

FULLMETAL ALCHEMIST TCG RULEBOOK 2.1

Updated 7/13/06

Welcome!

You have in your hands a game based on the top-rated anime and manga series *Fullmetal Alchemist*™! *Fullmetal Alchemist* is the story of Edward and Alphonse Elric, two brothers who attempted the most forbidden of deeds: They tried to resurrect their mother using alchemy. Edward lost his arm and leg and Alphonse's entire body disappeared, though Ed was able to bind Al's soul into an empty suit of armor. Now the brothers seek to undo the wrongs they have done, and their adventures will lead them to the darkest secrets at the heart of the empire.

The *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG* lets you experience those adventures by taking on the role of Ed or Al Elric, Roy Mustang, or one of the other heroes — or villains — from the show.

As your search progresses, you'll gather allies and items to assist your search. You'll also meet one or more teams of opponents, who seek the Stone for their own purposes. You must beat them to the Stone, either by reaching it first or by removing the competition. The Philosopher's Stone is out there, and it's reputed to give alchemists almost godlike power — for good or for evil...

The *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG* can be played by two or more players. You can play it just as easily with one other person as you can with five, so invite all your friends to join the fun!

SO, HOW DOES THIS WORK?

Fullmetal Alchemist is a trading card game, or TCG. The various cards represent your leader, your leader's allies, equipment, locations, and special events. As you look through the cards, you'll see several different card types, and you'll also notice that some cards appear more frequently than others. There are dozens of different cards in the deck, and at this time, there are over 600 cards in the game. Every few months, *JoyRide Entertainment*™ releases expansion sets for the game, containing more new cards for you to collect and play with!

Most of the cards look the same, but there are exceptions: Some are printed with a shiny foil treatment, while others are printed on clear plastic! These cards are much rarer than other cards. In addition to the cards found in starter decks and booster packs, there are lots of promotional cards you can obtain at conventions and tournaments, in DVDs and magazines, and so on.

In a TCG, you don't play with all your cards at once. Rather, you build your own custom deck from the cards in your collection. You can play *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG* with just the cards in a starter deck, but you can also make your deck better. Once you've learned the rules and gotten a feel for the game, you'll want to pick up some booster packs, which contain more cards to help you tune your deck. You might even want to find leagues and tournaments in your area. After all, pitting your skills against other alchemists is the truest test of your ability!

GAME OVERVIEW

First, we'll introduce the concepts of the game. You can skip ahead to the main rules section if you want, referring back to this section as needed.

You will head up a team of adventurers, equip them, and send them out to a different location each turn. While there, you'll likely encounter other players' teams and do battle over the clues to the Philosopher's Stone at those locations. The value of those clues is represented by a number in the upper-left corner of the location card. **If you can win 9 points' worth of locations, or eliminate the opposition, you win!**

Card Types

There are five card types in the *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG*:

Characters are the heroes and villains of the game. Their names are printed in an ornamental gothic typeface, they have a subtitle, and they have a variety of attributes. There are two types of characters: **leaders** and **allies**.

- **Leaders** are the most important characters in the game. In essence, you are your leader, directing your team. Leader cards have a green banner in their upper-left corner.

C **10** **A** **Edward Elric**
In-Patient **F**

B

G **6** **Human • State Alchemist • Hero** **J** **3**
Your hero allies get +1 alchemy.

H **5** **Search Alchemy 9:** Reduce target character's wits to 0.

I **7** **K** **L**
"You drink it. I hate milk—it's like drinking vomit."

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LEADER CARD

E **2** **A** **Military Records**

B

K **L**
Military Records can only be played if your leader is a Military character.

K **L**
Search Wits 5: Draw 1 card.

L
"Wait a minute. Wasn't the original cause of the war in Ishbal a soldier named... Douglas?" —Maes Hughes

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ADVANTAGE CARD

E **8** **A** **Roy Mustang**
Daring Gambler **F**

B

G **4** **Human • Soldier • State Alchemist • Hero**
Search Alchemy: Target this location. Reduce its attribute goal by 3.

H **5** **K** **L**
"Be careful, Roy. You've got some enemies around here in very high places."
—Maes Hughes

I **6**

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ALLY CARD

E **8** **A** **Cannon**

B

G **+1** **Weapon**
Battle Strength 7: Target character cannot play events or abilities until the end of the battle.

H **K** **L**
"I'll never surrender the spring! As long as I have the red water, nothing can stop me!"
—Mugear

I

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ATTACHMENT CARD



EVENT CARD



LOCATION CARD

CARD ELEMENTS

-  Command
-  Cost (ally/advantage)
-  Cost (attachment)
-  Clue points
-  Strength
-  Wits
-  Alchemy
-  Level
-  Elric faction
-  Military faction
-  Homunculus faction
-  Rebel faction

- **Allies** are other heroic or villainous people who will join you in your quest. Collectively, your leader and allies make up your team. Allies look much like leaders, but instead of a green banner in the upper-left corner, they have a gold coin.

Advantages play on the table and provide a lasting effect or give your characters the ability to perform additional actions. Like allies, they have a gold coin in the upper-left corner, but have a blue background and no attribute icons.

Attachments play on your characters and give them a variety of benefits. They have all the same attribute icons that allies do and have a silvery coin in the upper-left corner.

Events provide powerful effects, but do not remain in play the way other cards do. They have only one icon, located in the upper-left corner, which can be any of the attribute icons found on characters.

Locations represent specific places in the world, where important clues to the Philosopher's Stone can be found. They have a clue-point icon in the upper-left corner, shaped like a red Philosopher's Stone.

Card Identification Guide

A) Name and subtitle. Many character cards have the same name, but different subtitles.

B) Illustration. A scene from *Fullmetal Alchemist*.

C) Command. Only **leader** cards have command. It's a number inside a green flag that shows how forceful, powerful, and persuasive the leader is. It affects how many allies the leader can recruit, as well as how powerful those allies can be.

D) Clue points. Only **location** cards have clue points. This shows how valuable the information provided by this location is.

E) Cost. **Allies, attachments, advantages,** and most **events** have a cost in the upper-left corner. The higher the number, the more difficult it is to get the card into play.

- For **allies** and **advantages**, this number is inside a gold coin.
- For **attachments**, this number is inside a silver coin.
- For **events**, this number can be inside any of the icons used for attributes (see below).

F) Faction. Only **characters** have factions. These symbols indicate where the character's loyalties lie. There are four factions in the game: **Elric, Military, Homunculus,** and **Rebel**. Some cards are unaligned, meaning that they are not part of any faction.

G) Strength. For **leaders** and **allies**, this number indicates how good the character is at all things physical. For **attachments**, this indicates the strength bonus that card gives the character it's attached to.

H) Wits. For **leaders** and **allies**, this number indicates the character's intelligence, wisdom, and education. For **attachments**, this indicates the wits bonus that card gives the character it's attached to.

I) Alchemy. For **leaders** and **allies**, this number indicates the character's speed and skill at alchemy. For **attachments**, this indicates the alchemy bonus that card gives the character it's attached to.

J) Level. Found only on **leaders**, this is an indication of how experienced your leader is. As the game progresses, your leader's level will increase.

K) Text box. This area includes keywords (found in bold at the top of the text box), traits (which are special game terms that give characters special restrictions or abilities), abilities (which tell what the card does), and flavor text (usually a quote from the series). Many cards have their own built-in actions, preceded by text like **Main Alchemy 5:** or **Battle Strength 4:**.

L) Collector's information. This tells the card's rarity, set, and its card number in the set. The rarity can be **common (C), uncommon (U), rare (R), fixed (F), chase (X, SIG, or PC),** or **transmuted (T)**. The set designator indicates what set the card is from: **Premier Edition (FMA), Blood & Water (BW), Artificial Human (AH),** or **A Hero's Passing (HP)**. Promo cards have a number of other identifiers, depending on how the promo is obtained.

GAME RULES

These rules tell you all you need to know about playing the game. Visit our website, www.fma-tcg.com, to download Current Rulings Documents and other information about the game.

How to Win

There are two ways to win in the *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG*.

- Find enough clues to locate the fabled Philosopher's Stone by **winning 9 clue points' worth of location cards** (described on page 12).
- At any time, if a player's team only consists of defeated characters (described on page 5), that player is eliminated from the game. **If you are the only player left, you win!**

Your leader is the centerpiece of your team; he or she holds your team members together and keeps them on task. If your leader is somehow

removed from play, your team disbands and you lose the game.

The Golden Rule

While these rules describe how to play the game, the cards themselves are the heart of the game. Many cards contain text that appears to break the rules. This is perfectly normal and is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the game!

In all cases, when a card's text contradicts the rules, the card's text takes precedence.

Play or Pass

“Play or Pass” is the foundation of the *Fullmetal Alchemist* TCG. Most phases of a turn use the Play-or-Pass structure, which allows all players to participate in each phase of the turn, instead of making some players wait while one player goes through all the steps of a turn.

At the start of each phase and at the start of the action step of the search phase, determine the **active player**. This is the player with the most wits on all his characters; in the case of the action step of the search phase (see page 11), this is the player with the most wits on his characters in his search party only. In case of a tie, use the wits of each player's leader as a tiebreaker. If a leader is not present (defeated or not in the search party), then the player(s) with the missing leader loses the tie, unless no player has a leader present. If there is still a tie, determine the active player randomly. Some abilities can modify this total, and others can change what attribute is used.

The active player may take one action appropriate to that phase (play) or do nothing (pass). Then the player to the active player's left becomes the new active player, and likewise gets a chance to play or pass. Play continues clockwise around the table, with each player taking one action at a time in turn.

A player who has passed earlier in a phase can still act later in that phase. It's possible for a player to pass several times in a row and then take additional actions as the phase continues.

When all players pass consecutively, the phase (or action step of the search phase) ends.

Character States

Characters in play have three states: **ready**, **set**, and **defeated**.

A **ready** character is available for any action that its owner wishes to take. All characters enter the game ready.

A **set** character has been used for a difficult task. In game terms, this means that the character has been used this turn for an action that requires the character to become set (attacking, for instance). You can indicate this by rotating the card sideways or upside-down or by using tokens; use whatever method is easiest and clearest. A character that has been set suffers no ill effects but can't play actions that require setting the card until it becomes ready again. A set character still defends as normal, can be used to play events, can play abilities, recruit allies, etc. All set cards are usually reset (become ready) at the end of the turn.

A **defeated** character is turned face down, usually to indicate that the character has lost a battle. Defeated cards have attributes of zero, no keywords, and no text, except for purposes of uniqueness (the **Mob** keyword and **Unique** trait still apply). They still have their name, faction, command or cost, and count toward your team size, but can't play actions, play abilities, receive attachments, or be attacked. (Defeated leaders can gain experience.) Also, all abilities on attachments on defeated characters are negated.

Factions

There are four factions: **Elric**, **Military**, **Homunculus**, and **Rebel**. Your leader has to pay extra to recruit an ally that doesn't match his faction. In addition, some cards are unaligned (have no faction).

Abilities

Many cards have game text on them. This game text may include **keywords**, **traits**, **activated abilities**, **passive abilities**, or **augment abilities**.

Keywords appear in bold at the top of the text box. These give more information about the card and what it is, but do not grant extra abilities, with two exceptions: The **Mob** keyword allows your team to have more than one copy of that character in play at a time, and the **Auto-mail** keyword on attachments allows you to have more than one card with that keyword attached to a character. See page 14 for more on these keywords.

Traits are special terms found beneath the keywords that give a card special abilities or restrictions. They are, in effect, shorthand for passive or activated abilities (see below) and should be treated as such. Examples of traits include **Toughness**, **Unique**, and **Stealth**. See page 15 for more on traits.

Activated abilities are game effects that you choose to play. Activated abilities start out with bold text that looks like **Main Wits** or **Battle Strength** or **React Alchemy**. Activated abilities on characters can only be played by that character. Activated abilities on attachments can only be played by the character bearing the attachment.

Passive abilities, like “All Military characters gain +1 strength and +1 wits,” have no bold text at all. You cannot choose when to play those abilities; they are always in effect. Passive abilities on characters at home still affect characters in the search party.

Augment abilities are played only when you recruit an ally with an augment ability. You can elect to pay additional command equal to the number after **Augment**. If you do so, you immediately play the effect found after the colon.

Bonuses and Penalties

An attribute **bonus** is created by an event, ability, or attachment that raises an attribute by a stated amount (such as +3) or raises an attribute to a stated amount, which should be treated as a +X bonus, where X is the amount the attribute is being changed by.

An attribute **penalty** is created by an event, ability, or attachment that reduces an attribute by a stated amount (such as -2) or reduces an attribute to a stated amount, which should be treated as a -X penalty, where X is the amount the attribute is being changed by.

Attribute bonuses and penalties from **Battle** abilities and events last until the end of that battle. Attribute bonuses and penalties from all other abilities and events last until end of that phase.

Playing Abilities and Events

Most characters, attachments, and advantages have abilities in their text that players can activate during the course of a turn; all events

have text that is activated when the event is played. In all cases below, we use “ability” to refer to “activated ability” (see page 5); passive abilities and augment abilities use different rules. All events and activated abilities follow the same basic rules:

When can I play an ability or event?

Each ability or event starts with the name of a phase (**Recruit**, **Main**, **Search**, or **Cleanup**), **Battle**, or **React**. This indicates the phase that ability or event can be played in. **Battle** abilities can only be played during a battle. You can’t play abilities or events that start with a phase during a battle, regardless of when the battle was initiated.

React abilities and events are different. The card will tell you when it can be played (“When this character comes into play,” “When you declare an attack,” etc.). The normal sequence of play stops while you play your react. Once the react is resolved, play resumes from where it left off. Playing a react does not count as a player’s “turn” in the Play-or-Pass structure.

Other rules regarding reacts:

- If another player reacts to your react, then your react is suspended while that player performs his react, then you perform yours, and so on.
- If multiple players want to react to the same action, then the player to the left of the currently active player gets the first opportunity to react. If he passes, then the next player gets a chance to react, and so on.

Who can play an ability or event?

Every time you play an event card or an ability printed on an advantage, you must choose a character to play it. Abilities on characters are played by the character; abilities on attachments are played by the character bearing the attachment.

- Any ready or set (but not defeated) character can play abilities or events, except as noted below. Also, set characters cannot play abilities or events that include “Set” in the cost; see “Costs,” below.
- During a battle, characters can play an ability or event if they are in the same area (home or search party) as the attacker or defender or if they are in any

search party (during the search phase), unless the ability refers to “this battle,” in which case only a character in the battle can play the ability or event.

Example: During the search phase, Player A’s character (in a search party) with **Stealth** attacks Player B’s character (at home). The characters in Player A’s search party, Player B’s search party, and Player B’s home can play events and abilities.

- During the search phase, only a character in a search party can play an ability or event. This includes both **Search** and **React** abilities played during the search phase. **Exception:** A character at home can play an ability that moves that character into the search party.
- Each ability can only be played once per turn. A character can’t play an ability that has already been played this turn.

How do I play an ability or event?

Designate the character playing the ability or event. That character must meet the requirements above, under “Who can play an ability or event?” as well as these additional requirements:

- In the case of an ability printed on a character (or granted to a character by another card), only the character with the ability printed on his or her card can play the ability.
- In the case of an ability printed on an attachment, only the character bearing the attachment can play the ability.
- In the case of an ability printed on an advantage or an event, you must designate a character who can legally play it. That character is considered to be playing that ability or event.

What can be targeted by an ability or event?

After you’ve determined who is playing the ability or event, you must choose the target of the event. Many abilities and events have targeting limitations printed on them, like “Target human ally” or “Target Elric leader.”

Apart from those restrictions, any character who can play an ability or event can also be targeted by an ability or event. Thus, during the search phase, only characters in a search party can be targeted by an ability or event; during a battle in the search phase between two characters in

search parties, all characters in the search parties can be targeted by abilities and events, and so on. Also, during the search phase, attachments on characters in the search party can be targeted, as well as advantages (which are located at home).

An ability or event that refers to “this character” or “this battle” can only target the character playing it or a character in the battle, respectively.

Some cards target an “opposing” character or player. An “opposing” character is one that belongs to another player. In a battle, an “opposing” card is one that is involved in the battle and belongs to another player; an “opposing” player is the player who controls the character(s) you are battling against.

What is the cost of an event?

After choosing target(s), you must meet all costs of the ability or event. Most abilities and events have an attribute followed by a number, such as **Strength 4** or **Alchemy 7**. The character playing the ability or event must have an attribute score of at least that much or higher to play the event (but see “Equivalent Exchange,” below). If there is no number, then the ability or event has a cost of 0 and any character can play the event or ability. This does not “use up” a character’s attribute. The attribute is not lowered, and that character can play more abilities and events using his full attribute score.

Some abilities and events have other costs, such as discarding cards or setting characters. All costs are listed before the colon (:) in the text and must be paid before the ability or event can be resolved. During the search phase, a character at home cannot meet costs (by setting or sacrificing) of an ability or event played by a character in a search party, and vice versa.

A cost of “Set” means that the character playing the ability or event must set to play it; if he is already set, he cannot play it.

A cost of **1** means that a player must discard one random experience card beneath his leader. If the leader has no experience, then the card cannot be played.

Some abilities and events have a cost of **X**. If the card doesn’t specify the value of X (such as “X is equal to the clue-point value of this location.”), then you can choose the value of X

when you play the card. All instances of X on the card are changed to that value.

For instance, suppose you play an event that says, “**Main Wits X**: Set target character with cost X.” If your character had wits of 4, you could change X to 4, so the event reads, “**Main Wits 4**: Set target character with cost 4.” You could set X to any value, to set a character with any cost; however, if X is greater than your character’s attribute, you will have to pay for the event with Equivalent Exchange, see below.

After you’ve played and fully resolved an event, place the event card in your discard pile. Nothing is discarded when you play an ability (unless a discard was part of the cost or effect), but no ability can be played more than once per turn.

But what about....?

Finally, some cards break the rules listed above. For instance, some abilities can be played by a character at home during the search phase or a battle. Such cards take precedence over the rules.

Equivalent Exchange

If the cost for an event or attachment card or an activated ability is higher than your character’s relevant attribute (or command/cost, in the case of an attachment), you can discard cards from your hand to lower the cost by one per card discarded.

For example, suppose you want to play a card that costs **Alchemy 4** and the character you want to play the card only has an alchemy attribute of 2. If you discard two cards from your hand, the cost drops by two to **Alchemy 2**, and your character can now meet the cost.

You can only use Equivalent Exchange to lower an attribute or attachment cost. You can’t use it to lower the cost of an ally or advantage or to pay for other costs (experience, setting, etc.). You can’t use Equivalent Exchange to lower a cost to zero.

DECKBUILDING

In order to play the game, each player must have a main deck, a location deck, and a leader stack. Your leader stack represents the main character, that you will use for the game. The main deck represents the resources available to your leader. The location deck contains the places your team will look for the Philosopher’s Stone.

Main Deck

Your main deck (often called just “deck”) must contain at least 60 cards, with no more than three copies of any card with the same title and subtitle. Your deck can’t contain any leaders or locations.

Location Deck

Your location deck is separate from your main deck and must contain at least nine location cards, with no more than one copy of any card.

Leader Stack

Your leader stack is also separate from your main deck. It may have any number of cards, but all cards must have the same leader name. You can’t have more than one leader card of any level. You also can’t skip levels; that is, there must be a leader card for each level, up to the highest-level leader in the stack. For example, you can’t have leader cards of only levels 1 and 3 in your leader stack; you must have a level 2 card as well.

SETUP

Players sit around a playing space. The area directly in front of each player is called the **home** for that player’s team. The center of the table is called the **search area**. Finally, each player needs space for his or her main deck, leader stack, location deck, and victory pile for locations that player has won.

Arrange your leader stack so that the cards are face down in numerical order by level, with your level 1 leader on top and your highest-level leader on the bottom. Each player turns his level 1 leader face-up and puts it into play in that player’s home. Then each player searches his deck for a number of ally cards, subject to the following restrictions, and puts them into play:

- If you have a leader with the **Hero** keyword, you can’t play allies with the **Villain** keyword, and vice versa.
- The total cost of all allies played must be less than or equal to your leader’s command.
- You can’t have more allies in play than your leader’s command.
- You can’t play an ally with the same name as your leader.
- You can’t have more than one ally in play with the same name, unless those allies have the **Mob** keyword.

- You can only start the game with allies who share a faction as your leader or are unaligned.
- You can't start the game with advantages in play.

Characters brought into play at the beginning of the game are not recruited. Therefore, effects that reduce recruit cost do not apply. Also, no player can take actions during this step, so **React** abilities on cards cannot be played. However, any passive effect that adds or changes a faction on characters will allow you to start with characters who have acquired the new faction.

Each player shuffles his main deck and location deck and presents them to an opponent to cut. Each player then draws four cards from his main deck to form a starting hand. Then it's time to play!

PHASES OF THE TURN

Sequence of Play

Each turn of the *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG* consists of six phases. Several phases are broken up into sub-phases, or steps:

1. Draw Phase

- Draw 2 cards
- Play location(s)

2. Power-up Phase

- Add experience or advance

3. Recruit Phase

- Play allies or advantages or take **Recruit** actions

4. Main Phase

- Play attachments or take **Main** actions

5. Search Phase

- Assignment Step
- Action Step: Play **Search** actions or start battles
- Victory Step

6. Cleanup Phase

- Home step: All characters go home
- Action step: Play **Cleanup** actions
- Recovery step: Recover and reset characters, and discard defeated characters

Battles, which usually occur in the search phase, have their own steps:

Battles

- Maneuver Step: Attacker declares attacks; defender may block
- Action Step: Attacker and defender play **Battle** actions
- Resolution Step: Highest attribute total wins; character are defeated

1. Draw Phase

Each player draws two cards from the top of his deck and adds those cards to his hand. There is no maximum hand size.

Next, the player(s) with the fewest total clue points (excluding players with no cards in their location decks) reveals the top card of his location deck. (All players start the game with zero points). The player who reveals the location with the lowest clue value plays that location in the search area (center of the table); in case of a tie, the active player decides what location will be used that turn. All other players place the cards they revealed face down on the bottom of their location decks.

2. Power-up Phase

During the course of the game, your leader will gain experience. This will allow you to use the higher-level (and more powerful) leader cards in your leader stack.

In this phase, each player must take one (and only one) of the following actions:

- **Add Experience.** Take the top card of your main deck and, without looking at it, place it face-down beneath your leader. The number of cards under your leader is that leader's experience. If an ability allows you to get experience at some other point in the turn, do it the same way.
- **Advance your leader.** If your leader has more experience than his level (two or more for a level 1 leader, three or more for a level 2 leader, etc.), your leader advances to the next level.

To advance your leader, first place all experience cards beneath your leader into the discard pile. Then place your current leader back in your leader stack, replacing it with the next leader

card from your leader stack. All cards attached to your old leader transfer to your new leader.

You are never required to advance your leader. If you choose not to, just add one experience to your leader instead. However, you *must* perform one of these two actions during the power-up phase, unless you have no cards in your main deck and don't have enough experience to advance your leader. A leader cannot gain experience and level up in the same power-up phase.

3. Recruit Phase

During this phase, you build and strengthen your team by recruiting new allies to your cause.

The recruit phase uses Play or Pass (see page 5). At the start of the phase, determine the active player. The active player takes one of the following actions:

- **Recruit one ally.** Play an ally from your hand onto your team.
- **Replace one ally.** Replace an ally on your team with a different version of that same ally from your hand.
- **Dismiss one ally.** Place an ally and all of that ally's attachments into your discard pile.
- **Play an advantage.** Play an advantage from your hand to your home.
- **Play an event or an ability.** Play an event from your hand or play an ability on a card in play that can be played during the recruit phase (see page 6).
- **Pass.** Do nothing.

Play then goes around the table, with each player taking an action or passing, until everyone passes consecutively, ending the recruit phase.

Recruit Allies

Ally cards represent characters who have sworn to help your leader. During this phase, you may recruit an ally each time your turn comes around, with the following restrictions:

- If you have a leader with the **Hero** keyword, you can't recruit allies with the **Villain** keyword, and vice versa.
- You can't recruit an ally if it would make you have more allies in play than your leader's command.

- You can't play an ally with the same name as your leader.
- You can't have more than one character in play with the same name, unless those characters have the **Mob** keyword.

When you play a character, it costs your leader command. On any turn, your leader can only recruit allies (and advantages, below) with a total cost up to his command. Recruiting does not lower a leader's command for purposes of playing attachments (see page 11).

Most characters belong to a faction. Your leader may recruit allies of the same faction, as well as allies with no faction, with no penalty. Recruiting an ally that does not share a faction with your leader costs your leader one additional command to recruit.

Replacing Allies

You can't have more than one ally with the same name on your team (except for allies with the **Mob** keyword). However, you may replace an ally on your team with a different version (i.e., a different subtitle) that you have in your hand. To do so, replace the ally in play with the new version and place your original ally in the discard pile. Transfer all attachments attached to the old version to the new version.

When you replace an ally, the ally still costs your leader command as if the ally were recruited normally (including out-of-faction penalty). If you replace a set or defeated ally, the new ally comes into play set or defeated, respectively.

Also see **Augment** (see page 15).

Dismissing Allies

You may find yourself in a position where your current allies aren't helping you, or you don't have room on your team for anyone else. In this case, you can voluntarily dismiss allies on your team to make room for new recruits. Simply choose the ally you want to dismiss, and place that ally, along with all cards attached to that ally, into the discard pile.

Playing Advantages

Advantages are cards that play to your home and stay there until they are somehow removed from play (typically by another card). Like allies, advantages have a cost; the total cost of all allies and advantages played in a turn cannot exceed

your leader's command. Finally, you can't have more than one advantage with the same name in your home.

4. Main Phase

The main phase is where teams outfit themselves with quality gear and undertake other, more nefarious activities...

The main phase uses Play or Pass (see page 5). At the start of the main phase, determine the active player. The active player may choose one of the following actions:

- **Play an attachment.** Choose one of your characters, meet costs, and place that attachment from your hand on that character.
- **Play an event or an ability.** Play an event from your hand or play an ability on a card in play that can be played during the main phase (see page 6).
- **Pass.** Do nothing.

Play then goes around the table, with each player taking an action or passing, until everyone passes consecutively, ending the main phase.

Playing Attachments

Attachments play on a character and usually improve a character's attributes or grant the character extra abilities.

Attachments have a cost in the upper-left corner. An attachment can only play on a character if the attachment's cost is less than or equal to the character's cost or command (however, see Equivalent Exchange, page 8). Thus a leader (or ally) with 6 command (or cost) can receive any number of attachments, so long as each attachment has a cost of 6 or less.

A character can't have more than one attachment with any given keyword. For example, a character can have both an **Item** card and a **Weapon** card, but not two **Item** cards. (**Exception:** A character may have two attachments with the **Auto-mail** keyword.)

You can, however, replace one attachment with another, if the two attachments share one or more keywords. To do so, play an attachment that shares keywords with the new attachment you want to play. Place the old attachment(s) in the discard pile.

Playing Events or Abilities

See page 6 for more on playing events and abilities. Only events and abilities that start with **Main** can be played in this phase. Unless the card text specifically says otherwise, abilities can only be played once per turn.

5. Search Phase

During the search phase, players send their teams out to find clues that lead them to the Philosopher's Stone. Inevitably, these groups encounter each other and compete for control of the location in play.

Each location dictates what type of combat occurs there (a battle of alchemy, wits, or strength, though some locations have multiple battle types) and what it takes for someone to win that location and score its clue points. This is called the goal of the location (see below).

Assignment Step

First, starting with the player whose team has the *lowest* total wits (or strength or alchemy, if one of those attributes is being used to determine the active player, along with any modifiers to determine the active player) and continuing clockwise around the table, each player assigns none, some, or all of his or her ready characters to a search party to try to win the location. Players should push these characters out into the search area so that everyone can tell which characters are in the search party. Note that players only get one opportunity to assign characters; this step does not use Play-or-Pass.

Action Step

Once all players have committed their characters to search parties, Play-or-Pass begins. Determine the active player, using only the wits of characters in the search party. The active player can perform one of the following search actions:

- **Initiate a battle.** If you have one or more characters that are eligible to attack, and there's at least one eligible target for an attack, you may begin a battle (see **Battles**, page 12). Characters must be in a search party to attack another character or be attacked by another character, although the **Stealth** trait (page 15) allows a character in the search party to attack a character at home. The battle sequence suspends the search phase until the battle is finished.

- **Play an event or an ability.** Play an event from your hand or play an ability on a card in play that can be played during the search phase (see page 6).
- **Pass.** Do nothing.

Play then goes around the table, with each player taking an action or passing, until everyone passes consecutively, ending the search phase.

Victory Step

Once everyone has passed consecutively, players determine who, if anyone, has won the location.

Each location has card text that indicates what it takes to win that location and recover the clue that the location holds. This is usually shown by the word **Goal:** and followed by an attribute and difference (such as “Alchemy +4”). Some locations list an additional requirement, such as “A mob character” or “An attachment.” To win the location, a player must have high enough total attributes (see below) and any additional requirements in the search party.

To win a location, the attribute total of all of your characters in your search party must be greater than the total of each other search party by the point difference. For example, if a location has “**Goal:** Alchemy +4,” then the total alchemy of the characters in your search party must be at least four points higher than the total alchemy of every other single player’s search party. If a location has a difference of zero (“**Goal:** Alchemy +0”), then you simply must have a higher attribute total than every other search party.

When a player wins a location card, he or she places it into his or her victory pile. If the location was not won by any player, the player who owns that location puts that card face down at the bottom of his or her location deck.

Each location has a clue point value. Once you have won 9 or more clue points’ worth of locations and have more points than any other player you win!

6. Cleanup Phase

In the cleanup phase, all players follow these directions, in this order:

- **Home step.** Return all characters still in search parties to their respective home areas.

- **Action step.** Next, if any player has any cleanup actions (abilities or events) he wishes to perform, determine the active player and use the Play-or-Pass method to take turns playing actions.

- **Recovery step.** Next, each player can recover characters by discarding an ally card from his hand with the same title as one of his defeated characters (though the two cards may have different subtitles). Even if a player can’t recover any characters in this fashion, he may recover one character for “free.” At this point, if your leader is still defeated, you *must* recover your leader. To recover a defeated character, turn that card face up and reset it. Then, discard all remaining defeated characters and reset all remaining characters.

Battles

Like the anime and manga, the *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG* is full of fighting. The teams fight each other in a variety of places to obtain vital clues to the location of the Philosopher’s Stone or, better yet, the secrets of its creation. Fighting over a location can and usually will involve several battles between various characters.

While most battles occur during the search phase, event cards and abilities can start battles at any time. Once a battle has been declared, normal gameplay is suspended until the battle is resolved. Once the battle is resolved, play continues normally from where it left off, with the person to the left of the player that started the battle becoming the next active player.

There are three types of battles, each based on the three attributes: strength, wits, or alchemy. If the battle was started by an event or ability, the event or ability stipulates what type of battle occurs. For battles initiated with a search action, the location in the search area dictates what type of combat occurs. This is indicated by the word **Battle:** followed by the type(s) of battle that occurs there. If multiple choices exist for the type of battle, then the attacker chooses.

There are three steps to the battle sequence: the **maneuver step**, the **action step**, and the **resolution step**.

Maneuver Step

When a battle begins, the attacker first chooses any number of his ready characters and declares an attack by setting those cards. The attacker then chooses a single character controlled by another player to be attacked. That character is the defending character and that player becomes the defender.

Some card effects allow the defender to “block” the attack. To block an attack, the defender sets the blocking character and declares that the character is blocking. This character is now defending against the attack, and the original target(s) of the attack is no longer involved in the battle. Setting is a cost of blocking; set characters cannot block, even if an ability does not require them to set while blocking. After a character blocks, he is considered to be a “blocking character” for the remainder of the battle and is affected by cards that affect a “blocking character.”

Once attackers and defenders are determined, the battle between those characters starts.

Action Step

A battle action step uses Play or Pass (see page 5). The attacker begins as the active player. Each player (even those not involved in the battle) now has the chance to take actions to affect the outcome of the battle. Beginning with the attacking player and proceeding to the left, each player has the option to:

- **Play an event or an ability.** Play an event from your hand or play an ability on a card in play that can be played during a battle (see page 6).
- **Pass.** Do nothing.

Once everyone has passed consecutively, the action step ends and players go to the resolution step.

Resolution step

In this step, the outcome of the battle is determined. While battles may involve strength, wits, or alchemy, the rules will use strength as an example. Battles using the other attributes are handled identically.

The player with the most strength on his characters is considered the “winner” of the battle. The other player is the “loser” of the

battle. If the two sides have equal strength, the battle is a tie.

Each player chooses a number of opposing characters in the battle with a total strength equal to or less than the strength of that player’s characters. Players must choose opposing characters as long as they have strength remaining, ignoring any characters who cannot be defeated for any reason (game text, **Toughness**, etc.)

For example, if your strength 5 character is attacked by characters with strength 1, 3, and 4, you could choose the 1 and 3 or 1 and 4. You could not choose just one (or zero) of the opposing characters, nor could you choose the 3 and 4, since that would be greater than your strength of 5.

Defeat (flip over and send home from the search party, if any) all characters chosen in this fashion. All bonuses granted by battle events or abilities end at this time.

After the battle, play then resumes where it had been suspended, with the person to the left of the attacker becoming the next active player.

ADDITIONAL RULES

Bringing Allies into Play

Many cards allow you to bring an ally into play outside of the recruit phase. Doing so allows you to skip paying the cost of the ally as well as ignore the limits on the size of your team.

It does not allow you to ignore the restriction that you can only have one ally of a given name in play (except mobs; see below), **Loyal** restrictions (see below), or hero/villain restrictions. You cannot use **Augment** abilities or “comes into play” Reacts on a character brought into play outside of the recruit phase.

If you bring a non-mob ally into play and you already have an ally of that name on your team, replace the old ally with the new one as described on page 10.

Command

There are many game effects that “spend” command: recruiting, playing advantages, and events and abilities (including **Augment** abilities) that spend command or increase the cost of characters (including faction penalty). All of these count as “spending” command, and your

leader cannot spend more command than his command in any single recruit phase.

Conflicts

If two cards have abilities that directly conflict with each other, the card that says “cannot” takes precedence.

Discarding cards

Discarded cards come from your hand. When a card gets sent to the discard pile by any means, it always goes to its owner’s discard pile.

Eight-card rule

In the main phase, a player can draw a maximum of eight cards per turn from his own abilities and events. This limit does not apply to cards taken into hand by other means or cards played by an opponent that force a player to draw cards. You may still play abilities and events that allow you to draw cards, or cards that allow you to draw more than your remaining limit, but no cards beyond the limit will be drawn. Taking cards into hand (by searching your deck, for instance), do not count against this limit.

Empty Deck

If your main deck runs out of cards, the game does not end and you do not shuffle your discard pile to make a new deck; you must continue to play with whatever cards you have in play and in your hand.

Keywords

Most keywords (such as **Weapon**, **State Alchemist**, **Villain**, etc.), with no inherent effects on the game. A few keywords, however, do have an effect on the game.

Auto-mail: A character may have two attachments with the Auto-mail keyword. Normally, a character may not have two attachments with the same keyword.

Mob: This is a keyword that means the ally is non-unique in game play. In other words, you can have more than one copy in play on your team. However, you can still only have three copies of each Mob card in your deck.

Negate

When game text is negated, it is effectively removed from the card. Treat it as if it wasn’t there.

Redirecting

An ability or event can only be redirected if the new target is a legal target for the action. Attacks cannot be redirected.

Return to Hand

When an ally returns to a player’s hand, all cards attached to that card are placed in their owner’s discard pile. A card returned to a hand goes to its owner’s hand, regardless of who currently controls the card.

Sacrificing Cards

Many cards use the term “sacrifice.” This means to take one of your cards in play (usually specified) and place it in the discard pile.

Searching for Cards

Whenever you search your deck for a card, you must shuffle your deck afterward. If a card text requires that you search for a specific card (like “Search your deck for a Military ally” or “Search your deck for a copy of Angry Mob”), you must show that card to each of your opponents once you have found it. However, if a card states that you can search your deck for any card (with no qualifiers), then you are not required to reveal that card to your opponents.

Self-referential Cards

Some cards use their own card name in their ability description. These cards only refer to themselves, not to any other copies of the card that other players may have. If self-referential card abilities are copied, the copying card similarly refers to itself (treat it as if the name in the ability changes).

Targeting

Events and activated abilities with the following in their effects have targets:

- Cards that say “target,” whether the target is “character,” “attachment,” etc. (target is specified)
- Cards that affect “this character” (target is the character playing the event or ability)
- Cards that affect or change a location (target is the location)
- Self-referential activated abilities (such as “**Battle Strength** Discard 1 card: Gluttony gets +2 strength”; target is the character playing the ability)

The following events and abilities do not have targets:

- Passive abilities
- All other events and activated abilities not included above, including:
 - Global events and abilities (cards that affect “all attachments,” or “all Rebel characters,” for instance)
 - Events and abilities that affect “you,” “your leader,” or have an implied “you” (such as “Draw 1 card” or the text of the **Mark of the Ouroboros**, which requires “you” to take an action); this does not include events and abilities that affect “target player” or “target leader”
 - Events and abilities that search any deck (unless they use the word “target”)

Traits

Traits are game terms that serve as “shorthand” for longer game text. They are not the same as keywords, which have no game text associated with them. All traits are abilities (passive, activated, or augment) and are affected by cards that affect abilities.

Currently, *Fullmetal Alchemist TCG* has the following traits:

Augment X (augment ability). When you recruit or replace an ally with an **Augment** ability, you can elect to pay additional command equal to the number after **Augment**. If you do so, you immediately play the effect found after the colon.

Using an **Augment** ability does not actually raise the cost of an ally; it just uses extra command. You can’t play an **Augment** ability at the start of the game when choosing your beginning characters. An **Augment** ability can only be played when an ally is recruited; it cannot be re-used once the ally is in play.

Loyal: X (passive ability). This indicates that the ally is particularly loyal to his or her cause. To bring an ally with the Loyal trait into play, your team must have at least X characters in play who share the ally’s faction. Thus, a Military character with **Loyal: 3** will only join your

leader if you already have at least three Military characters in play.

Quick [Attribute]: X (activated ability). The three **Quick** traits (**Quick Strength**, **Quick Wits**, and **Quick Alchemy**) allow a player to discard event cards of the stated type to give a character a bonus to an attribute. The trait

Quick [Attribute]: X

is shorthand for the following activated ability:

***Battle [Attribute]** Discard a/an [attribute] event: This character gets +X to any attribute.*

Thus, a character with **Quick Alchemy: 1** has the ability:

***Battle Alchemy** Discard an alchemy event: This character gets +1 to any attribute.*

This is treated like any activated ability; it can only be used once per turn, it can be cancelled, copied, negated, etc.

Quick abilities that reference the same attribute stack; they do not allow you to use an ability multiple times. Thus, a character with **Quick Alchemy: 2** who gains **Quick Alchemy: 1** now has **Quick Alchemy: 3**. Characters can gain different **Quick** abilities, which can each be used. The same character gaining **Quick Wits: 2** now has **Quick Alchemy: 1** and **Quick Wits: 2**.

Toughness: X (passive ability). A character with **Toughness: X** can’t be defeated in battle unless the opponent’s attribute total is greater than or equal to his relevant attribute plus his level of toughness. The player with the higher total still wins the battle, however.

Example: Alex Louis Armstrong has strength 6 and **Toughness: 2**. He engages in a battle of strength against a character with strength 7. Although he loses the battle (for purposes of cards like Spoils of War), Armstrong is not defeated. If the opponent had had 8 or more strength, Armstrong would have been defeated.

Toughness is cumulative. Thus, a character with **Toughness: 2** who gains **Toughness: 1** is now **Toughness: 3**.

Stealth (passive ability). Once per turn, a character with this trait can attack a character at

home as though that defending character were in a search party.

Unique (passive ability). If you have an attachment with the Unique trait in play, you cannot have another copy of that attachment in play. This trait is still in effect when a character bearing a unique attachment is defeated. (Game text on an attachment is typically negated when the character bearing the attachment is defeated.)

Zero

When a card effect reduces an attribute to zero, that attribute becomes zero, regardless of any attachments currently on that card that may provide a bonus or bonuses from events and abilities. Later effects can modify that ability upward.

GLOSSARY

Attribute: The numerical assessment of a character's strength, wits, and/or alchemy. Command and cost are not attributes.

Character: A leader or ally.

Defeated: A card that has been turned face down and set to indicate that it has lost a battle. If a defeated character is in a search party, it is sent home.

Experience: A measure of how close a leader is to advancing to the next level. This is tracked by face-down cards placed beneath the leader.

Move: Moving is playing an event or ability that takes a character from the home area and adds it to the search party or removes a character from the search party and places it in that player's home area. This does not include assigning characters during the assignment step of the search phase, sending defeated characters in the search party home, or sending characters home during the cleanup phase.

Ready: A character that is not set or defeated.

Recover: To turn a defeated card face up and reset it.

Reset: To make a set card ready.

Search party: The search party is the group of characters that a player has committed to searching for the location's clue that turn.

Set: To rotate a ready card or place a token on it to indicate that it has been used this turn.

Team: The entire group of leaders and allies a player controls, regardless of whether or not they are defeated.

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