

Mario: the Gathering Manual

By SethBling

Introduction

Mario: the Gathering is a set of 360 custom-designed Magic: the Gathering cards, designed to be played as a [draft cube](#). With the exception of a handful of reprints of existing Magic cards, [SethBling](#) custom-designed the cards in the set, with the help of Twitch viewers. The set can be played online via websites and software, or offline by printing proxies. Both methods of play, as well as lots of information about the cube, are described in this document.

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Discord

If you want help with setup, or want to play/draft with other people, check out the #mariothegathering channel on this unofficial SethBling Discord server: <https://discord.gg/NV4EQ5m>

Full Card List

A full card list can be found online [via Planesculptors.net](https://www.planesculptors.net).

Draft Primer

A cheat sheet .pdf (by Schwa77) can be found [here](#). It's intended to be printed double-sided. I laminated my copies.

What is a cube draft?

A cube draft is a way to play Magic where each player builds a deck out of cards they pick from a card pool, designed for eight players. First, the card pool is divided into twenty four face-down “packs” of fifteen cards each. The eight players sit in a circle, and each player is given three of these “packs”. Each player will open pack #1, look at all fifteen cards, and pick the one they want for their deck. Then, they'll pass the remaining fourteen cards to the player to their left. Each player will then look at the pack of fourteen cards passed to them, pick one, and repeat. This goes on until the packs are empty, and each player has picked fifteen cards for their deck. Then they move on to pack #2, where they do the same thing, except passing right instead of left this time. Then pack #3, passing left again.

After this process, each player will have drafted 45 cards. They'll need to create a 40 card (minimum) deck using some of those cards, and may use any number of basic lands from outside their draft picks to complete the deck. The remaining cards (along with unlimited basic lands) form their sideboard. They'll use these 40+ card decks to play games against each other. There are various tournament structures, usually either [Swiss](#) or Single Elimination, but drafts can also be done in a casual setting without keeping track of wins and losses. Matches are usually best-of-three.

Never drafted before?

My super basic advice:

- Go for 23 nonland cards and 17 lands in your deck.
- If your deck is three colors, try for four multi-colored mana sources at a bare minimum.
- You should have at least ten creatures, though Vehicles and things that generate creatures can mess with that.

What are the draft archetypes in this cube?

A draft archetype is a strategy around which you can build a deck. In this cube, supported archetypes include:

Three-Color “Shard” Archetypes

-  [Heroes & Powerups](#)
-  [Villains & Minions](#)
-  [Ghost House](#)
-  [Karts](#)
-  [Mario Maker](#)

Allied Color-Pair Archetypes

-  [Midrange](#)
-  [Aggro](#)
-  [Sacrifice](#)
-  [Control](#)
-  [Blink](#)

Heroes & Powerups

This strategy relies on creatures with Super (*When this creature dies, if it was enchanted, return it to the battlefield under its owner's control.*) and Enchant creature Auras. Power your creatures up, make them resilient to removal, and overwhelm your opponent with big bois and special abilities.



Villains & Minions

Summon swarms of Minions and use them to overwhelm your opponent, with support from the big bosses. Use Spawn (*1: Exile this card from your hand: Create a 1/1 black Minion creature token. You may cast this card later from exile. Spawn only as a sorcery.*) to fill out your mana curve early game, then pump up your tokens, or use them as fodder for powerful sacrifice effects. Spawn works like adventures from Eldraine, except the only adventure these cards can go on is to create a 1/1 minion for 1 generic mana.



Ghost House

Use face-down creatures to trick your opponent and gain massive card advantage. Spook (*You may cast this card face down as a 2/2 creature for 3. When this creature dies while face-down, exile it. You may cast it later from exile for its spook cost.*) works like a cross between Morph and adventures from Eldraine. You may optionally cast the card face-down for 3 (just like



Morph), but there's no built-in way to turn the creature face up while it's on the battlefield. Instead, you have to get the creature to die, which exiles it and allows you to play the card for a reduced cost for the rest of the game.

Karts

Vehicles are back in style! Take advantage of Vehicle synergies, crew Vehicles without the need for creatures, and develop your board while gaining advantage by being in pursuit (*You're in pursuit if an opponent controls more creatures than you.*) Crew your vehicles with cheap, high-power creatures, and take advantage of big buffs for Vehicles only. Make sure your deck has enough ways to crew your vehicles!



Mario Maker

Become a maker (*If there are four or more card types among permanents you control, you're a maker for the rest of the game*) to get big bonuses from your cards. Make sure your deck includes lots of artifacts and enchantments, and planeswalkers if you can help it. Artifact creatures and enchantment creatures are a big boon.



Midrange

Build an army of efficient creatures that are comfortable both on defense and offense. Use Treasure token (*Artifacts with "T, Sacrifice this artifact: Add one mana of any color."*) synergies to gain lots of extra card advantage.



Aggro

Attack! Use cheap aggressive creatures to win before the opponent has a chance to build up their board. Play flexible aggressive cards that work well both in a go-wide strategy and also in a narrower Super+Aura strategy.

Sacrifice

Create lots of minions and face-down Spook creatures, then sacrifice them for powerful effects.

Control

Gain lots of card advantage, and destroy your opponent's best threats. You can get extra advantage by having creatures with power 2. Face-down Spook cards naturally come this way, and most Vehicles in this color pair can be crewed with 2 power.

Blink

Use permanents with "enters the battlefield" effects, then reuse them! There are a bunch of ways to get extra triggers. Build defenses early to survive, then use late-game evasion to win.



Cockatrice (M:tG Sandbox Program)

Cockatrice is a Magic: the Gathering sandbox program that lets you install and play with custom cards.

Installing the Set

1. Download and install Cockatrice [here](#).
2. Open Cockatrice. I recommend disabling all sets.
3. Download the Mario: the Gathering Cockatrice zip file [here](#). (Current version: 1.0)
4. Unzip the contents.
5. In Cockatrice, use **Card Database**→**Add custom sets/cards**, navigate to the unzipped folder, and select **MarioTheGathering.xml**.
 - a. If you're updating to a newer version, and have previously installed a copy of this xml file, you should use **Card Database**→**Open custom sets folder** and delete the existing **MarioTheGathering.xml** first.
6. In Cockatrice, use **Card Database**→**Open custom image folder**
7. Copy all images from the unzipped **MarioTheGathering-files** folder into the **CUSTOM** images folder you opened in the previous step.
 - a. This is also necessary when updating from a previous version of the card set.
8. Restart Cockatrice.
9. There may be some decklists (**.cod** files) also contained in the unzipped folder.

Playing Online

1. Use **Cockatrice**→**Register to server...** to register an account. The verification email may take a few minutes.
2. In Cockatrice, use **Cockatrice**→**Connect...**
3. Select the **Rooster Ranges** server from the dropdown menu.
4. Login with your account.
5. This will bring up several tabs in Cockatrice. The **Magic** tab has a list of games. You can create or join a game.

Gameplay Tips

- Use **Ctrl+I** to roll a 20-sided die to see who goes first.
- **Ctrl+M** shuffles your hand (if any) into your library and draws 7 cards. Use for both initial hand and for mulligans.
- When you want to cast a spell, double click it to put it in the red zone, which acts as the stack. You can resolve it from there by double clicking on it again. You can also double click lands to put them onto the battlefield.
- When you're done with your turn, go to the end step (by clicking it on the left hand side), and let your opponent click the **Pass** button to start their turn. This allows them to use your end step for any last-minute spells/abilities.
- Select a creature and press **Ctrl+P** to temporarily modify its power/toughness. Useful for +1/+1 counters, auras, temp effects etc.
- **Ctrl+T** lets you search for and create a token. Most of the time this isn't necessary, because you can right click the card that creates the token, and select the token from the context menu.
- When casting an aura, put it on the battlefield, then right click it and **Attach to card...**
- Use **Shift** while dragging a card to the battlefield to cast face down.
- Use **F2** to concede.
- You can **right click** on a card and drag it to another card or player to draw a temporary red arrow. You can right click on the arrow to delete it. Changing steps will also do so.
- Use **Shift+Tab** to advance a step and perform actions associated with the next step (e.g. untapping, drawing).

Planesculptors (Drafting Website)

Planesculptors.net is a website that allows you to draft custom sets. Mario: the Gathering has been uploaded to the website, and anyone may host a draft, though you must create an account to do so.

Hosting a Draft

1. If you don't already have an account create one.
2. Log in.
3. In the top right, click **Host Event**.
4. Select **Cube Draft**.
5. Find **Mario the Gathering** (you can use ctrl+F, or sort by name), and click **Add 3x** to the left of the set name. Scroll back to the top of the page. You should see something like this:

Selected packs (click to remove):

MAR - Mario the Gathering - Version 0.07	MAR - Mario the Gathering - Version 0.07	MAR - Mario the Gathering - Version 0.07
--	--	--

Open the event

6. Click **Open the event**.
7. Send the invite link to anyone else you'd like to invite. Also click **Join as player** if you'd like to join the draft. Other players do not need to log in, only the host does.
8. Once you have enough players, click **Start event**.

Drafting

1. Double click cards or drag them into your inventory to pick them. Sometimes you may need to refresh the page due to a bug. There's no harm in refreshing if you're not sure.
2. Once the draft is complete, build your deck. There are buttons to sort your cards by various methods. You can drag cards to the sidebar to exclude them from your deck. You can add basic lands at the top of the card area.
3. To play the deck on Cockatrice, click **Export deck** to open a text file window. Right click and select **Save as...** and then save as a text file somewhere on your computer. This text file can be opened as a decklist in Cockatrice (make sure you have the matching version of Mario: the Gathering installed).
 - a. You can also select all with **Ctrl+A**, and copy with **Ctrl+C**, then in Cockatrice use **Deck Editor**→**Load deck from clipboard...** If you load the deck this way, you can add "**MAR**" before each type of basic land (e.g. "**7 MAR Plains**") to use the custom basic lands for this set. You'll need to save the deck with **Ctrl+S** to be able to play games with it.
 - b. Sample [decklist](#)

Comprehensive Rules Additions

Mario: the Gathering introduces several new mechanics: Pursuit, Hits/Extra Hits, Publish/Maker, Spawn, Spook, and Super. This section gives complete comprehensive rules additions, as an addendum to the existing [Magic: the Gathering comprehensive rules](#). This section is highly technical, and is only intended to help solve rules disputes. Reminder text should be sufficient to explain the abilities for most gameplay situations.

7. Additional Rules.

700.General

700.MAR1. A player is *in pursuit* as long as any of that player's opponents controls more creatures than that player does.

702. Keyword Abilities

702.MAR1. Hits

702.MAR1a Hits represents both a static ability and a replacement effect. "N Hits" means "This permanent enters the battlefield with N +1/+1 counters on it." and "If this creature would be dealt damage while it has a +1/+1 counter on it, remove a +1/+1 counter instead."

702.MAR1b Extra hits represents the same replacement effect as hits, but without the static ability. "Extra hits" means "If this creature would be dealt damage while it has a +1/+1 counter on it, remove a +1/+1 counter from it instead."

702.MAR2. Publish

702.MAR2a Publish on an instant or sorcery spell represents a spell ability. It means "If there are four or more card types among permanents you control and you're not a maker, you become a maker for the rest of the game."

702.MAR2b Publish on a permanent represents a static ability. It means "Any time there are four or more card types among permanents you control and you're not a maker, you become a maker for the rest of the game."

702.MAR2c Being a maker is a designation that has no rules meaning other than to act as a marker that other rules and effects can identify. A condition that "you're a maker" is true if you've become a maker via a publish ability at a prior point in the game.

702.MAR2d After a player becomes a maker, continuous effects are reapplied before the game checks to see if the game state or preceding events have matched any trigger conditions.

702.MAR3. Spawn

702.MAR3a Spawn is an activated ability that functions only while the card with spawn is in a player's hand. "Spawn" means "{1}, Exile this card from your hand: Create a 1/1 black Minion creature token. For as long as this card remains exiled, you may cast it. Activate this ability only any time you could cast a sorcery."

702.MAR3b Although the spawn ability can be activated only if the card is in a player's hand, it continues to exist while the object is on the battlefield and in all other zones. Therefore objects with spawn will be affected by effects that depend on objects having one or more activated abilities.

702.MAR4. Spook

702.MAR4a Spook represents both a static ability and a triggered ability. The spook static ability functions in any zone from which you could play the card it's on. The spook triggered ability functions when the card is face-down on the battlefield and is put into a graveyard. "Spook [cost]" means "You may cast this card as a 2/2 face-down creature with no text, no name, no subtypes, and no mana cost by paying {3} rather than paying its mana cost." (See rule 707, "Face-Down Spells and Permanents"), and "When this object changes zones, if it was put into a graveyard from the battlefield and it was face-down on the battlefield, exile it. For as long as it remains exiled this way, the player that controlled the face-down object on the battlefield may cast it from exile for its spook cost."

702.MAR4b To cast a card using its spook ability, turn it face down. It becomes a 2/2 face-down creature card with no text, no name, no subtypes, and no mana cost. Any effects or prohibitions that would apply to casting a card with these characteristics (and not the face-up card's characteristics) are applied to casting this card. These values are the copiable values of that object's characteristics. (See rule 613, "Interaction of Continuous Effects," and rule 706, "Copying Objects.") Put it onto the stack (as a face-down spell with the same characteristics), and pay {3} rather than pay its mana cost. This follows the rules for paying alternative costs. You can use a spook ability to cast a card from any zone from which you could normally play it. When the spell resolves, it enters the battlefield with the same characteristics the spell had. The spook effect applies to the face-down object wherever it is, and it ends when the permanent is turned face up.

702.MAR4c The spook triggered ability triggers when a face-down object with spook is moved from the battlefield into a graveyard, if the object has that ability while it's in the graveyard. It triggers even though the object didn't have the ability while it was face-down on the battlefield. The player who owns the object with spook controls the triggered ability, and also controls the continuous effect which allows the card to be cast for its spook cost. However, the continuous effect only allows the controller of the face-down object to cast the card from exile. Cards with spook have this triggered ability regardless of whether they were cast face-down using the spook ability, or became face-down through some other means.

702.MAR5. Super

702.MAR5a Super is a triggered ability. "Super" means "When this permanent is put into a graveyard from the battlefield, if it was enchanted, return it to the battlefield under its owner's control."

Frequently Asked Rules Questions

- **What happens if you use Magma Spray/Poltergust 3000 on a face-down creature with Spook or an enchanted creature with Super?**
Magma Spray and *Poltergust* include a replacement ability that prevents the creature from being put into the graveyard. Spook and super are triggered abilities, and they won't trigger.
- **What happens if you gain control of a face-down creature with Spook, and then it dies?**
The card will be exiled, and whoever controlled it when it left the battlefield may cast it from exile.
- **What happens if you gain control of an enchanted creature with Super, and then it dies?**
The creature will return to the battlefield under its owner's control.
- **What happens if you kill a creature with Super that's been enchanted with Baby Form?**
Baby Form removes Super's triggered ability. It stays dead.
- **What happens if you play Baby Form on a creature that's enchanted with Feather Power?**
Feather Power is an Aura that gives flying and +1/+1. *Baby Form* will make the creature lose flying, but it retains the +1/+1.
- **What happens if you play Feather Power on a creature that's enchanted with Baby Form?**
Feather Power is an Aura that gives flying and +1/+1. Since it has a later timestamp than *Baby Form*, the creature will get the full benefit of *Feather Power*.
- **What happens if you blink a face-down card that's not a permanent on its front side?**
If a non-permanent card tries to enter the battlefield from another zone, it just stays in that zone. The card will be exiled and then stay there permanently.
- **Do the first two abilities of Letter from the Princess do anything?**
Normally Mountains and Islands are colorless. *Letter from the Princess* makes them red and blue, respectively. In this set that has no particular effect. *Letter* only changes lands on the battlefield, not in any other zone.
- **Can you counter a Spawn ability?**
Paying {1} and exiling the card to create a Minion token is an activated ability that cannot be countered by any card in this set.
- **What happens if you use Capture on Canvas to turn an Aura or Equipment face-down?**
Creatures can't be attached to other permanents. It will become unattached from whatever it's attached to (if anything).
- **What happens if you cast Peek-a-Boo on a spell that couldn't normally be cast due to timing restrictions?**
Peek-a-Boo lets you ignore timing restrictions to cast the spell.
- **When cards are put onto the battlefield with Artistic Obsession or Ghost Ride, do you get to look at them? If they have spook, can you cast them from exile when they die?**
Yes and yes. The controller of a face-down permanent or spell on the stack may look at it whenever they like. Spook triggers upon death regardless of how the card was put face-down onto the battlefield.

Downloading and Exporting the Set File

Magic Set Editor was used to create the set. This section explains how you can download the set file in order to make modifications to the set or export the set with custom settings/for different platforms.

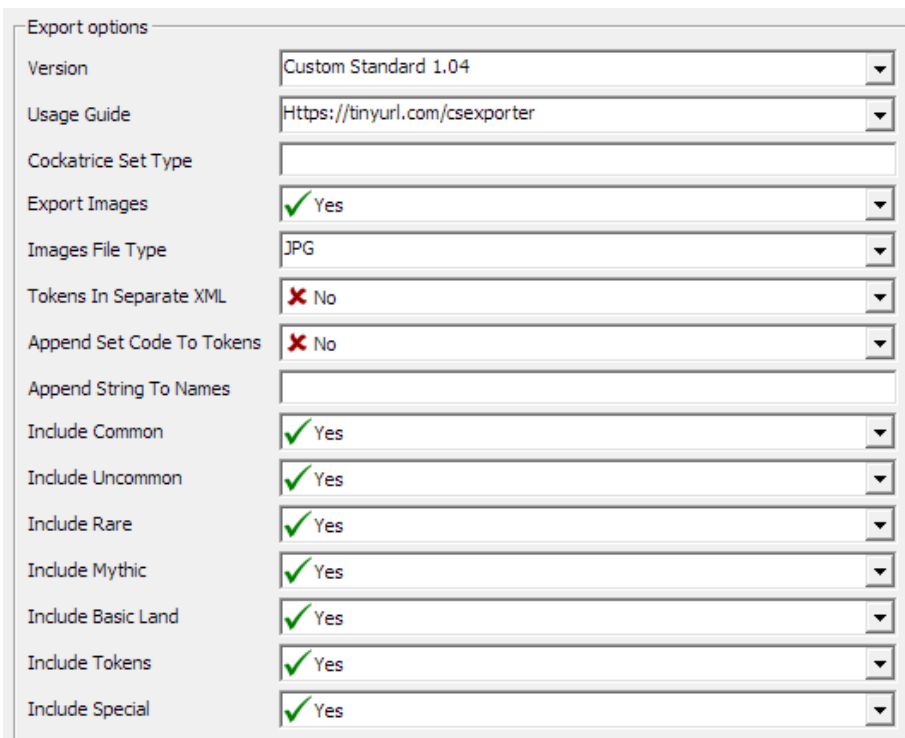
Downloading

1. Download Magic Set Editor [here](#)
2. Unzip Magic Set Editor, and note the file location where you unzip it.
3. Download the Mario: the Gathering zip file [here](#)
4. Extract the **data** folder into the Magic Set Editor folder, overwriting some files within the existing **data** folder there.
 - a. This is required for: watermarks, extended planeswalker art, full-art vanilla creatures, and PlaneSculptors/Cockatrice exporting
5. Extract **Cube.mse-set**.
6. Open Magic Set Editor (mse.exe within your Magic Set Editor Installation), and open **Cube.mse-set** within it.

Exporting

This is the process I use to create public releases of Mario: the Gathering.

1. Open **Cube.mse-set** in Magic Set Editor.
2. Make sure the Copyright info in the **Set info** tab is what you want it to be.
3. Use the **File→Export→HTML...** menu
 - a. For Cockatrice, select the Cockatrice (Custom Standard 1.04) exporter. These are the options that I use:



Export options	
Version	Custom Standard 1.04
Usage Guide	https://tinyurl.com/csexporter
Cockatrice Set Type	
Export Images	✓ Yes
Images File Type	JPG
Tokens In Separate XML	✗ No
Append Set Code To Tokens	✗ No
Append String To Names	
Include Common	✓ Yes
Include Uncommon	✓ Yes
Include Rare	✓ Yes
Include Mythic	✓ Yes
Include Basic Land	✓ Yes
Include Tokens	✓ Yes
Include Special	✓ Yes

This will export an .xml file and a folder of card images which can be imported into Cockatrice using the instructions in this document. You may want to first delete the contents of the **MarioTheGathering-files** folder if you've exported the images there before.

- b. For Planesculptors, select PlaneSculptors Export 1.4. I modified this file to have custom options to exclude tokens, basic lands, and emblems from the export. This will export a .txt file which can be uploaded to Planesculptors, along with the images from the Cockatrice export.

Printing the Set

The set is designed to be printed once and played many times. There are many options for printing the set, at various levels of quality.

PDF Downloads

The Whole 360 Card Set: [Download](#)

180 Lands (36 of each type): [Download](#)

99 Tokens: [Download](#)

Primer/Cheat Sheet: [Download](#)

I got my set printed at FedEx Office, and due to maximum file size, I had to split the main set into two 180-card PDFs:

First 180 Cards: [Download](#)

Last 180 Cards: [Download](#)

Instructions and Advice

The most basic way to print and play the set is:

1. Acquire about 540 identical Magic card sleeves.
2. Sleeve 36 actual Magic cards of each basic land type (180 cards)
3. Sleeve 360 additional Magic cards.
 - a. It doesn't matter what cards you use, but it's best if all of these cards are black-bordered, since Mario: the Gathering is black-bordered. You can also face the cards backwards in the sleeve to use the black border from the back of the card.
4. Print out the set on your home printer
5. Cut the cards out
 - a. Optionally, cut off the corners of the cards. If you just cut out rectangles, there will be a white triangle on each corner of the card. You can try and make curved cuts, but straight triangular cuts are much faster and easier, and get the job done fine.
6. Place one cutout proxy in each sleeve, in front of the actual Magic card.

You can get a little fancier by using the provided lands and tokens PDFs to make the experience more immersive. If you print out token proxies, make sure to use sleeves that are different colors than the main cube/lands. You can also print using a professional printing service. I used FedEx Office, printing on 32lb paper. The provided PDFs will print at the correct size on their printing equipment. I also printed several copies of the Primer on heavy card stock, and had them laminated.