

Anatomy of Card Time

Preamble

The timing of things in Codex is a significant cause of confusion. Card interactions have to be done in a very specific order for the game's design to run smoothly. This specific ordering is what allows us to play with complicated, multi-step actions, like a Trojan Duck obliterating before it executes its attack, while also delaying complex interactions like Orpal Gloor's disease-spreading maxband trigger to happen after the main action is resolved. However, while this ordering is essential for the game to run, it's barely hinted at in the official rulebook. Through studying the rulings from the forums I've put together a formal definition of how the timings work.

I've organized this document to go over the basic principles of timing, go over some definitions of language I am using to be as clear as possible, and finally go over the anatomy of the timing of key events in Codex. I have an appendix of all of the triggers in the game, organized by category.

Basic Principles

1. The active player gets to choose the order of resolving events that happen simultaneously.
2. Triggers are generally resolved by putting them in a "queue" to be processed after the current action (ie casting a spell) is fully resolved. I say generally because this is only always true for 9 of the 13 types of triggers I've catalogued in Appendix A.
3. Triggers that are triggered simultaneously are put in the queue as a batch together, so when the active player processes the queue they get to choose the order that the events resolve.

Definitions

- **Creatures:** inclusive of heroes and units.
- **Lethality:** a state that would trigger a **creature's** death if it could die. Usually lethal damage, but could be caused by **deathtouch**, having 0 max hp while destructible, etc.
- **Interrupts:** an ability that interrupts usual behavior (ie. **Indestructible** is an **interrupt** for death).
- **Knockouts:** inclusive of death and interactions where death is **interrupted** by abilities.
- **Triggers:** specific wordings that describe "whenever x, y" triggered effects. See Appendix A.
- **Simultaneous:** Things that happen at the same time. The active player gets to choose in which order **simultaneous** events are processed.
- **Queue:** a queue of **triggers** to keep track of the order that the **triggers** will be processed. **Simultaneous triggers** are batched together in the **queue**.

Anatomy of Knockouts

1. For all **creatures** with **lethality: simultaneously** process the **knockout** by either killing it as per the rulebook or by following the instructions of the **death interrupt**.
2. For the creatures that were killed (**the dead**):
 - a. Add to the **queue** the batch of all **death triggers** from **the dead** (after previous batches).
 - b. At this point there may be additional **creatures** with **lethality** due to buffs given to other **creatures** by **the dead** expiring (ie. Grounded Guide, Two Step.). If so, process those **knockouts** at the next unit of time.

Summary table

Simultaneously for all creatures with lethality :		
Kill as per rulebook (discarding attachments etc.)	~ or ~	follow instructions of the death interrupt
Queue death triggers	Buffs etc. expire Resulting Lethality is processed immediately but in the next position in the queue	

Anatomy of Actions

1. Declare Targets (for abilities, spells, and attacks)
 - a. For spells and abilities: **Trigger**-on-Targeted effects (**illusions** and Smoker) happen immediately if the targeting symbol is present. All **illusions** are killed **simultaneously**. Do not choose a new target. Do as much as you can from the spell or ability. Shadow Blade, for example, would cause a discard if targeting an **illusion**.
 - b. For attacks, resolve any **attacks:... triggers** and **obliterate** immediately. If the **trigger** or **obliterate** kills the target of the attack, you choose a new target to attack, but this does not trigger the ability a second time that turn.
2. For each part of the action.
 - a. Execute the part of the action. Activated **triggers** are added to the **queue simultaneously**.
 - b. All **creatures** with **lethality** are **knocked out simultaneously**. Destroyed buildings and the resulting base damage are processed immediately.
3. Start processing the **queue**.

Summary table

Type	Attack	Spell	Summon
Targeting <i>triggers</i> Performed <i>immediately</i>	<i>Attack:</i> or <i>Arrives or attack:</i>	<i>Illusions</i> or smoker	
Perform action step	Base is immediately damaged from destroyed buildings		
<i>triggers</i> are <i>queued</i>	All other <i>triggers</i>		<i>arrives:</i>
Perform next action step as above until complete			
Process <i>queue</i>	In order, each <i>batch</i> is processed as simultaneous actions.		

Appendix A: Catalogue of Triggers

Arrival Triggers:

Buff Tokens: Spore Shambler, Drill Sergeant, and Blooming Ancient.
Deals damage: Hired Stomper and Bamstamper Lizzo.
Debuff Tokens: Cursed Ghoul, Plague Lab.
Destroy something: Potent Basilisk, Jefferson DeGrey, and T-Rex
Draw a card: Young Treant, Flagstone Garrison, and Scribe.
Runes: Fairie Dragon, Forus Master, Tricycloid
Repair: Artisan Mantis
Steal gold: Tax Collector.
Stealth: Sneaky Pig and Disguised Monkey
Summons: Pandas, Argagarg Garg, Terras Q, Heroes Monument, Jade Fox, Hive, and Pirate Gang Commander.
Other: Drakk's Maxband. Reputable Newsman, Insurance Agent, Skeleton Javelineer, Thieving Imp, Zarramonde, Oathkeeper, Seer, Stewardess of the Undone

Attack Triggers:

Deal Damage: Doubleshot Archer, Xenostalker
Earn Gold: Spirit of the Panda
Kidnap: Ogre Recruiter.
Other: Poisonblade Rogue, Voidblocker (?), Setsuki, Frenzy.
Summon: Bone Collector

Arrives Or Attack Triggers:

Cast Spell: Cinderblast Dragon
Deals Damage: Brick Thief, Trojan Duck
Draw a Card: Hyperion
Bebuff Tokens: Plague Lord
Summon Tokens: Moss Ancient

Building Destroyed

Destroyed tech buildings and add-ons deal 2 damage to the base immediately.

Damages a Building or base:

Molting Firebird, Predator Tiger, Flagstone Spy, and Carrion Crow, Yesterday's Golgort

Deals Combat Damage Triggers:

Guardian of the Gates

Death Triggers:

Draw a card: Gorgon and Technician patrollers.

Gain 1 gold: Scavenger patrollers.

Dead Damage: Crash Bomber, Captured Bugblatter, and Drakk.

Other: Bloodburn, Jandra the Negator, Blackhand Dozer, Orpal Gloor's maxband.

Summon: Necromancer

Heroes give levels on death.

Fade removed Trigger

Rememberer

Kill Triggers or conditionals:

Steal: Zane, Gunpoint Taxman.

Force discard: Shadow blade

Leaves Trigger

Sacrifice Stingers: Hive

Return to play: Second Chances

Leveling Triggers.

Maxbands of many heroes.

Spellcast Triggers:

Summon Token: Harmony

Targeting Triggers:

Smoker

Illusions.

Appendix B: Partial Catalogue of Interrupts

This isn't a complete list, but is focussed on ***interrupts*** that could interact with ***triggers***.

Arrival Interrupts:

Jail.

Death Interrupts

Prevention:

Brave Knight

Indestructible (Hardened Mox, Immortal)

Soul Stone

Two Lives: Rook and Justice Juggernaut.

Corpse redirection:

Rambasa Twin

Graveyard

Exactly Lethal Damage Interrupt:

Focus Master