

MetaZoo™ TRADING CARD GAME

LEARN TO PLAY: ALPHA DEMO VERSION

It's a new world, but it's one you've been living in all along. Cryptids—those creatures that lurk on the edge of our lives, sometimes seen but never proven to exist—can be discovered at last, their very essence added to your own spellbook. Then, using your cards, you can bring those cryptids to life before you—to help you, to guide you, even to fight for you...

The MetaZoo Trading Card Game is your window to the world of cryptids. As a player, you'll discover amazing creatures from all manners of places and call on them to battle with you against an opponent with equally impressive cryptids.

And it all begins with the Alpha Demo Deck.



Figure 1: Your side of the field



Rules for Play

These condensed rules will jumpstart your game knowledge so you can start playing almost immediately.

How to Win

Players compete to win Missions and earn Mission Points (MP). The first player to reach 15 Mission Points wins the game immediately.

Each Deck Contains

- 1 Caster "In Training"
- 2 Starter Terras
- 5 Aura cards to make your Aura deck (same type as your Caster)
- 15 cards to build your main deck

Pre-Game Setup (See Figure 1)

- Place your Caster face-up on your side of the field (A in Figure 1).
- Place your Aura deck below your Caster (B in Figure 1).
- Place 1 Aura from the Aura deck in the Aura zone. (C in Figure 1)
- Shuffle and place your main deck (D in Figure 1).
- Draw 5 cards from your main deck.
- Determine who will be the Priority player (roll).

Watch the Learn How to Play Video Series!



Lanes

The main play area consists of 3 lanes. The Priority player places both of their Starter Terras on the end lanes with a space between them. The other player chooses one of their Starter Terras and places it in the center lane (set the other aside). Each lane has two sides: friendly (your side) and non-friendly (your opponent's side). Lanes can hold up to 5 legal cards per side, excluding the Terra. Only creatures, equipment, Casters, and Aura enhancements may occupy lanes.

Gameplay

Each round consists of 3 phases: draw phase, Aura phase, and action phase. Complete all of these phases each round, even on the first round of the game.

Draw Phase

- Swap priorities (except for the first round).
- Draw 1 card from the deck.

Aura Phase

- Add 1 Aura from the Aura deck to the Aura zone.
- Untap all Aura in the Aura zone and untap cards in play.
- Reset all lanes (they are ready to resolve Missions again).
- Untap any tapped creatures and equipment.

"Tap" into Something Great

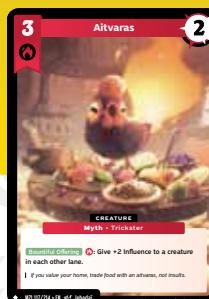
Some creatures have a "use" ability that requires them to be tapped, like Giant Salamander. To tap it, spend an action and turn your creature 90 degrees. (Some might require other payments as well.) The real cost of tapping is that a tapped creature does not add its Influence to resolving a mission. You can still tap a creature after its lane is resolved.



Pay to Do X

Creatures in play with an activatable ability can be used by spending an action and paying a cost. For example, Aitvaras requires you to spend an action and 1 Red Aura to give all your other lanes a boost.

You can only use abilities once per card, per round.



Action Phase

Players alternate taking one action at a time. The player with Priority goes first.

Actions include:

- Play a card. Pay its cost in Aura.
- Enhance a lane with Aura (Aura Enhancement keyword).
- Use an ability on a friendly creature or equipment in play.
- Declare a Mission and resolve the lane.

The action phase ends when all lanes have been resolved. Players must always take an action on their turn. If players are done taking actions, a player must declare a Mission in an unresolved lane.

Declare a Mission

Declare a Mission to resolve a lane. The player with the highest total Influence in the lane wins the mission and scores Mission Points (MP). Missions have a few outcomes when you win, lose, or tie.

- Uncontested Mission:** If your opponent has no creatures in the lane, the mission is uncontested. Winning an uncontested mission awards you +2 Mission Points.
- Contested Mission:** If your opponent has at least one creature in the lane, the mission is contested. Winning a contested mission awards you +1MP.
- Tie:** If both players have equal influence and a creature in a lane,

Deal Damage

If a card says you "may" deal damage, you have the option not to, but if there is no "may," you have to. Damage Shatters creatures or equipment if it meets or exceeds their Influence. Damage remains on a creature until end of round, making them easier to Shatter with an additional damage effect. Then damage is cleared away.

With Metal Man, you "may" deal the damage. But you have to gain the MP (and why wouldn't you want to?!).



each player receives +1 MP.

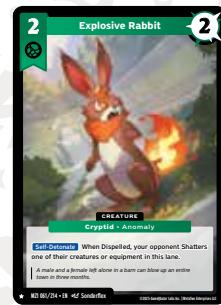
- Loss:** Both players have zero Influence and/or neither player has a creature in the lane. No MP is awarded.

After all lanes have been resolved, follow the same steps to start a new round.

Damage

Damage that meets or exceeds a creature or equipment's Influence will Shatter it, sending it to the discard pile. Damage is tracked on each card until the end of the round, and then it is removed if there is not enough to Shatter it.

Keyword Abilities: Most keyword abilities are capitalized in the rules text.



Keywords

Give / gain / have & has / deal

In MetaZoo, these words have specific, temporal meanings.

Give indicates “until end of round.” If you give a creature +2 Influence, when the round ends, remove that bonus.

Gain indicates a permanent bonus or change. When you gain 1 MP, it is not removed at the end of a round—you keep it. If a creature gains a bonus, the bonus lasts from round to round.

Has/have usually implies that there is a condition that is affecting something(s). As long as that condition is met, the creature “has” that bonus, even from round to round. For example, Goofus Bird has +1 Influence, but only if the condition is met that there is another friendly Soar creature in a different lane.

Deal is similar to give. It lasts until the end of the round and is usually dealing damage to an opponent’s creature or equipment.

Create

To create is to put something in play (usually a token) that was not a card in your hand or in one of your zones. Create is not considered “playing” the token/card and does not trigger those effects.

Destruction

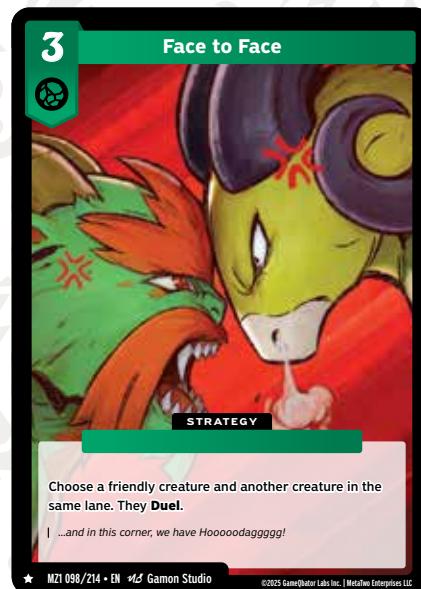
Immediately after awarding Mission Points, if the Destruction keyword(s) is present on the winning side of a lane, a rival non-Aura card in the lane must be Shattered. Your opponent chooses which of their cards to Shatter. Shatter one card for each instance of “Destruction” on the winning side.

Discover (X)

Look at the top X number of cards from your deck. Choose a card from those cards based on any limitation indicated (type of card, Aura type, etc.). Show the chosen card to your opponent and put it in your hand. Put the remaining cards, in any order you wish, on the bottom of your deck.

Dispel / When Dispelled

The ability occurs when a card is Shattered or otherwise removed from play and is put in the discard pile. Sacrifice is another common way a card can be Dispelled. Strategies are not Dispelled, and Aura cannot be Shattered or Dispelled.



Duel

A Duel ability typically allows two creatures to deal damage to each other equal to their respective Influence. If at any time a creature has taken damage equal to its Influence or higher, Shatter it. Like other damage, it remains on the creature or equipment until the end of the round, then all damage is removed.

On Mission Declaration

The ability occurs when a mission is declared by a player.

On Mission Resolution

The ability occurs after the winner has been determined in a mission and the MP have been awarded.

Move

Move means to relocate a card in play to another lane. A Move is not allowed if the move to the destination lane would break either card-name, prevention effect, or lane-size limit rules.

On Play

This ability occurs when the card is played to a lane.

Overwhelm

This effect triggers if the lane is won by a difference of (X) or more Influence. (X is the number on the card, the threshold of difference required to succeed.) This effect is checked for as soon as a winner is determined and is not cancelled or triggered by any subsequent effects that would change the Influence of either side (such as Destruction).

Sacrifice

Sacrifice sends a card to the discard pile from play (see also Dispelled). It is not Shattered, sacrifice cannot be prevented, and this is most often used as an additional cost to pay for an effect.

Soar

Creatures with Soar allow a friendly lane to score a successful an otherwise contested mission as if it were uncontested unless the opponent also has Soar. Soar is not cumulative, meaning a friendly lane’s resolution either has Soar, or it does not have Soar.

On Successful Mission

This ability occurs at the same time that a mission resolution ability occurs, but you must win the mission for “On Successful Mission” to trigger.

Unit

Unit(s) is the term for a creature, equipment, token, or Caster in a lane. Unit does not include Aura enhancements, which can also be placed in a lane but aren’t subject to all the same rules. Unit also does not refer to Terra.

Top Tips for Transitioning from Alpha Decks to Your First Full Game

When you play your first full game, you need to know the following:

1. A main deck is now 50 cards, not 15.
2. Your Aura deck is now 10 cards, not 5.
3. Non-“In Training” casters will give you access to more Aura Types (colors).
4. There are 4 lanes, not 3.
5. The game is won at 30 points, not 15.
6. Each player will place 2 Starter Terras, not just the Priority player.

So, let's go into some detail about how to prepare for this.

1. Build for the long haul. The first big change will be your minimum main deck size and the points needed to win. To play a full game requires a 50-card main deck and 30 MP to win. You'd likely run out of cards before scoring 30 MP with your Alpha deck. You need a plan to add at least 35 more cards. Purchase boosters at your local game store to build your collection, and you'll want to prioritize finding a new caster card.
2. Find a caster who can play two colors (Aura Types). Your “In Training” caster only allows one Aura Type (color) to be played. That means fewer cards out of every pack will be allowed in your full game deck. You'll want to buy some booster packs or trade with friends to find a caster that will let you play an allied Aura Type (a second color). Don't worry, casters are common cards, so it'll be easy to find what you need. And you'll be pleasantly surprised at how helpful their more advanced abilities are! Plus, with that one change, there will be twice as many cards in each booster that you can jam in your main deck!

3. Up your “curve.” Currently, your Aura deck stops at 5. But the full game is a 10-Aura deck. You need to collect cards from booster packs that will help you make more powerful plays with that additional Aura. Find and add 5+ cost cards that can dominate a lane.
4. If you play two colors, you must use 1 Starter Terra of each Aura Type (your primary color and your chosen allied color) as your starters. The allied color you choose must be shown on your caster card in your caster's allied Aura box.
5. Learn how to “trade” Aura. You couldn't do this in the demo decks. During play, to bring in a second color, you have to take an action and pay 1 aura to swap in an allied Aura Type for one of your primary Aura type. Each card you play of the Allied color will require you to use at least one allied Aura to play it.
6. Roll to determine who will go first (the first player is the “Priority” player).

Deck Building:

- Your main deck may only hold 3 copies of any card.
- Terras without “Starter” can only be added to your main deck.
- Terras with “Starter” can be added to your main deck, so long as they aren't copies of the Starter Terra you used in Pre-Game Setup.
- You may play with one of your allied colors, but you can't play with both allied card colors in your main deck.
- Your creatures and equipment with the exact same name can't be played to the same lane.

For example, *Piasa Bird* and *Piasa Bird the Territorial* would not be considered to have the same name, but you can't play two copies of your *Piasa Bird* to one lane.

- Some creatures and equipment have the “unique” trait. Cards with the unique trait are limited to 1 copy per side in play (not in the deck), regardless of which lane they are played to.

Aura Enhancement

- You may enhance a lane with Aura(s) if you have at least one friendly unit with an Aura enhancement in the lane.
- To enhance the lane, as an action, move an untapped Aura into a friendly lane. It cannot be tapped to pay any costs while in a lane. Lane size limits still apply.
- Enhancing a friendly lane with Aura provides +1 Influence to the lane and enables the powerful Destruction keyword on Aura.
- Enhanced Aura in lanes typically cannot be Shattered or affected by your opponent or their effects. It cannot be chosen to satisfy Destruction or Sacrifice effects for either player.
- Note: At the end of each round, all Aura in lanes returns to the Aura zone, whether used for Destruction or not.



Card Types

Caster



Creature



Aura



Strategy



Terra



Equipment

Card Anatomy

