

MAGIC INFRACTION PROCEDURE GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

The **Magic**[™] Infraction Procedure Guide provides judges the appropriate penalties and procedures to handle rules violations that occur during a tournament held at Competitive or Professional Rules Enforcement Level (REL), as well as the underlying philosophy that guides their implementation. It exists to protect players from potential misconduct and to protect the integrity of the tournament itself. Rules violations usually require a penalty or they are unenforceable. Tournaments run at Regular REL use the Judging at Regular REL document.

FRAMEWORK OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is divided into two major parts: General Definitions and Philosophy (section 1), and Infractions (sections 2-4). Infractions are broken down into general classes (Game Play Errors, Tournament Errors, and Unsporting Conduct), and further into subclasses for specific infractions.

See the **Magic** Tournament Rules for further definitions of terms in this document.

This document is published in multiple languages. If a discrepancy exists between the English version and a non-English version of this document, tournament participants must refer to the English version to settle disputes concerning interpretations of the Infraction Procedure Guide.

This document is updated periodically. Please obtain the most current version at <http://www.wizards.com/wpn/Events/Rules.aspx>.

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1. GENERAL PHILOSOPHY

Judges are neutral arbiters and enforcers of policy and rules. A judge shouldn't intervene in a game unless he or she believes a rules violation has occurred, a player with a concern or question requests assistance, or the judge wishes to prevent a situation from escalating. Judges don't stop play errors from occurring, but instead deal with errors that have occurred, penalize those who violate rules or policy, and promote fair play and sporting conduct by example and diplomacy. Judges may intervene to prevent or preempt errors occurring outside of a game. Knowledge of a player's history or skill does not alter an infraction, but it may be taken into account during an investigation.

The purpose of a penalty is to educate the player not to make similar mistakes in the future. This is done through both an explanation of where the rules or policies were violated and a penalty to reinforce the education. Penalties are also for the deterrence and education of every other player in the event and are also used to track player behavior over time.

If a minor violation is quickly handled by the players to their mutual satisfaction, a judge does not need to intervene. If the players are playing in a way that is clear to both players, but might cause confusion to an external observer, judges are encouraged to request that the players make the situation clear, but not assess an infraction or issue any penalty. In both these situations, the judge should ensure that the game progresses normally. More significant violations are addressed by first identifying what infraction applies, then proceeding with the corresponding instructions.

Only the Head Judge is authorized to issue penalties that deviate from these guidelines. The Head Judge may not deviate from this guide's procedures except in significant and exceptional circumstances or a situation that has no applicable philosophy for guidance. Significant and exceptional circumstances are rare—a table collapses, a booster contains cards from a different set, etc. The Rules Enforcement Level, round of the tournament, age or experience-level of the player, desire to educate the player, and certification level of the judge are NOT exceptional circumstances. If another judge feels deviation is appropriate, he or she must consult with the Head Judge.

Judges are human and make mistakes. When a judge makes a mistake, he or she should acknowledge the mistake, apologize to the players, and fix it if it is not too late. If a member of the tournament staff gives a player erroneous information that causes them to commit a violation, the Head Judge is authorized to downgrade the penalty. For example, a player asks a judge whether a card is legal for a format and is told yes. When that player's deck is found to be illegal because of these cards, the Head Judge applies the normal procedure for fixing the decklist, but may downgrade the penalty to a Warning because of the direct error of the judge.

1.1. DEFINITION OF PENALTIES

Warning

A Warning is an officially tracked penalty. Warnings are used in situations of incorrect play when a small amount of time is needed to implement the corrective procedure. The purpose of a Warning is to alert judges and players involved that a problem has occurred and to keep a permanent record of the infraction in the DCI Penalty Database. A time extension should be issued if the ruling has taken more than a minute.

Game Loss

A Game Loss is issued in situations where the procedure to correct the offense takes a significant amount of time that may slow the entire tournament or causes significant disruption to the tournament, or in which it is impossible to continue the game due to physical disruption. It is also used for some infractions that have a higher probability for a player to gain advantage.

A Game Loss ends the current game immediately and the player who committed the infraction is considered to have lost the game for the purpose of match reporting. The player receiving a Game Loss chooses whether to play or draw in the next game of that match, if applicable. If a Game Loss is issued before the match begins, neither player in that match may use sideboards (if the tournament uses them) for the first game they play.

Game Losses are applied to the game in which the offense occurred unless the players have begun a new game or the tournament is between rounds, in which case the loss is applied to the player's next game. If simultaneous Game Loss penalties are issued to each player, they are recorded, but do not affect the match score. If a player receives a Game Loss at the same time his or her opponent receives a Match Loss, the Game Loss is carried over into the next round. Players will still receive a Game Loss if they drop from the tournament; if the penalty is issued between rounds, they will still receive it even though they will not be paired for the next round.

Match Loss

A Match Loss is a severe penalty that is usually issued when the match cannot be completed due to timing restrictions or because the match itself has been compromised.

Match Losses are applied to the match during which the offense occurred unless the match has already ended, in which case the penalty will be applied to the player's next match. Players will still be issued a Match Loss penalty if they drop from the tournament, though they won't be paired for the next round.

Disqualification

A Disqualification is issued for activity that damages the integrity of a tournament as a whole or for severe unsporting conduct.

The recipient of a Disqualification does not need to be a player in the tournament. He or she may be a spectator or other bystander. If this happens, he or she must be entered into the tournament in Wizards Event Reporter ("WER") so that he or she may be disqualified and reported to the DCI.

Disqualification can occur without proof of action so long as the Head Judge determines sufficient information exists to believe the tournament's integrity may have been compromised. It is recommended that the Head Judge's report reflect this fact.

When this penalty is applied, the player loses his or her current match and is dropped from the tournament. If a player has already received prizes at the time he or she is disqualified, that player may keep those prizes but does not receive any additional prizes or awards he or she may be due.

When a player is disqualified during a tournament, he or she is removed from the tournament and does not take up a place in the standings. This means that all players in the tournament will advance one spot in the standings and are entitled to any prizes the new standing would offer. If the Disqualification takes place after a cut is made, no additional players advance in place of the disqualified player although they do move up a spot in the standings. For example, if a player is disqualified during the quarterfinal round of a Preliminary Pro Tour Qualifier, the former 9th place finisher does not advance into the single elimination top 8, but he or she does move into 8th place in the standings.

More information about the Disqualification process may be found at <http://blogs.magicjudges.org/o/disqualification-process/>.

1.2. APPLYING PENALTIES

Penalties are included with the tournament report so that a permanent record can be kept in the DCI Penalty Database. Additionally, any penalty of Game Loss or higher should be reported to the Head Judge, and it is recommended that only the Head Judge issue penalties of this nature (with the exception of Tardiness (3.1) and Deck Errors (3.5)).

Any time a penalty is issued, the judge must explain the infraction, the procedure for fixing the situation, and the penalty to all players involved. If the Head Judge chooses to deviate from the Infraction Procedure Guide, the Head Judge is expected to explain the standard penalty and the reason for deviation.

Some infractions include remedies to handle the offense beyond the base penalty. These procedures exist to protect officials from accusations of unfairness, bias, or favoritism. If a judge makes a ruling that is consistent with quoted text, then the complaints of a player shift from accusation of unfairness by the judge to accusations of unfair policy. Deviations from these procedures may raise accusations against the judge from the player(s) involved, or from those who hear about it. These procedures do not, and should not, take into account the game being played, the current situation that the game is in, or who will benefit strategically from the procedure associated with a penalty. While it is tempting to try to “fix” game situations, the danger of missing a subtle detail or showing favoritism to a player (even unintentionally) makes it a bad idea.

Infractions with the same root cause, or multiple instances of the same infraction that are discovered at the same time, are treated as a single infraction.

1.3. RANDOMIZING A DECK

The remedy for some infractions in this document includes shuffling the randomized portion of the deck. This requires first determining whether any portion of the deck is non-random, such as cards that have been manipulated on the top or bottom of the library, and separating those. Check with both players to verify this, and check the graveyard, exile, and battlefield for deck manipulation cards, such as Brainstorm and cards with the scry mechanic. Once the deck has been shuffled, any manipulated cards are returned to their correct locations.

Shuffles performed by a judge as part of a remedy are not considered shuffles for game purposes.

1.4. BACKING UP

Some infractions in this document permit the judge to consider the possibility of a backup. Due to the amount of information that may become available to players and might affect their play, backups are regarded as a solution of last resort, only applied in situations where leaving the game in the current state is a substantially worse solution. A good backup will result in a situation where the gained information makes no difference and the line of play remains the same (excepting the error, which has been fixed). This means limiting backups to situations with minimal decision trees.

Only the Head Judge may authorize a backup. At large tournaments, they may choose to delegate this responsibility to Team Leaders.

To perform a backup, each individual action since the point of the error is reversed, starting with the most recent ones and working backwards. Every action must be reversed; no parts of the sequence should be omitted or reordered. If the identity of a card involved in reversing an action is unknown to one of the players (usually because it was drawn), a random card is chosen from the possible candidates. Shuffles are reversed by a single shuffle of the random portion of the library after the rest of the backup is complete. A card that became legally known to a player after the error was committed is not considered random and is returned to the appropriate location after the shuffle has been completed.

Backups involving random/unknown elements should be approached with extreme caution, especially if they cause or threaten to cause a situation in which a player will end up with different cards than they would once they have correctly drawn those cards. For example, returning cards to the library when a player has the ability to shuffle their library is not something that should be done except in extreme situations.

Some remedies state a simple backup may be performed. A simple backup is backing up the last action completed (or one currently in progress) and is sometimes used to make another portion of the prescribed remedy smoother. A simple backup should not involve any random elements.

2. GAME PLAY ERRORS

Game Play Errors are caused by incorrect or inaccurate play of the game such that it results in violations of the **Magic** Comprehensive Rules. Many offenses fit into this category and it would be impossible to list them all. The guide below is designed to give judges a framework for assessing how to handle a Game Play Error.

Most Game Play Error infractions are assumed to have been committed unintentionally. If the judge believes that the error was intentional, he or she should first consider whether an Unsporting Conduct — Cheating infraction has occurred.

With the exception of Failure to Maintain Game State, which is never upgraded, the third or subsequent penalty for a Game Play Error offense in the same category is upgraded to a Game Loss. For multi-day events, the penalty count for these infractions resets between days.

2.1. Game Play Error — Missed Trigger

No Penalty

Definition

A triggered ability triggers, but the player controlling the ability doesn't demonstrate awareness of the trigger's existence the first time that it would affect the game in a visible fashion.

The point by which the player needs to demonstrate this awareness depends on the impact that the trigger would have on the game:

- **A triggered ability that requires its controller to choose targets (other than 'target opponent'), modes, or other choices made when the ability is put onto the stack:** The controller must announce those choices before they next pass priority.
- **A triggered ability that causes a change in the visible game state (including life totals) or requires a choice upon resolution:** The controller must take the appropriate physical action or acknowledge the specific trigger before taking any game actions (such as casting a sorcery spell or explicitly taking an action in the next step or phase) that can be taken only after the triggered ability should have resolved. Note that passing priority, casting an instant spell or activating an ability doesn't mean a triggered ability has been forgotten, as it could still be on the stack.
- **A triggered ability that changes the rules of the game:** The controller must acknowledge the trigger or prevent an opponent from taking any resulting illegal action.
- **A triggered ability that affects the game state in non-visible ways:** The controller must make the change known by the first time the change has an effect on the visible game state.

Once any of the above obligations has been fulfilled, further problems are treated as a Game Play Error — Game Rule Violation.

Triggered abilities that do nothing except create delayed triggered abilities automatically resolve without requiring acknowledgment. Awareness of the resulting delayed trigger must be demonstrated at the appropriate point. Triggered abilities that do nothing except create one or more copies of a spell or ability (such as storm or cipher) automatically resolve, but awareness of

the resulting objects must be demonstrated using the same requirements as described above (even though the objects may not be triggered abilities).

If a triggered ability would have no impact on the game, it's not an infraction to fail to demonstrate awareness of it. For example, if the effect of a triggered ability instructs its controller to sacrifice a creature, a player who controls no creatures isn't required to demonstrate awareness of the ability. Similarly, a player demonstrating awareness of an optional trigger with no visible effect is assumed to have made the affirmative choice unless the opponent responds.

Judges do not intervene in a missed trigger situation unless they intend to issue a Warning or have reason to suspect that the controller is intentionally missing his or her triggered abilities.

Examples

- A. Knight of Infamy (a 2/1 creature with exalted) attacks alone. Its controller says "Take two."
- B. A player forgets to remove the final time counter from a suspended spell and then draws a card during his draw step.
- C. A player casts Manic Vandal, then forgets its triggered ability by not choosing a target for it. He realizes this only after casting another spell.
- D. A player forgets to exile the Angel token created by Geist of Saint Traft at end of combat. She realizes the error when declaring blockers during the next turn.

Philosophy

Triggered abilities are common and invisible, so players should not be harshly penalized when forgetting about one. Players are expected to remember their own triggered abilities; intentionally ignoring one may be Unsporting Conduct — Cheating (unless the ability would have no impact on the game as described above). Even if an opponent is involved in the announcement or resolution of the ability, the controller is still responsible for ensuring the opponents make the appropriate choices and take the appropriate actions. Opponents are not required to point out triggered abilities that they do not control, though they may do so if they wish.

Triggered abilities are assumed to be remembered until otherwise indicated, and the impact on the game state may not be immediately apparent. The opponent's benefit is in not having to point out triggered abilities, although this does not mean that they can cause triggers to be missed. If an opponent requires information about the precise timing of a triggered ability or needs details about a game object that may be affected by a resolved triggered ability, that player may need to acknowledge that ability's existence before its controller does. A player who makes a play that may or may not be legal depending on whether an uncommunicated trigger has been remembered has not committed an infraction; their play either succeeds, confirming that the trigger has been missed, or is rewind.

Players may not cause triggered abilities controlled by an opponent to be missed by taking game actions or otherwise prematurely advancing the game. During an opponent's turn, if a trigger's controller demonstrates awareness of the trigger before they take an active role (such as taking an action or explicitly passing priority), the trigger is remembered. The Out-of-Order Sequencing rules (MTR section 4.3) may also be applicable, especially as they relate to batches of actions or resolving items on the stack in an improper order.

Additional Remedy

If the triggered ability specifies a default action associated with a choice made by the controller (usually “If you don’t ...” or “... unless”), resolve it choosing the default option. If the triggered ability is a delayed triggered ability that changes the zone of an object, resolve it. For these two types of abilities, the opponent chooses whether to resolve the ability the next time a player would get priority or when a player would get priority at the start of the next phase. These abilities do not expire and should be remedied no matter how much time has passed since they should have triggered.

If the ability was missed prior to the current phase in the previous player’s turn, instruct the players to continue playing. If the triggered ability created an effect whose duration has already expired, instruct the players to continue playing.

If the triggered ability isn’t covered by the previous two paragraphs, the opponent chooses whether the triggered ability is added to the stack. If it is, it’s inserted at the appropriate place on the stack if possible or on the bottom of the stack. No player may make choices involving objects that would not have been legal choices when the ability should have triggered. For example, if the ability instructs a player to sacrifice a creature, that player can’t sacrifice a creature that wasn’t on the battlefield when the ability should have triggered.

Upgrade: If the triggered ability is usually considered detrimental for the controlling player the penalty is a Warning. The current game state is not a factor in determining this, though symmetrical abilities (such as Howling Mine) may be considered usually detrimental or not depending on who is being affected

2.2. Game Play Error — Looking at Extra Cards

Warning

Definition

A player looks at a card they were not entitled to see. Players are considered to have looked at a card when they have been able to observe the face of a hidden card, or when a card is moved any significant amount from a deck, but before it touches cards in another set. A set is a physically distinct group defined by a game rule or effect. It may correspond to a specific zone, or may only represent a part of a zone. This includes errors of dexterity or catching a play error before the card is placed into his or her hand. Once a card has been placed into his or her hand, the offense is no longer Looking at Extra Cards.

A player is not considered to have looked at extra cards when he or she places a card face down on the table (without looking at the card) in an effort to count out cards.

This penalty is applied only once if one or more cards are seen in the same action or sequence of actions.

Examples

- A. A player accidentally reveals (drops, flips over) a card while shuffling her opponent’s deck.
- B. A player pulls up an extra card while drawing from his deck.

C. A player sees the bottom card of her deck when presenting it to her opponent for cutting/shuffling.

Philosophy

A player can accidentally look at extra cards easily and this infraction handles situations where a dexterity or rules error has led to a player seeing cards they shouldn't have. Once those cards have joined another set, the infraction is handled as a Hidden Card Error or Game Rule Violation.

Players should not use this penalty to get a “free shuffle” or to attempt to shuffle away cards they don't want to draw; doing so may be Unsporting Conduct — Cheating. Players also are not allowed to use this penalty as a stalling mechanism. The deck is already randomized, so shuffling in the revealed cards should not involve excessive effort.

Additional Remedy

Shuffle the random portion of the deck, including any previously unknown cards that were accidentally seen.

2.3. Game Play Error — Hidden Card Error

Warning

Definition

A player commits an error in the game that cannot be corrected by only publicly available information and does so without his or her opponent's permission.

This infraction only applies when a card whose identity is known to only one player is in a hidden set of cards both before and after the error. A set is a physically distinct group defined by a game rule or effect. It may correspond to a specific zone, or may only represent a part of a zone.

This infraction does not apply to simple dexterity errors, such as when a card being pulled off the library sticks to another card and is seen or knocked off the library. The cards themselves must be part of a distinct set.

Examples

- A. A player draws four cards after casting Ancestral Recall.
- B. A player scries two cards when he should only have scried one.
- C. A player resolves a Dark Confidant trigger, but forgets to reveal the card before putting it into her hand.
- D. A player has more cards in his hand than can be accounted for.
- E. A player casts Anticipate and picks up the top four cards of her library.
- F. A player, going first, draws for his turn.

Philosophy

Though the game state cannot be reversed to the ‘correct’ state, this error can be mitigated by giving the opponent sufficient knowledge and ability to offset the error so that it is less likely to generate advantage.

If cards are placed into a public zone, then their order is known and the infraction can be handled as a Game Rule Violation. Order cannot be determined from card faces only visible to one player unless the card is in a uniquely identifiable position (such as on top of the library, or as the only card in hand.)

Be careful not to apply this infraction in situations where a publicly-correctable error subsequently leads to an uncorrectable situation such as a Brainstorm cast using green mana. In these situations, the infraction is based on that root cause.

Information about cards previously known by the opponent, such as cards previously revealed while on the top of the deck or by a previous look at the hand, may be taken into account while determining the set of cards to which the remedy applies.

Always operate on the smallest set possible to remedy the error. This may mean applying the remedy to only part of a set defined by an instruction. For example, if a player resolves Collected Company, picks up three cards with one hand and then four cards with the other, the card causing the infraction is part of the set of four cards and should be removed from there.

Additional Remedy

In cases where the infraction was immediately followed by moving a card from the affected set to a known location, such as by discarding, putting cards on top of the library, or playing a land, a simple backup to the point just after the error may be performed.

If the set of cards that contained the problem no longer exists, there is no remedy to be applied.

If the error put cards into a set prematurely and other operations involving cards in the set should have been performed first, the player reveals the set of cards that contains the excess and his or her opponent chooses a number of previously-unknown cards. Put those cards aside until the point at which they should have been legally added, then return them to the set.

If the set contains more cards than it is supposed to contain, the player reveals the set of cards that contains the excess and his or her opponent chooses a number of previously-unknown cards sufficient to reduce the set to the correct size. The cards chosen are treated as excess cards (see below.)

If the error involves one or more cards that were supposed to be revealed, the player reveals the set of cards that contains the unrevealed cards and his or her opponent chooses that many previously-unknown cards. Treat those as the unrevealed cards for any required actions. If the cards chosen would not legally be in the set as a result, they are treated as excess cards.

Excess cards are returned to the correct zone. If that zone is the library, they should be shuffled into the random portion. The player does not repeat the instruction or partial instruction (if any) that caused the infraction.

Upgrade: If a face-down card cast using a morph ability is discovered during the game to not have a morph ability, the penalty is a Game Loss. If the player has one or more cards with a morph ability in hand, has not added cards to his or her hand since casting the card found in

violation, and has discovered the error themselves, the upgrade does not apply and they may swap the card for a card with a morph ability in hand.

2.4. Game Play Error — Mulligan Procedure Error

Warning

Definition

A player makes an error during the mulligan process. This infraction does not apply to errors made once pre-game procedures are complete.

Trivial process errors that provide no advantage, such as declaring an intent to mulligan early, are not an infraction.

Examples

- A. A player draws eight cards at the start of the game (instead of seven).
- B. A player draws seven cards at the start of the game (instead of six) after taking a mulligan.
- C. A player keeps her hand, scries, then mulligans again.
- D. A player chooses to not take a mulligan then takes a mulligan after seeing his opponent choose to take a mulligan.

Philosophy

Errors prior to the beginning of the game have a less disruptive option—a forced mulligan—that is not available at any other point during the game. However, players should not be incentivized to sit on the infraction until mulligan procedures are completed so that they can ‘discover’ the error at a point where it becomes a Hidden Card Error if they believe that is to their advantage. To encourage the offending player to report their error as early as possible, they are given their choice of remedy before the game begins.

If a player looks at the top card of his or her library after taking a mulligan, it is assumed that they have chosen to keep their hand unless they make it very clear that they intend to mulligan again, either verbally before looking or by picking up multiple cards from the top of their deck.

Additional Remedy

If the player has too many cards in hand, he or she may choose to reveal his or her hand, and his or her opponent chooses a card from it to be shuffled back into the library. If more than one excess card was drawn (for example, eight cards drawn during a mulligan to 6) his or her opponent continues removing cards until the correct number has been reached.

If cards are not removed from the hand this way (either due to an error that didn’t lead to too many cards, or by the player choosing not to reveal), that player takes an additional mulligan.

Players may continue taking mulligans after the remedy has been completed.

2.5. Game Play Error — Game Rule Violation

Warning

Definition

This infraction covers the majority of game situations in which a player makes an error or fails to follow a game procedure correctly. It handles violations of the Comprehensive Rules that are not covered by the other Game Play Errors.

Examples

- A. A player casts Wrath of God for 3W (actual cost 2WW).
- B. A player does not attack with a creature that must attack each turn.
- C. A player fails to put a creature with lethal damage into a graveyard and it is not noticed until several turns later.
- D. A Phyrexian Revoker is on the battlefield that should have had a card named for it.
- E. A player casts Brainstorm and forgets to put two cards back on top of his library.

Philosophy

While Game Rule Violations can be attributed to one player, they usually occur publicly and both players are expected to be mindful of what is happening in the game. It is tempting to try and “fix” these errors, but it is important that they be handled consistently, regardless of their impact on the game.

Additional Remedy

If the infraction falls into one of the following categories, and only into that category, perform the fix specified unless a simple backup is possible:

- If a player made an illegal choice (including no choice where required) for a static ability generating a continuous effect still on the battlefield, that player makes a legal choice. A simple backup to clear problems generated by the illegal choice may be considered.
- If a player forgot to draw cards, discard cards, or return cards from their hand to another zone, that player does so.
- If an object is in an incorrect zone either due to a required zone change being missed or due to being put into the wrong zone during a zone change, the identity of the object was known to all players, and it can be moved with only minor disruption to the state of the game, put the object in the correct zone.
- If attacker or blocker order has not been declared, the appropriate player orders them.

Otherwise, a backup may be considered or the game state may be left as is.

For most Game Play Errors not caught within a time that a player could reasonably be expected to notice, opponents receive a Game Play Error — Failure to Maintain Game State penalty. If the judge believes that both players were responsible for a Game Rule Violation, such as due to the existence of replacement effects or a player taking action based on another player's instruction, both players receive a Game Play Error — Game Rule Violation. For example, if a player casts Path to Exile on an opponent's creature and the opponent puts the creature into the graveyard, both players have committed this infraction.

2.6. Game Play Error — Failure to Maintain Game State

Warning

Definition

A player allows another player in the game to commit a Game Play Error and does not point it out immediately. If a judge believes a player is intentionally not pointing out other players' illegal actions, either for his or her own advantage, or in the hope of bringing it up at a more strategically advantageous time, they should consider an Unsporting Conduct — Cheating infraction. Not reminding an opponent about his or her triggered abilities is never Failure to Maintain Game State nor Cheating.

Examples

- A. A player's opponent forgets to reveal the card searched for by Worldly Tutor. It is not noticed until the end of turn.
- B. A player does not notice that his opponent has Armadillo Cloak on a creature with protection from green.

Philosophy

If an error is caught before a player could gain advantage, then the dangers of the ongoing game state becoming corrupted are much lower. If the error is allowed to persist, at least some of the fault lies with the opponent, who has also failed to notice the error.

3. TOURNAMENT ERRORS

Tournament errors are violations of the **Magic** Tournament Rules. If the judge believes that the error was intentional, he or she should consider Unsporting Conduct — Cheating. (Previous versions of the MIPG made reference in each section about how to handle an intentional violation; with the exception of Slow Play, all intentional violations are now evaluated as potential Unsporting Conduct — Cheating.)

If a player violates the **Magic** Tournament Rules in a way that is not covered by one of the infractions listed below, the judge should explain the appropriate procedure to the player, but not issue a penalty. Continued or willful disregard of these rules may require further investigation.

A second or subsequent Warning for a Tournament Error offense in the same category is upgraded to a Game Loss. For multi-day events, the penalty count for these infractions resets between days.

3.1. Tournament Error — Tardiness

Game Loss

Definition

A player is not in his or her seat at the beginning of a round, or has not completed tasks assigned within the time allocated. If a round begins before the previous round would have ended (due to all players finishing early), tardiness does not apply until the scheduled end of the previous round.

A player is not tardy at the start of a round if he or she has notified a judge of a delay, provided the delay is not excessive. Extra time may be given in these situations.

Examples

- A. A player arrives to her seat 5 minutes after the round begins.
- B. A player hands in his decklist after the time designated by the judge or organizer.
- C. A player loses his or her deck and cannot find replacement cards within the first 10 minutes of the round.
- D. A player sits at an incorrect table and plays the wrong opponent.

Philosophy

Players are responsible for being on time and in the correct seat for their matches, and for completing registrations in a timely manner. The Tournament Organizer may announce that they are giving the players some additional time before a penalty is issued. Otherwise, the penalty is issued as soon as the round begins.

Additional Remedy

The players are given a time extension corresponding to the length of the tardiness. A player not in his or her seat 10 minutes into the round will receive a Match Loss and be dropped from the tournament unless he or she reports to the Head Judge or Scorekeeper before the end of the round.

3.2. Tournament Error — Outside Assistance

Match Loss

Definition

A player, spectator, or other tournament participant does any of the following:

- Seeks play advice or hidden information about his or her match from others once he or she has sat for his or her match.
- Gives play advice or reveals hidden information to players who have sat for their match.
- During a game, refers to notes (other than Oracle™ pages) made before the official beginning of the current match.

These criteria also apply to any deck construction and draft portions of a limited tournament. Additionally, no notes of any kind may be made during a draft. Some team formats have additional communication rules that may modify the definition of this infraction.

Notes made outside the current match may only be referenced between games, and must have been in the player's possession since the beginning of the match.

Examples

- A. During a game, a player references play notes that were created before the tournament.
- B. A spectator points out the correct play to a player who had not solicited the information.

Philosophy

Tournaments test the skill of a player, not his or her ability to follow external advice or directions. Any strategy advice, play advice, or construction advice from an external source is considered outside assistance.

Visual modifications to cards, including brief text, that provide minor strategic information or hints are acceptable and not considered notes. Detailed instructions or complex strategic advice may not be written on cards. The Head Judge is the final arbiter on what cards and notes are acceptable for a tournament. Spectators who commit this infraction may be asked to leave the venue if they are not enrolled in the tournament.

3.3. Tournament Error — Slow Play

Warning

Definition

A player takes longer than is reasonably required to complete game actions. If a judge believes a player is intentionally playing slowly to take advantage of a time limit, the infraction is Unsporting Conduct — Stalling.

It is also slow play if a player continues to execute a loop without being able to provide an exact number of iterations and the expected resulting game state.

Examples

- A. A player repeatedly reviews his opponent's graveyard without any significant change in game state.
- B. A player spends time writing down the contents of an opponent's deck while resolving Thought Hemorrhage.
- C. A player takes an excessive amount of time to shuffle his deck between games.
- D. A player gets up from his seat to look at standings or goes to the bathroom without permission of an official.

Philosophy

All players have the responsibility to play quickly enough so that their opponents are not at a significant disadvantage because of the time limit. A player may be playing slowly without realizing it. A comment of "I need you to play faster" is often appropriate and all that is needed. Further slow play should be penalized.

Additional Remedy

An additional turn is awarded for each player, to be applied if the match exceeds the time limit. This turn extension occurs before any end-of-match procedure can begin and after any time extensions that may have been issued.

No additional turns are awarded if the match is already in additional turns, though the Warning still applies.

3.4. Tournament Error — Insufficient Shuffling

Warning

Definition

A player unintentionally fails to sufficiently shuffle his or her deck or portion of his or her deck before presenting it to his or her opponent or fails to present it to his or her opponent for further randomization. A deck is not shuffled if the judge believes a player could know the position or distribution of one or more cards in his or her deck.

Examples

- A. A player forgets to shuffle his library after searching for a card.
- B. A player searches for a card, then gives the deck a single riffle-shuffle before presenting the deck to her opponent.
- C. A player fails to shuffle the portion of his deck revealed during the resolution of a cascade ability.

Philosophy

Players are expected to shuffle their deck thoroughly when it is required and are expected to have the skill and understanding of randomization to do so. However, as the opponent has the opportunity to shuffle after the player does, the potential for advantage is lowered if tournament policy is followed.

Any time cards in a deck could be seen, including during shuffling, it is no longer shuffled, even if the player only knows the position of one or two cards. Players are expected to take care in shuffling not to reveal cards to themselves, their teammates, or their opponents.

A player should shuffle his or her deck using multiple methods. Patterned pile-shuffling alone is not sufficient. Any manipulation, weaving, or stacking prior to randomization is acceptable, as long as the deck is thoroughly shuffled afterwards.

Additional Remedy

Shuffle the random portion of the deck thoroughly.

3.5. Tournament Error — Deck/Decklist Problem

Game Loss

Definition

A player commits one or more of the following errors involving deck contents or registration:

- The deck or decklist contains an illegal number of cards for the format.
- The deck or decklist contains one or more cards that are illegal for the format.
- A card listed on a decklist is not identified by its full name, and could be interpreted as more than one card. Truncated names of storyline characters (legendary permanents and Planeswalkers) are acceptable as long as they are the only representation of that character in the format and are treated as referring to that card, even if other cards begin with the same name.
- The contents of the presented deck and sideboard do not match the decklist registered.

Sideboards are considered to be a part of the deck for the purpose of this infraction. If sideboard cards are missing, make a note of this, but issue no penalty.

This infraction does not cover errors in registration made by another participant prior to a sealed pool swap, which should be corrected at the discretion of the judge.

Cards that are obviously not part of the deck (e.g. cards in different sleeves, tokens) are ignored when determining deck legality.

Examples

- A. A player has 59 cards in her deck, but 60 listed on the decklist.
- B. A player in a Legacy tournament lists Mana Drain (a banned card) on his decklist.
- C. A player has a 56-card decklist. His actual deck contains 60 cards, with four Dispel's not listed.
- D. A player has a Pacifism in his deck from a previous opponent.
- E. A player lists 'Sarkhan' in a format with both Sarkhan, the Dragonspeaker and Sarkhan Unbroken.
- F. A player looking at her sideboard during a game fails to keep it clearly separate from her deck.

Philosophy

Decklists are used to ensure that decks are not altered in the course of a tournament. Judges and other tournament officials should be vigilant about reminding players before the tournament begins of the importance of submitting a legal decklist, and playing with a legal deck. A player normally receives a Game Loss if his or her decklist is altered after tournament play has begun.

Penalties for decklist errors discovered during a deckcheck and deck errors are issued immediately. Other decklist penalties are issued at the start of the next round to minimize the disruption to the match currently being played and provide consistency in case some players have finished playing their match before the penalty can be administered.

Ambiguous or unclear names on a decklist may allow a player to manipulate the contents of his or her deck up until the point at which they are discovered. The Head Judge may choose to not issue this penalty if they believe that what the player wrote on their decklist is obvious and unambiguous, even if it is not the full, accurate name of the card. In Limited events, the Head Judge may choose to not issue this penalty for incorrectly marked basic land counts if they believe the correct land count is obvious. This should be determined solely by what is written on the decklist, and not based on intent or the actual contents of the deck; needing to check the deck for confirmation is a sign that the entry is not obvious.

If the sideboard is not kept sufficiently separate from the deck during play, it becomes impossible to determine the legality of the deck. Additionally, if there are extra cards stored with the sideboard that could conceivably be played in the player's deck, they will be considered a part of the sideboard unless they are:

- Promotional cards that have been handed out as part of the tournament.
- Double-faced cards represented by checklist cards in the deck.
- Double-faced cards being used to represent the 'night' side of cards in the deck.

These cards must not be sleeved in the same way as cards in the main deck and/or sideboard.

Additional Remedy

Remove any cards from the deck that are illegal for the format or violate the maximum number allowed, fix any failures to de-sideboard, restore any missing cards if they (or identical replacements) can be located, then alter the decklist to reflect the remaining deck. If the remaining deck has too few cards, add basic lands of the player's choice to reach the minimum number; this change may be reverted at a later point if replacements for lost cards are found. If the deck and decklist both violate a maximum cards restriction (usually too many cards in a sideboard or more than four of a card), remove cards starting from the bottom of the appropriate section of the list.

Downgrade: If a deck is discovered to be missing cards after initial presentation and shuffling, and the missing cards can be located, the Head Judge may downgrade the penalty to a Warning and shuffle those cards back into the deck. If the missing card(s) are in the current opponent's deck, shuffle them into their owner's deck and issue Warnings to both players. If the missing card(s) are with the sideboard and it isn't the first game, choose the ones to be shuffled into the deck at random from all sideboard cards.

Downgrade: If a player, before taking any game actions, discovers incorrect cards in their deck and calls attention to it at that point, the Head Judge may issue a Warning, fix the deck, and, if the player has drawn their opening hand, instruct the player to mulligan. The player may continue to take further mulligans if desired.

3.6. Tournament Error — Limited Procedure Violation

Warning

Definition

A player commits a technical error during a draft.

Examples

- A. A player passes a booster to his left when it is supposed to go to his right.
- B. A player exceeds the amount of time allotted for a draft pick.
- C. A player puts a card on top of his draft pile, then pulls it back.

Philosophy

Errors in draft are disruptive and may become more so if they are not caught quickly. Announcements prior to the draft or the specific tournament rules for the format may specify additional penalties for Limited Procedure Violations.

3.7. Tournament Error — Communication Policy Violation

Warning

Definition

A player violates the Player Communication policy detailed in section 4.1 of the **Magic** Tournament Rules. This infraction only applies to violations of that policy and not to general communication confusion.

Examples

- A. A player is asked how many cards he has in his hand and answers “Three.” A few moments later, he realizes that he has four.
- B. A player claims she hasn’t played her land for the turn, but it is determined that she had and forgot.

Philosophy

Clear communication is essential when playing **Magic**. Though many offenses will be intentional, it is possible for a player to make a genuine mistake and these should not be penalized harshly. Refer to section 4.1 of the **Magic** Tournament Rules for a full explanation of the policy. It can be summarized as:

- Players must answer all questions asked of them by a judge completely and honestly, regardless of the type of information requested. Players may request to do so away from the match.
- Players may not represent derived or free information incorrectly.
- Players must answer completely and honestly any specific questions pertaining to free information.

Additional Remedy

A backup may be considered in cases where a player has clearly acted upon incorrect information provided to him or her by his or her opponent. The backup should be to the point of the action, not the erroneous communication.

3.8. Tournament Error — Marked Cards

Warning

Definition

The cards in a player's deck are marked or oriented in a way that could potentially give an advantage to that player.

Examples

- A. A player has small marks on a few of his sleeves. The markings are on a Mountain, a Loxodon Hierarch, and a Lightning Helix.
- B. A player without sleeves has several foil cards that stand out significantly from the rest of her deck.

Philosophy

Sleeves and cards often become worn over the course of a tournament, and, as long as the player is not attempting to take advantage of this, addressing the situation is sufficient in most cases. Note that almost all sleeves can be considered marked in some way; judges should keep this in mind when determining penalties. In cases of marked cards, educating players to shuffle their cards and sleeves before sleeving the cards is very important.

Additional Remedy

The player needs to replace the card(s) or sleeve(s) with an unmarked version or, if no sleeves are being used, use sleeves that conceal the markings. If the cards themselves have become marked through play in the tournament, the Head Judge may decide to issue a proxy. If the player is unable to find replacement cards, he or she may replace those cards with basic lands; this change may be reverted at a later point if replacements for marked cards are found.

Upgrade: If the Head Judge believes that a deck's owner noticing the pattern of markings would be able to take advantage of this knowledge, the penalty is a Game Loss.

4. UNSPORTING CONDUCT

Unsporting conduct is disruptive behavior that may affect the safety, competitiveness, enjoyment, or integrity of an event in a significantly negative fashion.

Being enrolled in the tournament is not a requirement to receive an Unsporting Conduct penalty. Although these guidelines refer to players, other people in the venue, such as spectators, staff, or judges are held to the same standard of behavior.

Unsporting behavior is not the same as a lack of sporting behavior. There is a wide middle ground of “competitive” behavior that is certainly neither “nice” nor “sporting” but still doesn’t qualify as “unsporting.” The Head Judge is the final arbiter on what constitutes unsporting conduct.

Judges should inform the player how his or her conduct is disruptive. The player is expected to correct the situation and behavior immediately. However, while making sure that the player understands the severity of his or her actions is important, judges should focus first on calming a situation, and deal with infractions and penalties afterwards.

4.1. Unsporting Conduct — Minor

Warning

Definition

A player takes action that is disruptive to the tournament or its participants. It may affect the comfort level of those around the individual, but determining whether this is the case is not required.

Examples

- A. A player uses excessively vulgar and profane language.
- B. A player inappropriately demands to a judge that her opponent receive a penalty.
- C. A player appeals to the Head Judge before waiting for the floor judge to issue a ruling.
- D. A player throws his deck on the ground after losing a game.
- E. A player leaves excessive trash in the play area after leaving the table.
- F. A player fails to follow the request of a tournament official, such as being asked to leave the play area.

Philosophy

All participants should expect a safe and enjoyable environment at a tournament, and a participant needs to be made aware if his or her behavior is unacceptable so that this environment may be maintained.

Additional Remedy

The player must correct the problem immediately. Subsequent Unsporting Conduct — Minor infractions, even for different offenses, will result in a Game Loss. If a Game Loss is issued for repeated infractions, and it occurs at the end of a game, it is acceptable for the judge to apply the penalty to the next game instead.

4.2. Unsporting Conduct — Major

Game Loss

Definition

A player takes action towards one or more individuals that could reasonably be expected to create a feeling of being harassed, threatened, bullied, or stalked. This may include insults based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Threats of physical violence should be treated as Unsporting Conduct – Aggressive Behavior.

It is possible for an offender to commit this infraction without intending malice or harm to the subject of the harassment.

Examples

- A. A player uses a racial slur against his opponent.
- B. A player takes inappropriate photos of another player without express permission.
- C. A player asks a spectator for a date, is denied, and continues to press the issue.
- D. A player purposefully obstructs another player with the intent of inducing physical contact.
- E. A spectator uses social media to bully another player.

Philosophy

A safe environment is a basic expectation of any tournament attendee. Harassment undermines the safety and integrity of a tournament. Players who purposefully create harmful or unwelcoming situations in an event are expected to immediately correct the behavior and demonstrate remorse or be removed.

Because of the confrontational nature of this infraction, judges need to end any match in progress and separate the players. Care should be taken not to escalate the situation if at all possible. The offender will be removed from the area to receive the penalty, and education about why the behavior is unacceptable regardless of excuse. They may need a few moments to cool down afterwards. Apologizing is encouraged, but the desire of the other individuals to not interact with their harasser must be respected.

Officials must investigate these matters as soon as they are brought to their attention. If they determine that the infraction does not meet the criteria for Unsporting Conduct – Major, it is still recommended that the players be talked to to avoid future misunderstandings.

Additional Remedy

The player must correct the behavior immediately. If the offense occurs at the end of a match, it is acceptable for the judge to apply the penalty to the next match instead.

Upgrade: If the offense was committed with malicious intent, the player displays no remorse, or the offense is repeated at a later time, the penalty is Disqualification and removal from the venue.

4.3. Unsporting Conduct — Improperly Determining a Winner

Disqualification

Definition

A player uses or offers to use a method that is not part of the current game (including actions not legal in the current game) to determine the outcome of a game or match.

Examples

- A. As time is called, two players about to draw roll a die to determine the winner.
- B. A player offers to flip a coin to determine the winner of a match.
- C. Two players arm wrestle to determine the winner of the match.
- D. Two players play rock-paper-scissors to decide if they should play the match or draw.
- E. Two players compare the converted mana costs of the top cards of their libraries to determine the winner of a game at the end of extra turns.
- F. Two players reveal cards from the top of their libraries to see “who would win” after extra turns.

Philosophy

Using an outside-the-game method to determine a winner compromises the integrity of the tournament.

Matches that result in a draw due to time are expected to be reported as such and are not excluded from this penalty if the players use an illegal method to determine the outcome.

In most cases this penalty will be issued to both players, unless the other player calls over a judge as soon as an inappropriate suggestion to determine the winner is made.

4.4. Unsporting Conduct — Bribery and Wagering

Disqualification

Definition

A player offers an incentive to entice an opponent into conceding, drawing, or changing the results of a match, or accepts such an offer. Refer to section 5.2 of the **Magic** Tournament Rules for a more detailed description of what constitutes bribery.

Wagering occurs when a player or spectator at a tournament places or offers to place a bet on the outcome of a tournament, match or any portion of a tournament or match. The wager does not need to be monetary, nor is it relevant if a player is not betting on his or her own match.

Examples

- A. A player in a Swiss round offers his opponent \$100 to concede the match.
- B. A player offers his opponent a card in exchange for a draw.
- C. A player asks for a concession in exchange for a prize split.
- D. Two players agree that the winner of the match will be able to choose a rare card out of the other person’s deck after the match.
- E. Two spectators place a bet on the number of games that will be needed to decide a match.

Philosophy

Bribery and wagering disrupt the integrity of the tournament and are strictly forbidden.

4.5. Unsporting Conduct — Aggressive Behavior

Disqualification

Definition

A player acts in a threatening way towards others or their property.

Examples

- A. A player threatens to hit another player who won't concede to him.
- B. A player pulls a chair out from under another player, causing her to fall to the ground.
- C. A player makes threats against a judge after receiving a ruling.
- D. A player tears up a card belonging to another player.
- E. A player intentionally turns over a table.

Philosophy

The safety of all people at a tournament is of paramount importance. There will be no tolerance of physical abuse or intimidation.

Additional Remedy

The offender should be asked to leave the venue by the organizer.

4.6. Unsporting Conduct — Theft of Tournament Material

Disqualification

Definition

A player steals material from the event, such as cards or tournament equipment.

Examples

- A. A player in a limited tournament pockets a foil rare that he opened in the sealed pool he is registering.
- B. A player steals cards from the sideboard of his opponent.
- C. A player steals the table number from a table.
- D. A player realizes she has a previous opponent's card, but she hides it instead of telling a tournament official.

Philosophy

Players enter a tournament expecting that their materials will be protected. This does not absolve the players from their responsibility to keep an eye on their possessions, but they should expect to be able to retain the product they began with or were given for the tournament. Other instances of theft not involving tournament materials are the responsibility of the Tournament Organizer, though judges are encouraged to help in any way possible.

Additional Remedy

The offender should be asked to leave the venue by the organizer.

4.7. Unsporting Conduct — Stalling

Disqualification

Definition

A player intentionally plays slowly in order to take advantage of the time limit. If the slow play is not intentional, please refer to Tournament Error — Slow Play instead.

Examples

- A. A player has two lands in his hand, no options available to significantly affect the game, and spends excessive time “thinking” about what to do to eat up time on the clock.
- B. A player is ahead in games and significantly slows down his pace of play so the opponent has little chance to catch up.
- C. A player playing slowly appeals a warning in an attempt to gain advantage by having more time to make a decision.
- D. A player intentionally mulligans slowly before the third game in an attempt to make it harder for his opponent to win in time.
- E. A player losing a game starts slowing down the pace of play in an attempt to run out the clock.

4.4. Unsporting Conduct — Cheating

Disqualification

Definition

A person breaks a rule defined by the tournament documents, lies to a tournament official, or notices an offense committed in his or her (or a teammate’s) match and does not call attention to it.

Additionally, the offense must meet the following criteria for it to be considered Cheating:

- The player must be attempting to gain advantage from his or her action.
- The player must be aware that he or she is doing something illegal.

If all criteria are not met, the offense is not Cheating and is handled by a different infraction. Cheating will often appear on the surface as a Game Play Error or Tournament Error, and must be investigated by the judge to make a determination of intent and awareness.

Examples

- A. A player alters the results of a match after the match is over.
- B. A player lies to a tournament official about what happened in a game to make his case stronger.
- C. A player allows her opponent to put a creature into the graveyard even though the creature has not been dealt lethal damage.
- D. A player notices that his opponent resolved only half of the triggered ability of Sword of Feast and Famine and decides not to call attention to the error.
- E. A player peeks at another player’s picks during the draft.
- F. A player adds cards to his Sealed Deck pool.
- G. A player realizes he has accidentally drawn an extra card, then fails to call a judge in order to avoid a penalty.

APPENDIX A — PENALTY QUICK REFERENCE

<u>Infraction</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
Game Play Errors	
Missed Trigger	None
Looking at Extra Cards	Warning
Hidden Card Error	Warning
Mulligan Procedure Error	Warning
Game Rule Violation	Warning
Failure to Maintain Game State	Warning
Tournament Errors	
Tardiness	Game Loss
Outside Assistance	Match Loss
Slow Play	Warning
Insufficient Shuffling	Warning
Deck/Decklist Problem	Game Loss
Limited Procedure Violation	Warning
Communication Policy Violation	Warning
Marked Cards	Warning
Unsporting Conduct	
Unsporting Conduct — Minor	Warning
Unsporting Conduct — Major	Match Loss
Improperly Determining a Winner	Disqualification
Bribery and Wagering	Disqualification
Aggressive Behavior	Disqualification
Theft of Tournament Material	Disqualification
Stalling	Disqualification
Cheating	Disqualification

APPENDIX B — CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS VERSIONS

April 8, 2016

- 1.4: Simple backups do not involve random elements.
- 2.1: Trigger acknowledgement needs to recognize the specific trigger.
- 2.1: A 'may' ability with no visible effect is assumed to have been chosen if acknowledged.
- 2.2: Cleanup to establish a clearer line between Looking at Extra Cards and Hidden Card Error.
- 2.3: Revamped infraction. Similar philosophy, but cleaner in handling edge cases.
- 2.4: Separate infraction to handle mulligan issues (those had been rolled into HCE).
- 2.5: Partial fixes only apply when entirely encompassed by the partial fix.
- 2.5: Partial fixes to address forgotten choices may back up problematic interactions that will result.
- 3.5: Cards that are clearly not part of a deck can be ignored when discovered.
- 3.5: More details on how to handle a card discovered missing during a game.
- 3.5: Self-call downgrade only needs to handle illegal cards, not missing ones.
- Appendix A:** Mulligan Procedure Error added.

January 22, 2016

- General:** Updated some examples to use more current cards.
- 1: Errors made by tournament staff may lead to downgrades.
- 2.1: Small tweaks to make acknowledgement for untargetted triggers a little clearer.
- 2.3: New infraction! DEC is replaced.
- 2.3: Morph upgrade moved here from 2.5.
- 2.4: No longer an infraction! Rolled into 2.3.
- 2.5: Update to object-in-wrong-zone. Also applies to objects that were supposed to move but didn't.
- 2.5: More judge discretion on issuing double GRVs. Applies to replacement effects, too.
- 3: Tournament Error upgrade counts reset between days.
- 3.5: Clarifying that modifying a decklist after play has begun should always come with a Game Loss.
- 3.5: Decks missing cards are only a Game Loss at the start of the game (assuming it's fixable).
- 3.6: Explicitly all about draft now. This isn't a change.
- 3.8: Opening sentence cleaned up.

October 14, 2015

- 2.2: Refers to Drawing Extra Cards under certain circumstances.
- 2.3: Situation where a set of cards is on top of the library has been rewritten to be clearer.

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