resolves**, in normal stack order.
- For Example (Using An **Attacking**) Trigger:

You control a Unit with this **Skill**: "**Attacking** Draw 2 cards."

You declare an attack and put the trigger on the stack then pass (take no action) when having Priority. Your opponent receives Priority and responds by casting Assassinate to K.O. the attacking Unit. Then, both players pass in succession (i.e., take no further actions), and the stack proceeds to resolve.

- The Unit is K.O'd.
- Its **attack trigger** is still on the stack and will resolve unless the effect requires it to be on the battleground (which it doesn't in this case).
- The 2 cards are still drawn when the trigger resolves.



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The Stack (cont.)

Additional
Rules

Empty Stack

Resolving the last object on the stack **does not automatically end the stack**. Here's what happens in more detail:

1. **Objects resolve one at a time, last in, first out (LIFO).**
2. After each object resolves, **all players get a round of priority.**
3. If **no player adds anything new** to the stack (like an Ability), and everyone passes (take no action), then the next Object resolves (if any).
4. If the **stack is empty** and everyone passes priority, then the game proceeds to the next **Step or Phase**.

To summarize:

- **No**, the stack **doesn't "end"** just because the last object resolves.
- But if the **stack is empty** and **no one does anything** when they get priority, then yes, the game moves forward.

Example:

- You cast a Spell.
- Your opponent responds with a Counterspell.
- You respond with an Ability that counters their Counterspell.
- All **Objects** resolve (yours first, then their Counterspell, then your original Spell).

Step-by-Step After the Last Stack Object Resolves:

1. The last object on the stack resolves and the stack is now empty.
2. The active player (AP) — the one whose turn it is — gets priority first.
3. That player can:
 - Add an Object to The Stack as a response
 - Do nothing (pass)
4. If the active player passes, priority transfers to the non-active player (NAP).
5. If the non-active player also passes, with an empty stack, then:
→ The game moves to the next Step or Phase of the turn.



If either player does something:

If either player adds something new to the stack (like an Ability or activates a Skill), then the stack starts filling again and resolves as usual — top-down, LIFO.



Important Clarification

- The stack doesn't "close" in a strict sense — it's just empty.
- Priority and passing are what determine whether the game advances.



Active Player, Non-Active Player

Additional Rules

APNAP stands for **Active Player, Non-Active Player**. It's a fundamental rule used to determine the order in which players make decisions or place triggered effects on the Stack—especially when multiple effects or choices happen simultaneously.

Definitions, Priority, and Timing

- The **Active Player** (AP)—the player whose turn it is—**receives priority first** during most steps and phases.
- The **Non-Active Player** (NAP)—everyone else, in turn order—acts after the Active Player.

This determines who acts first when adding **Objects** to the Stack—such as casting **Spells, Abilities**, using **Skills**, adding **Shield Energy**, or playing a **Unit** or **Reserve** (if applicable).

When APNAP Order Is Used

APNAP is applied:

- When **multiple triggered Skills** go on the Stack at the same time (e.g., during the upkeep, attack declaration, end phase, or when a Unit is K.O'd).
- When **multiple players** must make decisions simultaneously, such as choosing targets, discarding cards, and/or selecting effects.

How it works

1. The **Active Player** places all of their triggered effects on the Stack in the order they choose.
2. The **Non-Active Player(s)** then place their triggered effects on the Stack, in turn order.
3. Since the Stack resolves **last-in, first-out**, the **Non-Active Player's** effects resolve **before** the Active Player's.

Example

It's your opponent's turn. Both you and your opponent control a Unit with the Skill: "At the beginning of either player's End Phase, draw a card."

When the End Phase begins:

- Your opponent (Active Player) places their trigger on the Stack first.
- Then you (Non-Active Player) place your trigger on top of the Stack.
- Your trigger resolves **first**, since it was the last **added** to the Stack.

Why it matters

Understanding APNAP is important because it:

- Determines the order in which multiple effects resolve.
- Impacts how Skills interact, especially with timing-sensitive effects like **On K.O.** triggers or replacement effects.
- Ensures consistent and fair Stack resolution in multiplayer scenarios.
- Gives each player strategic control over the order of their own simultaneous effects.



What is Priority?

Additional Rules

Priority determines **who has the right to act**—to cast Spells, Abilities, activate Skills, add Shield Energy, play a Unit or Reserve (if applicable), or pass (take no action). It controls the flow of interaction between players and the order in which the Stack is built and resolved.

How Priority Works With the Stack

1. Adding to the Stack

When a player:

- Casts a **Spell** or **Ability**
- Uses a **Skill**
- Discards a card as **Shield Energy** (in response to incoming damage)
- Casts a **Unit** or **Reserve** (if applicable)

...it is placed on the **Stack**, and **priority automatically transfers** to the next player in turn order. This ensures all players have a chance to respond before resolution begins.

2. Passing Priority Back and Forth

Players take turns getting priority. Each time a player has priority, they may:

- Cast a **Spell** (outside of combat, while the stack is empty, and you have priority during your Main Phase)
- Cast an **Ability** (any time you have priority outside of the Upkeep Phase)
- Activate a **Skill**
- Discard a card as **Shield Energy** (in response to incoming damage)
- Cast a **Unit** or **Reserve** (if applicable)
- Or **pass** (take no action)

If a player passes, priority transfers to the next player. **When all players pass consecutively**, the top item on the Stack begins to resolve.

3. Resolving the Stack

- The Stack only resolves after all players pass (take no action) in succession without adding anything new.
- Once the topmost item resolves, priority returns to the Active Player, and the process begins again for any remaining Stack items.

Priority During Stack Resolution

You **cannot respond during** an effect's resolution—only **after** it finishes and priority is transferred again. Here's how it works:

- After each Object resolves, the Active Player (whose turn it is) receives priority first.
- Then priority transfers to the Non-Active Player in turn order.
- Players can now:
 - Cast a **Spell** (outside of combat, while the stack is empty, and you have priority during your Main Phase)
 - Cast an **Ability** (any time you have priority outside of the Upkeep Phase)
 - Activate a **Skill**
 - Discard a card as **Shield Energy** (in response to incoming damage)
 - Cast a **Unit** or **Reserve** (if applicable)
 - Or **pass** (take no action)

If all players pass priority again, **the next effect on the Stack** resolves.

Important

You cannot respond during an effect's resolution—only **after** it resolves, when players regain priority.



What is Priority? (cont.)

Additional
Rules

Triggered Skills and APNAP

If an effect causes a **Triggered Skill** (e.g., “when this Unit is K.O’d”) to activate, that Skill will be placed on the Stack **the next time someone would receive priority**. These triggers are ordered using **APNAP**:

- Active Player places their triggers first
- Non-Active Player follows in turn order

What Happens If a Player Doesn’t Act?

- A player may choose to pass when they receive priority.
- If all players pass consecutively, one of two things happens:
 - If the Stack contains effects → the top effect resolves.
 - If the Stack is empty → the game advances to the next Phase or Step.

Summary

- **Priority** controls who can take actions at any moment.
- Players alternate priority while building and resolving the Stack.
- **The Stack resolves only after all players pass (take no action) in sequence.**
- Once a Stack item resolves, priority begins again with the Active Player.
- This system ensures strategic back-and-forth responses, even with fast effects.





Shields

Additional Rules

Units and Commanders have a **Shield** value, which determines how many cards you may discard from your hand to generate **Shield Energy** in response to incoming damage.

How Shields Work

- A Unit or Commander's **Shield** is the number of cards you may discard **per damage source** to generate Shield Energy.
- Shields are not a one-time resource; they are available to use **separately** for **each individual damage source** during a damage sequence.
- You can choose to discard any number of cards up to the Shield limit for **each** incoming source of damage.



Shield

The number of cards a player can discard to use as Shields.

Example

1. Your Unit has **2 Shields**.
2. Your opponent attacks with a Unit (3 ATK) and adds a Skill to the stack that deals **1 instant damage**.
3. These are **two separate damage sources**.
4. You may discard up to **2 cards targeting the Skill**, and also discard up to **2 cards targeting the attacking Unit's damage** following APNAP and The Stack rulings.

Note

Shield Energy is generated (and added to The Stack as an **Object**) and assigned when you discard the cards, and it must **target a specific damage source**.

Clarification

- Shields do not limit the total number of cards you can discard during a turn—they only cap how much you can discard **per damage source** to generate Shield Energy.
- If a Unit or Commander has **0 Shields**, it cannot generate Shield Energy through discards, but may still benefit from **Damage Prevention** effects from Skills or Abilities.





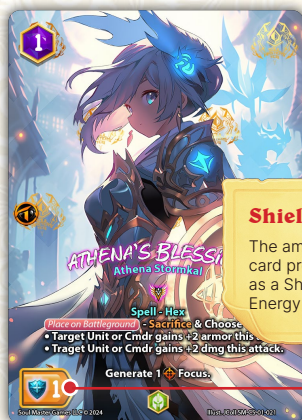
Shield Energy & Damage Prevention Effects

Additional Rules

Shield Energy and Damage Prevention effects are used to reduce incoming damage by targeting the **source** of that damage. These effects do not prevent damage universally; they only apply to the **specific damage source** they are declared against.

Shield Energy

- Shield Energy is generated by discarding cards as **Shields**.
- When declared, Shield Energy targets a **specific damage source**.
- Each instance of Shield Energy created by discarding a card is treated as a separate **Object** on the stack.
- Shield Energy is **accumulated** during the resolution of the stack and applied **during the damage calculation step**.
- Shield Energy only subtracts from the damage dealt by the targeted source.



Shield Energy

The amount of Shield Energy a card provides when discarded as a Shield. Each Shield Energy prevents 1 damage.

Shield Energy Timing Reminder

- Shield Energy must be added to the stack **before the last instant damage source effect resolves** if you want to prevent damage from that source.
- Once the stack is empty (especially after the Defender Step), and both players pass (take no action), combat damage is resolved immediately — you **cannot** respond or add new **Objects** after this point.

Damage Prevention Effects

- Damage Prevention effects function similarly to Shield Energy but are tracked separately.
- These effects are typically created by Abilities or Skills and also target a specific source of damage.
- Prevention effects accumulate during stack resolution and are tied to a specific damage source.
- Damage Prevention effects apply to any type of damage—whether incoming or outgoing.

Note

Damage Prevention effects apply to any type of damage—whether incoming or outgoing.

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Shield Energy & Damage Prevention Effects

Additional Rules

Important Clarification: Non-Damage Health Reduction

- Card effects that give a Unit or Commander **-1 Health** are not considered damage sources.
- These effects directly modify Health and **cannot be targeted or reduced** by Shield Energy or Damage Prevention effects.

Damage Calculation & Resolution

When the stack resolves and becomes empty, and both players pass in succession (take no action), combat damage is ready to be calculated:

1. Combat damage checks for any Shield Energy or Damage Prevention effects targeting it.
2. Shield Energy is subtracted from the source's damage.
3. Any remaining damage is further reduced by Damage Prevention effects, if applicable.
4. The final damage is dealt to the intended target.

Example:

- **Player A attacks** with a 3 ATK Unit.
- **Player A activates a Skill** (1 instant damage) → goes on the stack.
- **Player B responds** with Shield Energy targeting the Skill damage → also goes on the stack.
- **Players both pass** → stack resolves:
 - Shield Energy resolves.
 - **Players both pass** → stack resolves:
 - Skill resolves → 1 damage prevented.
- Now that the stack is empty, in this final round of priority, both players pass (take no action), so the game proceeds to combat damage calculation, ends the Combat Step, and returns to the Main Phase.

✗ Incorrect Play Timing

- Player B wants to now respond to the 3 damage attack. But it's too late!
- The game is already resolving damage — no stack can be created at this stage.

✓ Correct Play Timing

- To reduce the Unit's 3 ATK, Player B must add Shield Energy targeting the combat damage **during the final round of priority when the stack is empty**, and **before both players pass in succession**.
- Important: Once the stack is empty and both players pass (take no action), the game proceeds to combat damage calculation. At that point, it is **too late** to add Shield Energy to block or reduce the Unit's damage.
- This means Player B's last opportunity to respond with Shield Energy is **while the stack is empty**, during the final priority round. If they pass and the other player also passes, damage is calculated immediately afterward.



Searching for Cards

Additional
Rules

When a player searches their deck for a card, they must reveal the chosen card to confirm that the search was valid. Then, they shuffle their deck unless instructed otherwise by a card effect. If the card was not present while searching, it falls into the “failed to find” ruling.

You can fail to find a card if:

- The search is optional (e.g., “You may search your deck...”).
- The search instruction is for a card with specific characteristics (e.g., “search for a Unit card,” “an Ability or Spell card,” etc.)
- In these cases, even if the card is in your deck, you’re not obligated to reveal it—so you can legally “fail to find”.





Activation Bubbles

Additional Rules

An **Activation Bubble** is an identifier that specifies when during gameplay a skill can be activated or becomes available for activation. Activation Bubbles also define how a skill functions, ensuring consistency in when and how its effects are applied.

Attacked *Attacked*

This skill triggers when that card becomes the target of an attack during the Combat Step. Unless otherwise specified, this trigger occurs immediately when the attack is declared, before damage is assigned.

Attacking *Attacking*

Previously referred to as 'When attacking' on cards. This Skill triggers when you declare an attack with a Unit or Commander. You may choose to resolve it if there is a valid target for the effect. This typically initiates a stack before the Defender Step.

Aura *Aura*

A continuous effect that persists for its stated duration. Unlike one-time effects, Aura effects apply not only to objects that were present when the effect began, but also to any new objects that meet the effect's conditions while it is active.

Example: If an Aura effect says "Units you control gain +1 atk until end of turn", then all current Units gain +1 atk, and any Unit that enters under your control later that turn will also have +1 atk.

Banding *Banding*

When attacking, if another Unit or Commander with the same Faction Subtype has already declared an attack this turn, this Unit gains the Banding effect.

Defender *Defender*

This Skill can only be activated during the Defender Step. Do not confuse it with the Defender keyword Skill, which is a separate mechanic.

End of Combat *End Of Combat*

This card/effect can only be played/activated during the End of Combat Step. This is the step after combat damage has been assigned and dealt, but before leaving the Combat Step. Unless otherwise stated, such cards cannot be played at any other time.

From Discard *From Discard*

This skill or effect may be activated while the card is in your discard pile, following its listed timing and costs. Unless otherwise specified, a skill with this activation bubble functions only while the card remains in the discard pile and cannot be activated from any other zone.

From Hand *From Hand*

This skill or effect may be activated while the card is in your hand, following its listed timing and costs. Unless otherwise specified, a skill with this activation bubble functions only while the card remains in hand and cannot be activated from any other zone.

Main *Main*

This Skill can only be activated during the Main Phase of your turn. It cannot be used during your opponent's turn.

Continued
on next
page!



Activation Bubbles (cont.)

Additional
Rules

On Cast *On Cast*

When a card is played from your hand or Reserve, its On Cast effect must be resolved as part of the casting process. If the effect allows you to skip resolution, the card resolves as normal. However, if the effect includes a mandatory condition, it must be fulfilled for the card to resolve successfully.

On K.O. *On K.O.*

This Skill activates when a Unit or Commander is K.O'd by combat or by a card effect that specifically causes a K.O. The controller of the K.O'd card resolves the effect.

On Play (Blue - Battleground) *On Play*

This Skill activates when the card is played from your hand onto the Battleground. It does not activate if the card enters the play area from another zone (e.g., deck or discard pile), unless specified otherwise.

On Play (Pink - Energy Field) *On Play*

This Skill activates when the card is played from your hand onto the Energy Field. It does not activate if the card enters the play area from another zone (e.g., deck or discard pile), unless specified otherwise.

This Skill can also be activated (when played face-up) even if your Energy Field is at maximum capacity, allowing you to swap it with a face-down card as part of the effect.

Once *Once*

You may activate this Skill once during either player's turn. After using it, you must wait until your next Upkeep Phase before activating it again. You cannot stack or activate the same Skill multiple times before then.

Phasing *Phasing*

A special timing skill that activates when a card is Phased from the Energy Field onto the Battleground. This occurs before the Defensed Step during the Attack Declaration Step.

Phasing activates only once per such transition and will only trigger again when the card moves from the Energy Field to the Battleground—not when it moves from the Battleground back to the Energy Field. In other words, Phasing is a one-way timing trigger.

Place On Battleground *Place On Battleground*

When this card is resolved, it is placed on the Battleground instead of the Discard Pile. Cards with this attribute (Hex) typically have delayed effects that can be activated on later turns. This card does not count toward the maximum of 5 Unit slots on the Battleground.

Priority *Priority*

This effect resolves immediately when triggered, before any other card effects can be added to the stack. It resolves on its own, outside of the normal stack sequence.

Trap *Trap*

A special timing Skill that activates when specific conditions on the card are met. When triggered, you may resolve the card's effect. Each Trap has unique activation conditions that must be fulfilled for it to activate properly.

Upkeep *Upkeep*

This effect activates during your Upkeep Phase and must be resolved without interruption. Neither player may play cards from hand or activate Skills in response. If the player chooses not to fulfill the effects condition, the appropriate resolution will still occur.

Learn about
Upkeep
costs on the
next page



Upkeep Costs

Additional
Rules

Paying for upkeep costs is not a requirement unless specifically stated on the card.

For example, in the event that a player doesn't want to pay the maintenance cost of an effect that asks for it in the Upkeep Phase cost, then the card is sent to the Discard or removed from the game according to the rules established on the card. Neither player may play cards from hand or activate Skills. The active player may only pay costs or fulfill any required conditions.





Attributes

Additional Rules

Many cards in Soul Masters TCG have specific attributes that determine when they can be played, targeted, or activated. Due to the large number of attributes, here is a list to help you understand and apply them correctly during play.



Ability

This attribute allows the card to be played during either player's turn, except during the Upkeep Phase.

Artifact Core

A card that must be included in your deck based on your Commander's Core Energy value. These cards can be placed face-up or face-down in the Energy Field and provide benefits to the player. When played from your hand, an Artifact Core allows you to retrieve a face-down card from your Energy Field back into your hand.

Arsalan

Cards with the Arsalan attribute can be searched from any zone when a card effect specifically searches for Arsalan, and they gain any benefits that target or enhance the Arsalan attribute.

Armor

A Reserve card attribute that determines the type of card in play. Armor cards generally provide defensive options to help mitigate damage. If another Reserve card with the Armor attribute enters the play area while one is already in play, the existing card is removed and replaced by the new one. Players are limited to 2 Armor cards in their Reserve deck.

Base

A specific Commander attribute identifying the starting Commander of your deck. This card sets the deck-building Restrictions and your starting health total. Once this card is defeated by losing all its health, you proceed to evolve into the next stage if available. If no further evolutions are possible, the game ends.

Battlefield

An attribute used primarily in Reserve cards. Battlefield cards are placed on the Battlefield Zone when played, and only one Battlefield card can be in play at a time unless stated otherwise. If another Reserve card with the Battlefield attribute enters the Battlefield Zone while one is already in play, the existing card is removed from the game and replaced by the newly played card. Players are limited to 2 Battlefield cards in their Reserve deck.

Commander

Commander is a special card attribute that defines the core of your deck-building and gameplay strategy. Commanders have a set health total and may have evolution forms that players can access during the game. Some Commander evolution cards can be played from the Reserve Deck, replacing your current Commander on the field. However, if a Commander is played from the Reserve Deck, only your life total changes — you do not gain any of the evolution's additional benefits.



Attributes (cont.)

Additional Rules

Evol. 1

A specific Commander attribute that identifies the first evolution of your starting Commander. This card must match the name of your Base Commander unless stated otherwise. It sets the deck-building restrictions and your health total when in play. Once this card is defeated by losing all its health, you proceed to evolve into the next stage if available. If no further evolutions are possible, the game ends.

Evol. 2

A specific Commander attribute that identifies the second evolution of your starting Commander. This card must match the name of your Evol. 1 Commander unless stated otherwise. It sets the deck-building restrictions and your health total when in play. Once this card is defeated by losing all its health, you proceed to evolve into the next stage if available. If no further evolutions are possible, the game ends.

Feat

Feat is an attribute used primarily in Reserve cards. A card with this attribute may only be played once per round, even if it also has the Ability attribute. These cards typically provide a significant boost to the Commander that plays them and are limited by Reserve card rules. Feat cards can bypass most forms of protection in the game unless stated otherwise. Players are limited to 2 Feat cards in their Reserve deck. They bypass card effects that prevent the card from being targeted by other effects, such as Resistance.

Golem Core

A variation of the Artifact Core that follows all the same rules but has the special ability to be converted into Units when the required cost or conditions are met. Once converted, they lose all Artifact Core properties, including Energy generation effects, and function solely as Units.

Hex

Hex is a card attribute that allows Spells and Ability cards to remain on the play area after being cast. Their effects may either benefit or disrupt a player's strategy at a later time when they are activated.

Phase

Phase is a card attribute that allows a card to be selected during the activation of the Phase Skill. When used this way, the card can enter the Battleground Rested and attacking, or swap places with another Phase card located in the Energy Field.

Potion

A special Reserve card attribute that determines the type of card in play. Potion cards generally provide healing options to mitigate or remove damage dealt to the Commander. If another Reserve card with the Potion attribute enters the play area while one is already in play, the existing card is removed and replaced by the new one. Players are limited to 2 Potion cards in their Reserve deck.

Reserve

A specific attribute that limits how many cards of this type can be played during a turn. To play a Reserve card, you use Resources instead of Energy to pay its cost. Additionally, if a new Reserve card shares more than two attributes with an existing Reserve card on the play area, the newly played card will replace the existing one.



Attributes (cont.)

Additional Rules

Spell

This card can only be played during your turn and retains the properties of a Spell. If it remains on the play area, it can be targeted by Cleanse effects.

Unique

Only one card with this Attribute can be on the Battleground from a single player's side. An opponent may also play a card with the same name, as it does not affect the other player's play area unless stated otherwise. If a face-down card is flipped face-up and reenters play with the Unique attribute while you control another card with the same name, you must choose one of them and sacrifice it.

Unit

The Unit attribute indicates that the card, when properly cast, will occupy one of your Unit spaces on the Battleground and be treated as a Unit. These cards typically enter with Summoning Sickness, preventing them from attacking or activating their own Rest Skills (if they have any) during the turn they are played.

Weapon

Weapon is an attribute used primarily in Reserve cards. These cards are placed on the Equipment Zone when played, and only one Weapon card can be in play at a time unless stated otherwise. Players are limited to 2 Weapon cards in their Reserve deck.





How to Phase

Additional
Rules

1. Declare a Unit with Phase as an Attacker

- The player chooses a Unit card with the Phase attribute to attack



2. Rest the attacking Unit

- The attacking Unit is turned sideways to show it is Rested (used) to attack.





How to Phase (cont.)

Additional
Rules

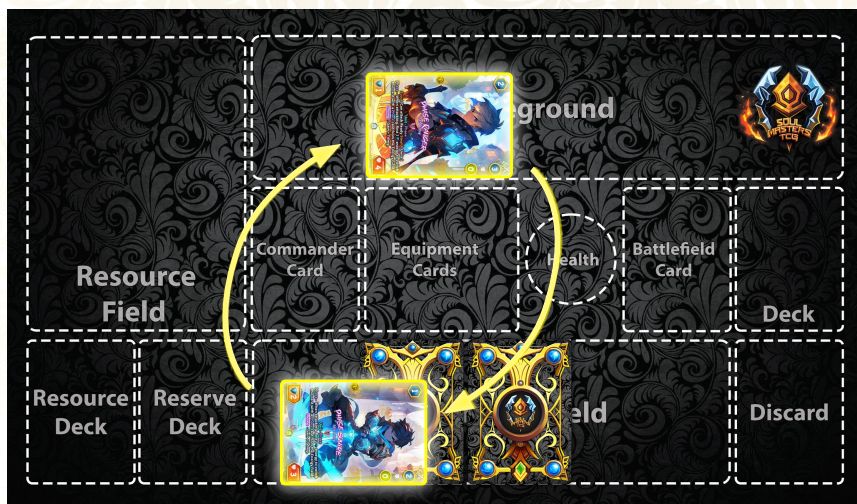
3. Pay the Phase Activation cost

- The player exhausts (Rests) 1 Energy card to pay the cost for activating Phase.
- You may decide not to activate Phase when attacking.



4. Swap Units

- The attacking Unit is swapped with a Unit in the Energy Field that has the Phase attribute (it can be either face-up or face-down).





How to Phase (cont.)

Additional
Rules

5. Adjust status and Energy

- The swapped Unit from the Battleground will inherit the status (Ready or Rested) from the Phase card chosen from the Energy Field. The Unit entering the Battleground from the Energy Field becomes Rested if it was Ready, as it is considered to be attacking.
- Additionally, Rest or Ready Energy equal to the difference in casting costs between the two swapped Units. If the Unit entering the Energy Field from the Battleground is swapping with a Unit of higher cost, Rest Energy equal to the difference. If it is swapping with a card of lower cost, Ready Energy equal to that amount.



6. Complete the Phasing before the opponent can respond

- The Phasing effect finishes fully before the opponent can activate any Defender cards.

In short...

1. A Unit card with Phase is declared as an Attacker.
2. That card is Rested to attack, then the player Rests 1 Energy to pay for the Phase activation cost.
3. Swap a Unit from the Energy Field that has the Phase attribute (either face-up or face-down) with the attacking card in the Battleground.
4. Rest the difference in casting costs (or Ready Energy) between the swapped cards.



Glossary





Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Keyword Skills are predefined Abilities represented by a single word or phrase that encapsulates a specific game effect. When a card has a keyword Skill, it automatically gains the associated rules text as described in the game's keyword glossary. Keyword Skills simplify card text and maintain consistency across different cards. Examples include Haste and Defender. **Attributes are explained in their own section and should not be confused with similar terms used here.**

Ability: A card type. Ability cards can be played at any time you have priority, including during your opponent's turn or in response to other Objects in the stack. However, they cannot be played during either player's Upkeep Phase.

Activate: To put an activated Skill onto the stack and pay its costs, so that it will eventually resolve and have its effect.

Activated Skill: A type of Skill. Activated Skills are written as "[Cost]: [Effect.] [Activation instructions (if any).]" You may only activate this type of Skill once per turn.

Activation Cost: Everything that appears before the colon in an activated Skill's text. It must be paid to activate the Skill.

Active Player: The player whose turn it is.

Additional Cost: A cost a card may have that its controller may pay (or, in some cases, must pay) in addition to its casting cost to cast that card.

Alternative Cost: A cost a card may have that its controller can pay rather than paying its casting cost. Any Target: A card or Skill may require "any target." "Any target" is the same as "target Unit, player, or Commander."

And (in rules text): Indicates that all listed actions must be performed, in the order written, for the effect to resolve. Each action connected by "and" is mandatory unless a condition or cost explicitly allows otherwise.

APNAP Order: See Active Player, Non-active Player rulings.

Armor: Reduces all instances of damage taken by an amount equal to its current Armor value. This reduction is usually temporary and lasts until the end of turn or as specified by the effect.

Artifact Core: A card type. These cards may be played face-down as generic Energy, or face-up for their effects.

Assign Combat Damage: To determine how an attacking Unit or Commander will deal its combat damage.

At End of Turn: A trigger condition on skills that trigger at the beginning of the End Phase.

Attach: To take a Resource from the Resource Field and place it underneath a card, typically to indicate that it is providing power, skills, or some other effect to that card. If there are no cards in the Resource Field, then this action cannot be taken.

Attack: To send a Unit or Commander into combat offensively. A Unit can attack a Commander or a Rested Unit.

Attack Declaration Step: Part of the combat step. This is the first step of the combat step.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Attack Power: A characteristic found only on Unit and Commander cards. It represents the amount of damage the card can deal and is printed in the top-right corner of the card.

Attacking Unit/Commander: A Unit or Commander that has either been declared as part of a legal attack during the combat step (once all costs to attack, if any, have been paid), or that has been put onto the battleground attacking. It remains an attacking Unit or Commander until it's removed from combat or the combat step ends, whichever comes first.

Attribute: Information that defines a card.

Attribute Line: Part of a card. The attribute line is printed directly below the faction symbol and contains the card's card attribute(s).

Base Attack Power, Base Health: Effects that change the base attack power and/or base health of a Unit or Commander set one or both of those values to a specific number.

Base Form: The first form of any Commander.

Battleground: A zone. The battleground is the zone in which Units exist. The max amount of Units you may have in this zone is 5.

Becomes: A word used in some trigger events to indicate a change in status or characteristics.

Before: Cards with this word have their Skill trigger before the specified step or Phase begins.

Bleed: A Resource used by the Vampyrian Faction to activate Skills, play Reserves, or perform special actions.

Blink: A keyword Skill that lets a player play a card any time they could cast an Ability.

Blocked Attack: Occurs during the Combat Step when the defending Commander's Armor and other damage prevention effects are equal to or greater than the attacking card's damage, fully preventing damage. This also applies when a Unit receives damage less than its total Health, meaning it is not K.O'd by the attack.

Blocked Unit/Commander: An attacking Unit or Commander that fails to K.O. a target during the combat step.

Brawler: When this Unit or Commander declares an attack, you may return the top 5 cards from your discard pile to the bottom of your deck. If you do, it gains +3 damage for this attack.

Break: When attacking, a Unit with Break ignores the keyword Skills of Taunt and Defender on enemy Units whose cost is less than its own.

Burn: When this Unit is K.O'd, deal 1 damage to the opposing Commander. Multiple Burn effects on the same Unit do not stack. This damage is unaffected by modifications unless stated otherwise on a card effect, but can be prevented or reduced by Shield Energy and/or Armor.

Card: The standard component of the game.

Card Type: A characteristic. Except for Skills on the stack, each card has a card type. Each card type has its own rules.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Cast: To take a card from where it is (usually the hand), put it on the stack, and pay its costs, so that it will eventually resolve and have its effect.

Caster/Controller: A term referring to the player who cast a card.

Casting Cost: A characteristic, and part of a card. A card's casting cost is indicated by the hexagon symbols printed in its upper-left corner.

Change a Target: To choose a new, legal target for a card, effect or Skill.

Collector/Seralization Number: A number printed on most cards that has no effect on game play.

Combat: Combat is the step of a player's turn during which that player may declare an attack with their Unit or Commander. Combat includes the declaration of attackers and defenders (if applicable during the Defender Step), the assignment and dealing of combat damage, and the resolution of combat-related effects.

Combat Damage: Damage dealt during the combat damage calculation step by attacking Units or Commanders.

Commander: Your chosen champions tasked with defeating the opposing player.

Concede: To quit the game. Conceding a game immediately causes that player to leave that game and lose that game.

Conjure: When a Commander or Unit declares an attack, it generates (Conjures) the specified number of Resources and places them into your Resource Field.

Consume: To spend all of your available resources as the cost of activating a skill, casting a card, or resolving an effect. When you Consume, you cannot choose to keep any amount unspent—every Resource you currently control must be paid.

Continuous Effect: An effect that modifies characteristics of cards, modifies control of cards, or affects players or the rules of the game, for a fixed or indefinite period.

Control Another Player: To make all choices and decisions that player is allowed to make, or is told to make, by rules or by any cards.

Control, Controller: "Control" is the system that determines who gets to use a card in the game. A card's "controller" is the player who currently controls it.

Conversion Rate: This is the number of cards in the Energy Field a player can Rest to generate Resources. This can be done during either player's turn at Ability speed.

Copiable Values: Values of a card's characteristics that are checked by copy effects.

Core Energy: This is the number of Artifact Cores you MUST include in your deck. It also determines the maximum number of cards you can place as Energy in the Energy Field.

Cost: An action or payment necessary to take another action or to stop another action from taking place.

Counter (noun): A marker placed on an object or player that modifies its characteristics or interacts with a rule or Skill.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Counter (verb): To cancel a card as it is being cast so that it does not resolve and none of its effects occur.

Create: To create a token is to put a token onto the battleground.

Damage: Cards can deal "damage" to Units or Commanders.

Damage Source: A damage source is the specific Object responsible for dealing damage in the game. This can be Unit, Commander, a Spell etc. on the stack or a Skill (activated or triggered). When damage is dealt, the game tracks which Object caused it for the purposes of effects like damage prevention, Shield Energy, and damage redirection.

- If a Unit deals combat damage, that Unit is the damage source.
- If a Spell deals damage, the Spell itself is the source.
- If a Skill deals damage, the source of the Skill is the Object that has the Skill.

Deal: See Damage.

Deck: A zone containing all the cards a player draws from during the game. It represents the player's deck of cards that remain to be drawn.

Declare Attacker: To choose a Unit or Commander that will attack. Declare whether the Unit or Commander is attacking the defending player's Unit or Commander, and pay any costs required to allow those attacks.

Defender: During the Defender Phase, a Ready unit with Defender can be rested to become the new target of an attack, intercepting the original target. This Skill can be used even if the unit has Summoning Sickness.

Defending Player: The player whose Units and Commander can be attacked during the combat step.

Delayed Triggered Skill: A Skill created by effects generated when some cards or Skills resolve, or when some replacement effects are applied, that does something later on rather than at that time.

Destroy: To remove it from the play area and place it in the Discard (or equivalent zone).

Discard: To move a card from its owner's hand to that player's Discard pile. When you would discard a Resource card from a card in play or from the Resource Field, instead return that Resource card to your Resource Deck.

Discard Pile: A zone commonly referred to as the player's graveyard, containing all cards that have been discarded or K.O'd during the game.

Discarding Resources: The act of returning a Resource card from your Resource Field to your Resource Deck, typically as a cost or effect. This does not place the card into the discard pile.

Draw (game result): Refers to a game outcome in which neither player wins or loses.

Draw (verb): To take the top card of a player's deck and add it to their hand, either as a turn-based action or as the result of an effect that instructs a player to "draw" a card.

Draw Phase: Part of the turn. Draw 2 cards during this Phase.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Duelist: When attacking, return the top card of your discard pile to the bottom of your deck. Add that card's Shield Energy as bonus damage to the attacker for this combat. Multiple Duelist effects stack and resolve separately. The damage bonus is cleared after combat.

During: Cards with this word have their Skill trigger at the beginning of the specified step or Phase. Effect: Something that happens in the game as a result of a Spell, Ability or Skill.

End of Combat Step: Part of the combat step. This step is the fourth and final step of the combat step. End Phase: Part of the turn. This Phase is the final Phase of the turn.

End the Combat Step: To "end the combat step" as the result of an effect is to perform an expedited process that skips everything else that would happen that step.

End the Turn: To "end the turn" as the result of an effect is to perform an expedited process that skips nearly everything else that would happen that turn.

Enemy: Any Unit or Commander controlled by an opponent. When a card refers to a "target enemy Unit" or "target enemy Commander," it means you must choose a valid card under an opponent's control.

Energy: The primary resource in the game. It is spent to pay costs, usually when casting cards from the main deck and activating skills. Energy is a cost represented by numerical symbols (such as {1}) or variable symbols (such as {X}) that can be paid with Energy.

Energy Field: A zone where players place cards intended to be used as Energy, typically placed face-down. Artifact Cores are also placed in this zone, either face-up or face-down. The total amount of cards you can place in this zone to use as Energy depends on your Commander's Core Energy.

Energy Generation Skill: An activated or triggered Skill/effect that could create Energy and doesn't use the stack.

Energy Symbol: An icon that represents energy or an energy cost.

Energy Value: The total amount of energy in an energy cost.

Evolution: Indicates the Commander's form and/or evolution stage. When a Commander Form is defeated, its controller draws 1 card and generates 1 Resource.

Excess Damage: Damage dealt to a Unit or Commander greater than what would be lethal damage.

Exchange: To swap two things, such as cards, sets of cards, or health totals.

Expansion Symbol: A card's expansion symbol is a small icon that has no effect on game play.

Extra Turn: A turn created by an effect of a Spell, Ability or Skill.

Face-Down: A card positioned with its back showing. Cards in certain zones are normally kept face-down. When placed as Energy, face-down cards gain all the characteristics of a basic Energy Core. Face-down is a status a card may have (see Null). Face-down cards have no attributes and are considered out of play, though they still occupy their designated zone. They remain face-down until a card effect flips them face-up or the effect that turns them face-down specifies when they can be flipped.

Face-Up: A card that is physically positioned with its front side visible. Cards in certain zones are normally kept face-up as their default status.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Faction: A thematic or mechanical group of cards that share a common identity—usually defined by their lore, visual design, and gameplay style. Factions help categorize cards and give decks a cohesive feel, often with synergy between cards of the same Faction. Determines what cards may be included in a deck for the chosen Commander.

Faction Subtype: A characteristic displayed below the card name that represents affiliations such as clans, guilds, or armies the card belongs to. Faction Subtypes can interact with or contribute to card effects and synergies.

Failed To Find: This means you looked through your deck and didn't choose a card, either because it isn't there or because the game allows you not to pick one.

Feral: When Ragnar K.O.'s an enemy Unit, return the top 6 cards of your Discard to the bottom of your Deck in any order. Then, Ready Ragnar.

Flipped: A status a card may have.

Flipping a Coin: A method of randomization with two possible outcomes of equal likelihood.

Floating Energy: Temporarily stored Energy created by effects before or after the Combat Step. If a card is cast for less than the total amount of Floating Energy, any unspent Energy is immediately cleared. All Floating Energy is removed when the game enters the Combat Step, unless a card effect specifically allows it to persist. Energy does not carry over into future steps or turns unless otherwise stated.

Focus: A Resource used by the Valkyrian Faction to activate Skills, play Reserves, or perform special actions.

Gain: A term used to identify any action of accumulating any benefits from cards or resources in the game. This term can be stacked and a card can gain multiple benefits.

Generate: To move a Resource card from your Resource Deck to your Resource Field.

Golem Core: A combination of an Artifact Core and a Unit that's subject to the rules for both.

Hand: A zone where a player holds cards they have drawn but not yet played. It contains all cards currently in the player's possession before being played.

Haste: A keyword skill that lets a Unit ignore the "summoning sickness" rule. Can attack or use activated skills requiring you to rest the turn it comes in.

Heal: When you increase your Commander's or Unit's health, only the amount actually Restored is considered the heal value. You can't heal beyond your Unit's or Commander's maximum health unless a card effect allows it.

Health, Health Total: Each Unit and Commander has an amount of "health," represented by that card's "health total." Health may be gained or lost. You can't heal beyond your Unit's or Commander's maximum health unless a card effect allows it.

Heavy: Units with the Heavy keyword Skill can be attacked while Ready, bypassing the usual rule that Ready units are untargetable for attacks. This effect does not rely on other keyword Skills such as Stealth or Initiative.

Hothead: A Unit with Hothead must attack during its controller's turn if it is able. This requirement is ignored if the Unit has Summoning Sickness or cannot legally attack.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Illegal Action: An action that violates the rules of the game and/or requirements or Restrictions created by effects.

Illegal Target: A target that no longer exists or no longer meets the specifications stated by the card or Skill that's targeting it.

Illustration: A picture printed on the card that has no effect on game play.

Illustration Credit: Information printed below the rules text that has no effect on game play.

In Play: Cards that contain the phrases "in play," "from play," "into play," or the like are referring to the card zones.

In Response To: A card effect that's been cast, or an activated Skill that's been activated, while another card effect or Skill is on the stack has been cast or activated "in response to" the earlier Spell or Ability. Information about a card that's no longer in the zone it's expected to be in, or information about a player who's no longer in the game. This information captures that card's last existence in that zone or that player's last existence in the game.

Initiative: A Unit with Initiative may declare an attack against a Ready Unit, bypassing standard targeting Restrictions. Combat resolves as normal after the attack is declared.

Instead: Effects that use the word "instead" are replacement effects. The word "instead" indicates what an event will be replaced with.

Intercepted Unit/Commander: A Unit or Commander that has either been declared as part of a legal Defender keyword Skill during the combat step.

Intervening "If" Clause: A specially worded condition checked as a triggered Skill would trigger and again as it would resolve.

K.O.: To move a Unit from the battleground to its owner's Discard pile.

K.O'd: A Unit "dies" if it is put into a Discard pile from the battleground.

Keyword Action: A verb, such as "K.O." or "cast," used as a game term rather than as its normal English meaning.

Keyword Counter: A marker placed on a card that modifies its characteristics by granting it a keyword.

Keyword Skill: A game term, such as "Defender" or "Haste," used as shorthand for a longer Skill or group of Skills.

Last In, First Out (LIFO): When multiple effects or skills are placed on the stack, they resolve in reverse order. The most recent effect added to the stack (the "last in") is the first to resolve ("first out").

Last Known Information (LKI): When a card is no longer in the play area, the game may still need to know something about it (such as its attack, cost, or other values) to resolve an effect that is already on the stack. In these cases, the game uses that card's last known information—the most recent characteristics it had while it was still in the play area.

- If an effect on the stack requires information about a card that has since left play, resolve it using the card's last known values.
- This ensures that skills or effects can finish resolving correctly even if their source is no longer present.
- If no last known information is available (for example, the card was never in the play area), the effect cannot use that value.



Keyword Skills & Game Terms

Glossary

Leaves the Battleground: A card “leaves the battleground” when it’s moved from the battleground to another zone.

Lethal Damage: An amount of damage greater than or equal to a creature’s health.

Loop: A set of actions that could be repeated indefinitely.

Lose the Game: There are several ways to lose the game.

Main Phase: Part of the turn. The third, or precombat, main Phase is the third Phase of the turn.

Match: A multiplayer game or a two-player series of games (usually best-of-one) played in a tournament.

May: Indicates an optional action. When a card says you “may” do something, you are not required to take that action, even if it’s possible. If you choose not to, the game continues without that effect occurring.

Maximum Hand Size: There is no maximum hand size.

Mercenary: A faction of Units that can be included in a deck by following special deck-building rules. These Units do not adhere to standard faction alignment Restrictions and are added based on conditions outlined by their individual or global Mercenary rules.

Mill: To move a card or multiple cards from a player’s deck (or another defined zone) directly to their Discard or equivalent. Milled cards bypass the hand and any effects that would normally trigger upon drawing.

Minimum Deck Size: If a rule or effect states that a player’s deck must contain at least a specific number of cards, that number is the player’s minimum deck size.

Modified: A card in play that has been altered by a counter, typically to represent an additional effect such as increased damage, health, or other stat changes.

Move: To remove a counter or card from one card or zone and place it onto a different card or zone.

Mulligan: Each player may return any number of cards from their hand to the bottom of their Deck, then draw the same number of cards from the Main Deck. Shuffle and cut the deck afterward. This option can only be used once.

Name: A characteristic, and part of a card. A card’s name is printed in the center, above the rules text.

Negate: To cancel the declared attack, preventing the attacking unit or commander from resolving their attack this turn. The attack is treated as if it never occurred. Conjure still triggers since it activates during the Attack Declaration Step.

Null: A Unit affected by Null is placed face-down and becomes untargetable by card effects unless stated otherwise. It remains in its Ready or Rested state and occupies its zone. The Null status ends only when specified by the effect that applied it.

Object: An Object is anything that exists on the stack or in a game zone, including Spells, Abilities etc. Objects have characteristics and can be interacted with by rules and effects.

One-Shot Effect: An effect that does something just once and doesn’t have a duration.



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Opening Hand: The hand of cards a player starts the game with. Each player starts the game with 5 cards in hand.

Opponent: Someone a player is playing against.

Owner: The player who (for purposes of the game) a card, token or effect belongs to.

Pass: To decline to take any action (such as casting a card or activating a Skill) when you have priority.

Pay: To perform the actions required by a cost. This often means, but is not Restricted to, spending Resources such as Energy, Resources or health.

Pay Health: A cost that can only be paid using the Health of your Commander. When a skill or effect requires you to Pay Health, only the Commander's current Health may be used to satisfy the cost.

Piercing: This Unit's or Commander's attack ignores 1 Shield Energy during damage calculation. It does not alter the card's attack power, only reduces the defending player's shield-based protection. Piercing has no effect on Armor.

Pile: A temporary grouping of cards.

Play: Refers to the action of putting a card into the game. To play an Artifact Core means placing it onto the Energy Field as a special action. To play a card generally means to either put it into play as an Artifact Core or to cast it as a spell, ability, unit, or other appropriate type depending on the card.

Play Area: The designated space where players place their cards during the game. This area typically includes zones for Units, Commanders, Resources, discard piles, and decks. Cards in the play area interact with each other according to game rules and effects.

Player: One of the people in the game.

Prevent: A word used by prevention effects to indicate what damage will not be dealt.

Prevention Effect: A kind of continuous effect that watches for a damage event that would happen and completely or partially prevents the damage that would be dealt.

Priority: Having priority means it's your turn to act—to either do something or do nothing.

Public Zone: A zone in which all players can be expected to see the cards' faces.

Put/Place: To move a card, token, or counter to a specified zone or location in the game. This action does not involve casting a card or activating a Skill unless otherwise stated.

Rage: A Resource used by the Woven Faction to activate Skills, play Reserves, or perform special actions.

Readied: The default status of a card when it is in its upright position, indicating that it is active and available for use (such as attacking or activating Skills).

Ready: A vertical, active state that allows a card to take actions appropriate to its type. Cards usually enter the play area Ready. Units that are Ready cannot normally be targeted for attacks. "Ready a card" means to turn it upright from its Rested position.

Redirection Effect: A kind of replacement effect that causes damage that would be dealt to one Unit or



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Commander to be dealt instead to another Unit or Commander.

Reflexive Triggered Skill: A Skill that triggers based on actions taken earlier during a card effect's resolution.

Reforge: When a Reserve card from the play area activates a Skill with Reforge, it is returned to the Reserve Deck instead of being discarded after resolving the effect. Reforging allows the card to be reused later, provided all normal timing and activation conditions are met.

Reminder Text: Summarizes a rule that applies to that card, but is not actually rules text and has no effect on play.

Remove: To take it out of the game. Removed cards cannot be targeted, returned, or interacted with unless explicitly allowed by a card's effect. Removing a card does not count as K.O. and does not trigger K.O.-related Skills.

Remove from the Game, Removed: When a card is Removed, it's not considered "in play" or "in your discard" and typically cannot be interacted with unless a card specifically says otherwise.

Removed from Combat: Certain events can cause an attacking Unit or Commander that's being attacked, to be "removed from combat."

Replacement Effect: A kind of continuous effect that watches for a particular event that would happen and completely or partially replaces that event with a different event.

Reserve: A card type. These cards usually consist of Weapons, Armor, Battlefields, and Feats. To cast a Reserve card, pay its cost using Resources from the Resource Field. You may play only one Reserve per turn, and not during your first turn.

Reserve Deck: A zone or deck in which not all players are expected to see the faces of the cards. This is where you keep your Reserve cards. The Reserve Deck is placed face-down and consists of exactly 2 Weapon cards, 2 Armor cards, 2 Feat cards, and 2 Battlefield cards. These cards are accessed during play through specific effects or actions and are not drawn like regular cards.

For non-tournament play, you may use only 1 Weapon, 1 Armor, 1 Battlefield, and 2 Feats in your Reserve Deck.

Resistance: This can't be the target of any effects, including your own.

Resolve: When the card effect or Skill on top of the stack "resolves," its instructions are followed and it has its effect.

Resource: The secondary Resource in the game. It is spent to pay costs, usually when casting Reserves and activating Skills.

Resource Deck: The deck containing your Resource cards, placed face-up in this zone. Resources are generated from this deck. The total amount of Resources available depends on your Commander's Resource Energy.

Resource Energy: This is the number of cards you must include in your Resource Deck. Each Commander has their own unique resource—also called Faction Resources—such as Rage or Focus.

Resource Field: Resource cards are placed here when generated.



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Respond: To cast an Ability, Spell or activate a Skill while another Spell, Ability or Skill is already on the stack.

Rest: To rotate it sideways to indicate it has been used for an action (e.g., attacking, activating a Skill/ effect, or paying a cost). Rested Units can be targeted by attacks. A card must usually be Readied (upright) to be used again.

Restart the Game: To immediately end the current game and Restart it.

Rested: A status a card has when it is in its Rest position (typically turned sideways to indicate it has been used or activated).

Return: To move a card from one zone to another, most commonly from the play area to its owner's hand (e.g., "Return target Unit to its owner's hand"). The direction of movement is specified by the effect.

Riposte: When a Unit or Commander with Riposte is attacked, it deals damage back to its attacker at the end of combat. This damage is treated as a separate combat damage source and is added to the stack when triggered.

Rules Text: A characteristic that defines a card's effects or Skills.

Sacrifice: To voluntarily send a card from your play area to the discard pile. This is distinct from K.O. and does not trigger K.O.-related Skills. Sacrifice actions occur during the resolution or activation of card effects. Sacrificing is only allowed if valid targets exist or if explicitly required by a game effect.

Scout: This Unit may target opponent's Stealth Units that are Readied when declaring an attack, bypassing the normal Restriction that Stealth Units must be Rested to be valid targets.

Search: To look at all cards in a stated zone and possibly find a card that matches a given description.

Shield: A value indicating the number of cards a Unit or Commander can discard to prevent incoming damage. Each discarded card prevents a fixed amount of damage (typically 1 per card, depending on Shield Energy). The Shield amount resets with each new damage instance, meaning it must be paid again for each separate occurrence of damage.

Shield Energy: A value printed on the bottom-left corner of cards that provide this element. When a card with Shield Energy is discarded as a shield, it prevents damage equal to its Shield Energy value. Each point of Shield Energy prevents 1 damage unless otherwise modified by a card effect.

Shock: A card affected by Shock cannot be ready during the Upkeep Phase. However, the card may still be readied through other effects that specifically Ready cards outside of the Upkeep Phase.

Shortcut: A mutually understood way for the game to advance forward a number of game choices (either taking an action or passing priority) without players needing to explicitly identify each such choice.

Shuffle: To randomize the cards in a deck (before a game) or library (during a game).

Sideboard: Extra cards that may be used to modify a deck between games of a match.

Skill/Effect (activated, triggered or static): An effect on the stack that represents a card's action or effect being used.



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Skill/Effect (noun): The text on a card that explains what the card does or can do.

Skip: Effects that use the word “skip” are replacement effects. The word “skip” indicates what events, steps, Phases, or turns will be replaced with nothing.

Source of a Skill/Effect: The card that generated that Skill or effect.

Source of Damage: The card that dealt that damage.

Source of Energy: The card that produced Energy or the source of a card effect that produced Energy.

Special Action **Priority:** An action a player must take from a card effect that doesn't use the stack.

Specialization: A restriction that limits certain cards to be played only by a specific Commander. A card with Specialization will have the name of its designated Commander printed beneath its card name. Only that Commander may include the card in a deck or use it during the game.

Spell: A card type. Spells can only be played while the stack is empty, outside of combat and you have priority during your Main Phase.

Stack: A “zone”. The stack is the zone in which cards and card effects wait to resolve.

Starting Deck: After a player has set aside their sideboard, their remaining deck becomes their starting deck.

Starting Deck: After a player sets aside their sideboard, the remaining cards become their Starting Deck, which must consist of exactly 50 cards.

Starting Hand Size: The number of cards a player draws as a game begins. In most games, each player's starting hand size is five.

Starting Health Total: The amount of health a Commander has as a game begins. In most games, each Commander's starting health total is 10.

Starting Player: The player chosen to take the first turn of a game.

State Trigger: A triggered Skill that triggers when a game state is true rather than triggering when an event occurs.

State-Based Actions: Game actions that happen automatically whenever certain conditions are met.

Static Skill: A kind of Skill. Static Skills do something all the time rather than being activated or triggered.

Status: The physical state of a card.

Stealth: When declaring an attack, a Stealth unit may bypass any Rested units with Taunt and is unaffected by the Defender Skill. This does not grant immunity to other forms of damage prevention or interference such as spells, abilities or skills.

Step: A subsection of a Phase.

Summon: The action of placing a Unit onto the battleground from any zone. A summoned Unit gains Summoning Sickness, preventing it from attacking or Resting to activate any Skills. This action can be interacted with by players and uses the stack to resolve.



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Summoning: Playing Units onto the Battleground, where they enter the game in a Ready state.

Summoning Sickness Rule: Informal term for a player's inability to attack with a Unit or to activate its Skills that include having to Rest or Ready unless the Unit has been under that player's control since the beginning of that player's most recent turn.

Switch/Swap: To exchange the positions of two specified cards. When you switch cards, each card moves to the exact location or zone previously occupied by the other. Any effects or conditions related to the cards remain with them unless otherwise stated.

Target: A preselected card a card effect will affect.

Taunt: When declaring attacks, opponents must target a Rested Unit with Taunt before choosing other valid targets. If the Unit with Taunt is Readied, this Restriction does not apply. Taunt Restricts target selection but does not compel your opponent to attack.

Text-Changing Effect: A continuous effect that changes the text that appears in a card's rules text and/or attribute line.

Then: In card text, "then" separates two instructions and implies that the second instruction only happens after the first one is completed. Sometimes, the second effect depends on the first one happening successfully.

Thirst: Upon declaring an attack, this Unit generates 1 Bleed Resource. This action resolves before entering the defender Phase. The amount of Bleed generated cannot be changed unless another card effect specifically alters it.

Token: A non-card game piece created by an effect to represent a temporary Unit, Resource, or status. It is not part of a player's main deck or hand and usually has limited rules and lifespan.

Total Cost: What a player actually has to pay, in practical Terms, to cast a card plus all cost increases (including additional costs) and minus all cost reductions.

Tournament: An organized play activity where players compete against other players.

Tournament Rules: Additional rules that apply to games played in a sanctioned tournament.

Toxin: When attacking, you may discard 1 Bleed from your Resource Field to give this Unit +1 damage for that attack's resolution. This effect only triggers once per attack and does not stack. The bonus damage lasts until the end of combat and is then removed.

Trample: When a Unit or Commander with Trample K.O.'s an opposing unit during an attack, it deals 1 damage directly to the enemy Commander. This damage is unaffected by modifications unless stated otherwise on a card effect but can be prevented or reduced by Shield Energy and/or Armor.

Transfer: To take the top Resource card from your Resource Deck and place it beneath the card that triggered this action. If the Resource Deck is empty, the Transfer action cannot be executed.

Trigger: Whenever a game event or game state matches a triggered Skill's trigger event, that skill automatically "triggers." That means its controller puts it on the stack the next time a player would receive priority.

Trigger Condition: The first part of a triggered Skill, consisting of "when," "whenever," or "at" followed by a trigger event.



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Trigger Event: The event that a triggered Skill looks for. Whenever the trigger event occurs, the triggered Skill triggers.

Triggered Skill: A kind of Skill. Triggered Skills begin with the word “when,” “whenever,” or “at.” They’re written as “[Trigger condition], [effect].”

Turn-Based Actions: Game actions that happen automatically when certain steps or Phases begin, or when each step or Phase ends.

Type: An card's card type or, more broadly, its card type, or attribute.

Type Icon: An icon that appears in the upper-left corner of the card, representing the card's type, which is identified by its color.

Type-Changing Effect: An effect that changes a card's card type or attribute.

Unattach: To remove a Resource from the card it is attached to. The Resource is then moved either to the Resource Deck or the Resource Field, depending on the effect that caused the unattachment.

Unflipped: A default status a card may have.

Unit: A card type. Units can only be played during your turn outside of combat and cannot attack the same turn they are summoned, unless otherwise specified. You may have a maximum of 5 Units on the Battleground at any time.

Unless: A word used to indicate a certain style of cost.

Upkeep: An activation bubble keyword that imposes a cost.

Upkeep Phase: Part of the turn. The first Phase of the turn.

Wanderer: The Wanderer faction is a special group of cards that can be played with any Commander, following the same restrictions as any non-Mercenary card. These cards typically don't benefit from Commander-specific effects or support, sacrificing power and synergy for greater flexibility and unique abilities.

Weakness: When a unit with Weakness attacks, you may choose any target unit and give it -1 health until the end of the turn. This effect persists after combat. If a unit's health reaches 0 due to this effect, that unit is K.O'd, but the K.O. is attributed to the effect itself, not the attacking unit. Multiple instances of this effect can stack on the same unit.

Win the Game: There are several ways to win the game.

X: A placeholder for a number that needs to be determined.

You, Your: Words that refer to a card's controller, its would-be controller (if a player is attempting to cast or activate it), or its owner (if it has no controller).

Zone: A place where cards can be during a game.