



Prerelease Kit Introduction

It's Prerelease time! Prereleases are some of the most fun events you can run as a judge, but they can be challenging also. We've put together these resources to help you prepare for your event and make the experience a great one for you and your players.

Remember that these resources (with the exception of our helpful rules summary) are suggestions to help you create the event that fits best into your situation. Use what makes sense for you and change what you need.

Most importantly: Let Judge Academy and your fellow judges know how things go! With events happening worldwide, there's nothing like signing on to social media and seeing pictures and hearing stories from all over. If something funny happens at your event, you have an idea you want to share, you fill out your bingo card, or just want to show us the packed event you're judging, let us know!

Post your stories and pictures on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok using the hashtag #JudgeDMU, or tag Judge Academy on Facebook!

Good luck at your events and have fun!

-Matthew Fox



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Opening Announcement Cheat Sheet

Prerelease opening announcements always pose a challenge: How much do you say about the rules and mechanics for the new set? Say too little and you might have a lot of confused players who aren't sure what their cards do. Say too much and you risk losing people's attention.

The Prerelease Rules Primer gives an overview of the rules to help prepare you for judging your event. The following are the DMU-specific rules and mechanics that will come up enough that they might be worth going over with your players if you have time!

These are a guide, not a script. Go with what you think the players in your particular situation need to hear and use more detail if you feel it is needed. If you're not sure, ask! Talking to players as they are settling in, asking them about what they're excited about, what questions they may have, is a great way to gauge how much or little they may know going in.

New Mechanic: Read Ahead

- Read Ahead lets you choose what chapter to start with.
- Sagas with Read Ahead will otherwise function normally on future turns.

New Mechanic: Enlist

- Each attacking creature with Enlist may only have at most one creature tapped for it.
- Each tapped creature can only be Enlisted by one creature.
- When a creature is tapped for an Enlist ability, you add that creature's power to the Enlisting creature's power.

New Mechanic: Stun Counters

- If a permanent with a stun counter would be untapped, instead you remove a stun counter and it remains tapped.

New Mechanic: Defilers

- Each Defiler applies to permanent spells of its own base color and will only apply once per spell.

Returning Mechanic: Kicker

- Some spells have multiple kicker costs. You can pay each cost no more than once, and you don't have to pay any of them if you don't want to.
- Copies of "kicked" spells are also kicked.



Prerelease Rules Primer

New Mechanic: Read Ahead

- Read Ahead is an ability of some Sagas that allows the player to start at a chapter of their choosing, rather than being forced to start at chapter 1.
- The choice of starting chapter is made as the Saga spell resolves. The Saga will enter the battlefield with that many lore counters, and the corresponding chapter ability will trigger. Earlier chapter abilities will be skipped.
- Sagas with Read Ahead will otherwise function normally on future turns.

Returning Mechanic: Sagas

- Sagas are enchantments with several abilities that happen in sequence over several turns.
- A Saga enters the battlefield with a lore counter on it, triggering the first chapter ability (this may be modified by Read Ahead).
- As each player's Precombat Main Phase begins, that player puts a lore counter on each Saga they control. Their respective chapter abilities will trigger and the active player will put them on the stack in the order of their choice.
- Once a Saga's final chapter ability has resolved, its controller sacrifices it as a state-based action.

New Mechanic: Enlist

- Enlist is an ability of creatures that allows them to get additional power from another creature.
- Effectively, Enlist requires you to tap a creature that isn't attacking even though it's largely otherwise able to attack.
 - The creature you tap must be untapped
 - The creature you tap must not be attacking
 - The creature you tap must not be affected by "summoning sickness"
 - It must have haste or it must have been under your control continuously since the beginning of that turn
- Each attacking creature with Enlist may only have at most one creature tapped for it.
- Each tapped creature can only be Enlisted by one creature.
- When a creature is tapped for an Enlist ability, you add that creature's power to the Enlisting creature's power.

New Mechanic: Stun Counters

- Have you ever wanted to “freeze” a creature for multiple turns? That’s what stun counters do!
- If a permanent with a stun counter would be untapped, instead you remove a stun counter and it remains tapped.
- Permanents with stun counters can still be used to pay “untap” costs. The cost will still be paid, a stun counter is removed, and the permanent remains tapped.

New Mechanic: Powerstone Tokens

- Powerstone tokens are similar to other predefined tokens such as Clue tokens or Blood tokens.
- Powerstone tokens are artifacts with the ability “Tap: Add one colorless mana. This mana can’t be spent to cast a nonartifact spell.”
- The mana produced by Powerstone tokens is supposed to be spent on artifact spells. As long as the spell is at least partially an artifact (say, it’s an artifact creature spell), the mana can be spent on colorless or generic costs for that spell.

New Mechanic: Defilers

- There is a Defiler in each color: Defiler of Faith, Defiler of Dreams, Defiler of Flesh, Defiler of Instinct, and Defiler of Vigor. These creatures modify how you cast some spells.
- Each Defiler applies to permanent spells of its own base color and will only apply once per spell.
- While casting the appropriate type of spell, you may pay 2 life instead of one of the colored mana costs of that spell. This functions very similarly to replacing that symbol with a Phyrexian mana symbol of the same color, even though that is not actually happening.

Returning Mechanic: Kicker

- Kicker is an additional cost to cast a spell.
- Some spells have multiple kicker costs. You can pay each cost no more than once, and you don’t have to pay any of them if you don’t want to.
- Copies of “kicked” spells are also kicked.

Returning Mechanic: Domain

- Domain abilities look for how many basic land types you control.
- The only basic land types are Plains, Island, Swamp, Mountain, and Forest. Each type only counts once for Domain abilities.
- Basic land types need to be printed on the land or granted by an external ability. Just because a land taps for red mana doesn’t make it a Mountain.

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BINGO

Player opens
3 or more
stained glass
basic lands

Player asks if
Domain
counts the
number of
lands in play

Player wants
to show you
t h e i r
deck

Player
comes in
cosplay

Player
opens a
foil or alt-art
Planeswalker

Player doesn't
take damage
when tapping
a pain land
for colored mana

Judge Call:
How does
Read Ahead
work?

You fix
tech
issues
on the fly

Judge Call:
How does
Enlist
work?

Player
asks you
how to
pronounce
a card name

You get to hear
how close a
player was to
winning

Player
thanks
you
for judging



Player hands
you a
DCI
Card

Player
shows you a
sweet card
they opened

Player
is surprised
that Jaya is
deceased

Judge Call:
How do
stun counters
work ?

Players laugh
or applaud
during opening
announcements

Judge Call:
How do
Powerstones
work?

Player
tries
to pay
Kicker cost
more than once

Player opens
foil or alt-art
Sheoldred

Player under
age 13 at
your event

Player wants
to tell you
about their
match

Player
opens a
card in
Phyrexian

Player says:
“I’m going to build
a Commander
deck with X”
three or more times