

Demystifying Amulet Titan

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Section 1 - Introduction

Why Should You Play Amulet Titan

Amulet Titan has long been one of the defining combo decks for the Modern format. Traditionally, the deck revolved around casting Primeval Titan with an Amulet of Vigor in play, aiming to win through combat damage. Over the years, players experimented with various backup plans, such as Hive Mind or Valakut, the Molten Pinnacle, but the core strategy remained consistent for many years. With the release of Modern Horizon 3, and after the Nadu chaos subsided with the ban, a new form of Amulet Titan emerged. This variant tries to go infinite by looping Aftermath Analyst with Shifting Woodland. While initially daunted by its enormous complexity, Amulet players slowly discovered that this new variant was more explosive than the old version; it often threatens to win with only a single Amulet effect, whereas the old version almost always requires two Amulets to win on the spot. Equally important, this variant sidesteps some of the interactions that historically were essential against Amulet decks - most notably Solitude. As a result, the Analyst variant has reshaped how the archetype plays, and it is harder for opponents to stop than ever.

In my opinion, the current Amulet Titan lists are the most enjoyable types of combo decks to play. First, just like other combo decks in the Modern format, such as Neobrand or Storm, Amulet has explosive potential, often winning on Turn 3 with a decent hand, and the possibility to win on Turn 2 if you draw two Amulets. But unlike other “pure” combo decks, Amulet also has a good midrange plan between Urza’s Saga constructs, Dryad/Valakut, a 6/6 that gains value every turn if left unchecked, and various sideboard midrange creatures. This means it is rare for Amulet decks to lose to a single piece of hate, leading to fewer non-games. Almost every game, you would have some cards to fight with, or alternative plans to get around a hate piece. That is not the case with “pure” combo decks - e.g. Storm *must* deal with Deafening Silence to win. And finally, Amulet usually cares more about whether you have something (Has amulet effect? Has payoffs? Bounceland?) rather than having a critical mass of something (needing X number of rituals, X number of Wrenn’s Resolves). This means in late games where you are top decking, a single lucky draw might mean winning immediately - it doesn’t matter if you are on 3 and your opponent has 40 cats on the battlefield and is on 50 life points with 20 energy counters.

Section 4 - Advanced Combo Lines

Mental Heuristics for Ad Hoc Calculations

In my opinion, the most important mental heuristics for Amulet Titan are about mana counting. Players should practice counting mana as fast as possible. For example, using Grazer to put in an SGC should not sound like this in the brain: spend {G}, play Grazer, put in SGC, untap, make

{UG}, but rather: Grazer + SGC = net {U}. You should also be aware that it nets a *non-green* mana.

The best way to memorise the combo lines is to keep track of the total mana. E.g. An easy way to remember the Scapeshift line is to memorise the total mana: 4 -> 9 -> 0 -> 13 -> 4 -> 8 -> ∞. Double amulet line is 0 -> 2 -> 4 -> 10 -> lots -> ∞.

For Scapeshift combos, the first goal to combo is usually to activate the Analyst for the first time. You should start by counting the mana needed for this, work your way back, and figure out how you can make that mana. Most of the time, without a Pact or Analyst in hand, it would be 9 mana — 3 for transmuting Tolaria West and 6 to play + activate. This is why the minimum number of lands for Scapeshift is usually 4 (Lotus, Lotus, SGC, Tolaria West). Sometimes you have floating mana that can contribute to the initial activation mana (6 or 9), but then you need to double-check whether you'd be able to combo post-initial activation, since lands come back to make more mana, but floating mana is gone once used (e.g. sacrificing a Scion for mana). Recall the 13-mana requirement for the standard line, though it is also doable with 12 mana (see later sections). Double-checks any lines that leave you with less than 12 mana post-initial activation.

With a Titan trigger on the stack, if you would be one mana short (or one land short, e.g. needing Woodland on the battlefield) of getting to 8 mana for copy Analyst + activate, then consider hasting Titan and attacking, and make infinite mana in the declare attackers' phase. This means you must “store” this mana in the form of untapped lands, not floating mana — keep this in mind when deciding what lands to tap/sacrifice/bounce. You should also remember that you do not always need to get Hanweir + {R} as a pair — usually the red mana can be made somewhere convenient, e.g. Lotus Field, Vestige, or Gruul Turf. You can tutor for something else more useful with that slot (Woodland, for example). There are scenarios later where this principle is used, [here](#) and [here](#).

Section 5 - My Build of Amulet Titan

Mulliganing & Planning Ahead

As a combo deck, the important thing to look out for in the opening hand is more like ticking boxes on a checklist. You check whether you have amulet effects, bouncelands and payoffs. Here are some exercises to illustrate the concept.

Exercise:

You kept this hand on the play and have played Forest Amulet for Turn 1. How many cards are there in your deck that would enable a Turn 2 kill (assuming no interactions)? Assume [this list](#).



Solution:

Playing extra land can get you to 6 mana and a pact for a Titan, and win from there. These include:

- 4 Arboreal Grazers: This can ramp you to 7 mana. Mental shortcut: $1 \rightarrow 0 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 7$

Any additional ways to tutor for a grazer:

- 3 Green Sun's Zenith: This can ramp you to 6 mana. Mental shortcut: $1 \rightarrow 0 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 6$
- 2 Summoner's Pact: Since this list plays 3 Pacts, you are free to use 2 of them for Titan and Grazers and just leave 1 for Analyst. Note that if your list only has 2 Pacts, then using the last one on Titan + Grazer leaves no Pacts for Analyst, and you must pay for 2 Pacts the next upkeep (there is no way to deal 20 damage without going infinite).
- 4 Primeval Titan: Drawing Titan itself allows you to use the current Pact for a Grazer.

Drawing a Lotus Field would get you to 6 mana and a pact for Titan.

- 2 Lotus Field: You can still do the full combo with access to only one Lotus Field in the deck. Usually, you would get Lotus Field + Mirrorpool (or Deeps) twice, but in this case, simply make the copy in response to the first Lotus Field sacrifice trigger and tutor for Vesuva, copying Lotus Field. Exactly as the stock line, this nets you 2 additional mana for going $0 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 10 \rightarrow \dots$

Any additional ways to get Lotus Field will get you to 6 mana too:

- 3 Scapeshift: You can play the bounceland for 4 mana, then use Scapeshift as a Crop Rotation to get a single Lotus Field.

So the total number is 20 cards out of a 54/55 cards deck. The odds are pretty good.

Section 6 - Communication and Executing Plays

Executing Plays in Paper

Amulet Titan is a tricky deck to physically play in paper, maybe second only to Nadu. In big tournaments, it is not an uncommon occurrence to spot an amateur pilot who is overwhelmed by the number of triggers they must go through, and be confused about where the lands are, whether they are tapped or not and the mana they have. Without preparation, it can consume too much mental energy to physically move cards and to remember all the triggers, which detracts from the pilots' ability to think about the game itself. Thus, executing plays cleanly and systematically is essential, especially when activating Analyst, where it seems like a million things are happening at once.

Most of the deck's physical complexity comes from putting multiple lands into play at the same time. These are the steps that I personally follow when playing:

1. Move all my game pieces to one side, leave plenty of space for lands that are coming in.
2. Sort out the land cards from your graveyard, then sort them into two stacks: those with a (non-amulet untapping and non-Valakut) trigger and those that don't. Non-amulet triggers include: Lotus field sacrifices, bounce triggers, saga triggers, vestige mana triggers, and surveil triggers. In the land stack with triggers, sort them by the trigger type (bounce lands together, vestige together, etc).

3. Put those two piles untapped on the table to reduce unnecessary tapping and untapping. Now start looking for targets for Vesuva and Echoing Deeps. Then say to your opponent, "Vesuva will enter as a copy of xxx", or "Echoing Deeps will enter as a copy of xxx, which is coming back at the same time". If the copied target has a trigger, move it to the lands-with-triggers pile.
4. Look for Spelunking on the battlefield. If you want lands to enter untapped, then announce "these lands will enter untapped under spelunking". Or should you choose to have them enter tapped when you have double amulets, also make it clear. Also state that "these lands (e.g. forest or saga) have to enter untapped from Spelunking, so no double untapping on these".
5. Announce Saga triggers, and say that (if multiple Sagas), they will share the same lore counter. Don't try to make mana with it before it gains the ability.
6. Announce your triggers from your trigger pile, I like to resolve them as I announce them, I find it easier for opponents to follow this way - but technically, you ought to announce the orders of triggers first, then resolve them. Say to your opponent, "Firstly, I have an amulet untap trigger on everything", or "I have two untap triggers on everything, I will make mana the first time, then leave them untapped from the second untap". Usually, it's safe to make mana, unless it's a Hanweir Battlement. Then resolve the Valakut triggers, if any. Then say, "I have other triggers from these lands (point at the pile with triggers), I will make x mana and x mana with Vestige triggers, then will do 2 bounce triggers and 2 sacrifice triggers (which one first is situational).
7. Count the number of lands that would leave the battlefield from bounce and sacrifice triggers. Choose and tap that number of lands for mana, then bounce or sacrifice them. It's usually a good practice not to tap non-necessary lands.

Executing Plays on MTGO

Playing Amulet Titan on MTGO is not a pleasant experience. Every game, you will get massive stacks of triggers to click through (in the right order!), and after that, you make mana and sacrifice the correct lands. After all that, you have realised you have only advanced your game state by one floating mana, then you realise copying a single titan costs 5 mana, plus you'd have to haste all of them.

The general advice is to keep in mind what your end goal is. When you manage to achieve the initial conditions, there are many possible actions you can take, and you must not waste any time online taking unnecessary actions. Have a clear goal in mind, e.g. making 5 or 6 titans and attack, then figure out the fastest way to get there. Kanister uploads some of his amulet streams to YouTube, and that is a good place to learn this. Keep in mind that sometimes he goes overkill when comboing; these are only precautions for the 0.01% corner cases and are skippable most of the time.

Use keyboard shortcuts to speed up clicking. You can spam {3} to say yes to all Spelunking effects.

Hold W when making mana to make auto mana. Some lands have activated abilities, or you can have Dryad in play so that all lands can make any of the colours.

When resolving through double amulet untaps, make sure you put these triggers onto the stack in order, so that a single land would untap twice before moving to the next one. So the clicking order

here would be: {1} - tap - {1} - {1} - tap - {1} - {1} - tap ... etc. Then, when you are done with untap triggers, start tapping the ones that you are bouncing or sacrificing.

I personally don't use yield for triggers because I find them confusing and sometimes mess up my clicking rhythm, although some people do find it useful.