

Green Tron Primer

Abstract

Green tron is a linear deck that aims to spend the first 2 turns getting all 3 Urza lands into play, and then spending the third turn with access to 7 mana making plays that put you far ahead of the curve with powerful planeswalkers or other impactful cards. The majority of the agency you have in these games involves maximizing your chances of having access to the full 7 mana on turn 3. Afterwards, your mana advantage can be pressed and the game becomes about closing it out as soon as possible.

Assembling Tron

There are a few ways you can go about assembling tron, and we'll discuss each of them. Most of your initial focus while learning the deck is about how to get to turn 3 tron (this means having all 3 unique tron lands in play by turn 3). All of these methods have one main concept in common: **Do everything you can to not spend your land drops on turns 1-3 on any land besides a unique tron piece.**

Important Pieces:

Tron Lands:



There are 3 unique urza tron lands: Urza's tower, mine, and power plant. Plant and mine each tap for 2 colorless when online, while tower taps for 3. For this reason, if you are presented with the choice on which of the 3 to search for/try to put into play, the tower should be last, to maximize your mana output. For example, if you are forced to tap one of these lands for one mana, you would prefer to tap a mine rather than a tower this way.

Sylvan Scrying:



Allows you to search for any land. This is great at finding your missing tron piece early game, or a utility land in the late game. This costs green mana, which means you are playing this with one of your lands that can produce green, which you should not have in play early, or using a star or sphere to produce green.

Expedition Map:



Allows you to search for any land just like sylvan scrying. While the effect costs 1 more mana than sylvan, it can be split up across 2 turns, and does not require green mana, meaning that you do not have to worry about finding a green source in order to search. One of your best turn 1 plays.

Ancient Stirrings:



For a single green, you can look at the top 5 cards of your deck and put a colorless card from among them into your hand. This is great at finding you tron lands on turns 1-3, and finding threats after tron is online. This requires you to have a green source to be able to use.

Chromatic Star and Sphere:



Turns colorless mana into green mana and replaces itself. This allows you to have access to green mana in the early turns without having to play a green land and delay tron by a turn. This also replaces itself by drawing a card when you use it, meaning it “cycles” for a net loss of only one mana in the late game when tron is online.

Methods:

Natural Tron:

The easiest method of assembling tron, this simply involves having or drawing all 3 unique tron lands by turn 3, and not playing any other lands before playing each unique piece on turns 1-3.

Map Tron:

This is the second-easiest, and involves having 2 unique tron pieces and an expedition map, which allows you to play the map on turn one off of one unique piece, activate the map with the second unique piece at the end of your opponent's turn 2, then playing the third unique piece with full access to 7 mana on turn 3.

Star/Sphere and Sylvan Scrying:

This method of getting turn 3 tron involves having 2 unique tron pieces and a star or sphere. You play a star or sphere on turn one (these are basically interchangeable from one another). On turn 2, *before* playing your second land, you should activate the sphere for green mana, and draw your card. You then play your second unique piece and use the green floating as well as the colorless from the second piece to find the third. On some deeper mulligans, you may not have the second unique piece, which is why it is very important to activate the star effect before you play your land, in case you draw a unique tron piece.

Star/Sphere and Ancient Stirrings:

Ancient Stirrings is pretty good if you are unable to find 2 unique tron pieces in your opening hand. You can play a star off of a tron land on turn 1, then crack star for a green and use stirrings on turn 2. Again, before you make your second land drop. Lands are colorless, so Ancient Stirrings can find you a unique tron piece. In game 1, with the example list, it is literally impossible to totally miss on ancient stirrings, so you will get something, even if it is not the unique tron piece you are looking for.

The Late Game

If things have gone well, your mana advantage should catapult you into the late game while your opponent is still setting up. Now, your goal is to close out the game as quickly as possible. There is some nuance to what threats you should deploy in what order, but playing the most expensive card you can cast is going to be right far more often than it will be wrong. There are a few things you should consider:

If your opponent has not gotten on board yet, Karn Liberated is great at removing one of their lands, then pressing your advantage from there. Don't be afraid to -3 two turns in a row, especially if you have other action in your hand. Getting 2 lands for one card very early is usually good enough to close out the game entirely.

If your opponent is showing counter magic, Ulamog, the Ceaseless Hunger is one of your best plays, since that creature exiles two permanents on cast. That, plus your opponent still needs to have an answer to the creature itself.

Against non-white decks that are threatening your life total, Wurmcoil Engine is a great choice.

Against white decks that play Solitude main (or, worse, path SB) you do not want to put yourself in a situation where you need wurmcoil as a blocker to survive. You may have to if you are low on action, but usually other plays will be better. KGC + Ensaring Bridge comes to mind.

Against the 4+ color piles, KGC for Sundering Titan can put games out of reach very quickly.

Walking Ballista has a 1 main, 1 side split. This is how a large % of games are actually ended. You can dump a lot of mana into a walking ballista and just finish off your opponent's life total. The one in the board is there to be easily accessed by Karn, giving you an effective 5 copies in the main.

The KarnBoard

While you have 15 sideboard slots to work with, Some slots are reserved for targets for KGC. Remember, the -2 on KGC allows you to get artifact cards from your sideboard, or artifact cards that were exiled. Keep this in mind and you may cycle your relic of progenitus and have access to any of the goodies that were in your graveyard before. Let's look at your starting options for now and give examples of times you may want to go get them.

Card Name	
Tormod's Crypt/Relic of Progenitus	Phoenix, Grinding Breach, whenever you want to have graveyard interaction available immediately. Sideboardable in quick graveyard matchups like dredge, self-mill combo, living end, etc.
Walking Ballista	To end the game with a large amount of mana, Sideboardable against magus of the moon/other creature hate/ragavan
Chalice of the Void	Murktide, Decks with a lot of 1-drops, Breach
Liquimetal Coating	Any deck that would struggle with a stone rain every turn. Remember, you can get it with Karn, then activate on a land in their upkeep to make it an artifact, therefore unable to tap for mana due to Karn's Static Ability. Can also be used to blank activated abilities on problematic permanents during your opponents turn (namely planeswalkers)
Ensnaring Bridge	Any matchup where the plan is to attack you with creatures. Emptying your hand can be trivial.
Trinisphere	Breach, Burn, Hammer, other decks that want to cast a lot of spells.
Sundering Titan	4c/5c Omnath, Creativity, Footfalls, End, Breach
Pithing Needle	Yawgmoth, planeswalkers, situationally good against hammer. Boseiju matchups - you can name Boseiju, who Endures to dramatically increase win% in boarded matchups.
The Stone Brain	Extraction effect fetchable with Karn. Creativity,Yawg, other decks with "key card" can also kill certain win cons to make games incredibly favored (Murktide regent, etc.)

Mulligans:

The most important decision of every game with this deck is the mulligan decision. Tron does not need a lot of cards to function, so you must be willing to mulligan aggressively. If your 7, 6, or even 5 cannot produce turn 3 tron, you should send it back. While hands that can resolve map or scrying to find a tron piece are best, using stirrings to do so is also acceptable, even if it is the one of the three that does not guarantee a hit.

You can mulligan very well, so you should not be afraid to keep mulliganing. This is not a midrange deck and you do not need a critical mass of cards to win. All of your cards are huge and impactful. A turn 3 tron one a 3-card hand with no payoffs is way better than a hand with a lot of action that has to play a non-unique tron land before turn 4.

We'll look at some example hands and determine one important thing based on them:
Can this produce turn three tron?

Example 1:

Forest
Urza's Mine
Urza's Tower
Expedition Map
Karn, the Great Creator
Chromatic Star
Ugin, the Spirit Dragon

Answer (highlight to see)
Yes. This can produce turn 3 tron by playing a unique piece on turn 1 and playing map, then activating map on turn 2 to find the third piece.
(Answer is above)

Example 2:

Chromatic Sphere
Urza's Power Plant
Urza's Tower
Sylvan Scrying

Answer (highlight to see)
Yes. This can produce turn 3 tron by playing a unique piece on turn 1 and playing sphere, then activating sphere on turn 2, to make a green and draw a card, then playing your unique piece and producing a colorless to cast sylvan scrying for your third unique piece.
(Answer is above)

Example 3:

Chromatic Star
Urza's Power Plant
Ancient Stirrings
Urza's Mine
Karn, Liberated

Answer (highlight to see)

Yes. This does require the top 6 or 7 cards of your deck to cooperate, though. You can play your star on turn one with a unique piece, then crack your star on turn 2 for a green, draw your card, then cast ancient stirrings looking for the missing tower.
(Answer is above)

Example 4:

Urza's Power Plant
Sylvan Scrying
Urza's Mine
Karn, Liberated
Forest
Sanctum of Ugin
Walking Ballista

Answer (highlight to see)

No. This hand is not able to produce turn 3 tron without a fair amount of help. You need to draw the tower off the top of your deck, or a way to make green without playing your forest. This does allow you to make assemble tron on turn 4. With a 7-card hand though, you want to mulligan this against an unknown opponent.
(Answer is above)

Example 5:

Urza's Power Plant
Sylvan Scrying
Forest
Karn, Liberated
Ugin, the Spirit Dragon
Boseiju, Who Endures
Ancient Stirrings

Answer (highlight to see)

No. This hand has only one unique tron land, and in order to use any of your green spells, it would require you to play a green source with one of your land drops. You can do much better than this.
(Answer is above)

Example 6:

Urza's Power Plant
Urza's Tower
Urza's Mine

Answer (highlight to see)
Yes. You have 3 tron lands. You should keep this mulligan to 3. Mana is far more important than payoffs. You have a lot of payoffs and a lot of ways to find them.
(Answer is above)

Hate Cards

Your game 1's are better than sideboard games usually, since your goal is just to assemble tron as quickly as possible, only worrying about the non-basic land hate that's maindeckable. Post board, people will bring in all sorts of ways to interact with your lands.

Main Deck Hate (% format):

Field of Ruin/Ghost Quarter (~0-5%)
Boseiju, Who Endures (~33%)
Assassin's Trophy (~0-5%)
Counterspell (~20%)
Thoughtseize/misc. Discard (~20%)
Blood Moon/Magus of the Moon (~30%)

Sideboard Hate:

Surgical Extraction (~0-10%)
Obsidian Charmaw (~0-5%)
Break the Ice (~0%)
Fulminator Mage (~0-2%)
Alpine Moon (~2%)
Gaddock Teeg (~0-2%)
Lavinia, Azorius Renegade (~2-5%)
Damping Sphere (~0%)
Void Mirror (~0-5%)
Situational Counterspells (Force of Negation, Ceremonious Rejection, etc.) (~20%)
Necromentia/Unmoored Ego (~5%)
Cheap Artifact Destruction (Nature's Claim, Force of Vigor, etc.) (~25-30%)

How to beat the Hate - don't play scared, but informed.

Black Interaction (Primarily discard spells) - Mulliganing can be incredibly difficult as you do not want to find yourself needing to topdeck 1-2 good cards due to a well timed thoughtseize/inquisition. Sometimes being lucky is just the move, metagames where this is expected heavily can increase Veil of Summer # in sideboard. But always remember, you're playing the deck with the most powerful topdecks in the format, even in bad positions.

Blue Interaction (Primarily counterspells) - Sequencing is your best friend - pressuring your opponent at the maximum value on each turn will make you the strongest versus a given counterspell. Tax your opponents mana, and navigate your hand to resolve the "best threat" in a given matchup. Blue mana sources can be attacked with Ulamog, which happens to be your best card vs. Counterspells.

Red Interaction (Primarily land hate) - This can be incredibly difficult in the main board, especially with ragavan interactive decks going to 2-3 copies in the main currently. Know your outs (Oblivion Stone, Warping Wail on Ragavan) and matchup early so you can find winnable game ones. Boarding can make this better as you both can leverage known play/draw against moons and Claim/Force to instant speed remove the moon and untap to continue your gameplan. Notably bring in Ballista's against expected Magus of the Moon.

Green Interaction (Primarily artifact hate) - Identify these situations and know that your expedition map/sphere lines can be much weaker into artifact hate. This can be very hard to play around, so be precise in your sequencing so that you can maximize your resources (Mapping on 3 mana, sphering on 2/3 mana to resolve the green spell) Redundancy helps!

White Interaction (Primarily "hatebear"/exile effects) - White can present some unique approaches to the tron matchup with hate on lands/mana/big spells or exile effects that lineup well against your threats. You are typically favored against decks that lean heavily on white sources of interaction.

"Land" Interaction (Field/Boseiju/etc.) - We are not completely stone cold to these effects, as Pithing Needle can protect you if **KGC'd** - or boarded in/mulliganed to (DISCLAIMER: This is an aggressive opportunity in those matchups - don't mulligan away good hands for it. But know that your suspect hands are even weaker in the matchup and mulligan to stronger hands/lucky needle)

"Creature" Interaction (Gaddock, Lavinia, Magus of the Moon, etc.) - Higher Walking Ballista counts in the main/side can help you be prepared for these effects, know that you have to get out in front of them so prioritize resolving your big spells that can potentially answer one of these permanents. Blast zone is a flexible answer to these as well (excluding Magus)

Extraction Interaction (Surgical, Necromentia, Unmoored Ego, etc.) - Surgical Extraction on a tron land that found its way into the graveyard that isn't on board is basically game, we don't have a great way to stop this if the situation presents itself. Dodge surgical matchups. Necromentia/Unmoored Ego - while game if resolved - can be countered by one of your best interactive cards Warping Wail. These are a MUST STOP, automatic loss effect if resolved before you have tron on board. Identify these matchups and know when you need to leave warping wail up. Note that any deck running Ragavan+3 mana sorcery speed extraction can do this on t2, and plan accordingly.

Tron's Interaction

While not exactly a strength of big mana decks conventionally, tron does offer some situational interaction that is very well positioned in the modern format.



Warping Wail - This can both exile creatures with p/t 1 or less (Ragavan, Monastery Swiftspear, Emry, no delirium DRC, no trigger Ledger Shredder, Tourach, Brazen Borrower, Almost all of Hammer's creatures+Inkmoth Nexus activated, mana dorks in Yawgmoth/etc., and much more) **OR** counter target sorcery spell (Expressive Iteration, Thoughtseize, Indomitable Creativity, Prismatic Ending, Necromentia/Unmoored Ego, Living End, Crashing Footfalls, Steelshaper's Gift, Persist, Burn sorceries, Explore, Eldritch Evolution, Mirror Stirrings/Scrying, Tribal Flames, etc.)



Boseiju, who Endures - Land that can be found with Map/Scrying/Stirrings that can answer problematic artifact/enchantment/lands.



Blast Zone - Land that can be found with Map/Scrying/Stirrings that can answer boards akin to Ratchet Bomb, especially when the necessary CMC is 1. This card is incredibly flexible and is often the easiest path to an answer in the main to various problematic game states.



Oblivion Stone/Ugin - Powerful wrath effects that can undo turns worth of work by your opponent in one spell. Ugin provides additional upside of exiling against decks like Living End. Never forget that you are not DEAD to blood moon, as you can typically angle towards a hard casted/activated oblivion stone (at instant speed) to get yourself back into the game.



Karn Liberated - Maybe clunkier than in modern from years ago, but still a powerhouse that can resolve on turn 3 and interact with your opponents mana, problematic permanents, or hand to severely limit opposing resources.



Karn, the Great Creator - While with the properly built Karnboard, a metagame can be attacked with drawn KGC's that are well used, also don't forget the incredibly relevant static ability on KGC. Since the printing of this card, decks playing it are extremely favored against any decks that plan to activate artifacts in their game plan. Don't forget some of the more niche applications that don't jump off the page (Ragavan treasure tokens/food tokens, so on). Karn's plus can extend this interaction to any one permanent targeted as well.

Sideboard Guide

UR Murktide

Out	In
	+2 Nature's Claim
	+2 Veil of Summer

Footfalls Cascade

Out	In

Rakdos Midrange (non-scam)

Out	In

Rakdos Scam

Out	In

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Elementals

Out	In

4/5c Aggro

Out	In

Affinity

Out	In

GDS

Out	In

UW Control

Out	In

4c Control

Out	In

Creativity

Out	In

Hammer

Out	In
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Breach

Out	In

Living End

Out	In

Burn

Out	In