

# MetaZoo™

## TRADING CARD GAME

# HOW TO PLAY

**L**egendary cryptids roam the world—some protect it, and others lurk in the shadows. As a Caster, the same essence that flows through the cryptids also flows through you. But watch out! Not every Caster plans to use essence with the same intentions. Complete missions to prove that you alone stand at the top in the world of MetaZoo.

### Winning the Game

Players compete to win missions and earn Mission Points (MP). The first player to reach 30 Mission Points wins the game.

### Building a Deck

To play, you will need the following cards:

- **1 Caster**
- **2 Starter Terras**
- **10 Aura cards to make your Aura deck**
- **50 cards to make your main deck (No Casters or Aura)**

Note: Your main deck cannot include more than three (3) copies of any card.

#### Caster



Allied  
Aura Types  
Available

#### Terras



#### Auras



Primary



Allied Aura,  
outside the  
game

#### Main Deck



50-card minimum size

**Y**our Caster choice determines the primary Aura type of your deck (e.g., Nia is a Fire Aura type). But Aura is not added to your main deck. You may include main deck cards of a second Aura type (color) from the Aura Type shown in the allied Aura box on the bottom right of your Caster. If the allied Aura box has the same Aura symbol as your Caster, that Caster has no allied Aura type.

Build your main deck with cards that match your Aura type and your allied Aura type (if you have one and choose to use it). Casters and Aura are not be placed in your deck. Starter Terra can only be placed in your deck if no copies of that same Terra were used by you during game setup.

If you choose to include allied cards in your deck, you must include 1 Starter Terra from your primary Aura type and 1 Starter Terra from your second Aura type.

Your Aura deck is built entirely from Aura, the primary resource of the game. Your Aura deck is made of 10 Aura, all from the primary Aura type of your Caster. If you chose to use an allied Aura type, set aside some Aura with the matching symbol but don't put it in your Aura deck.

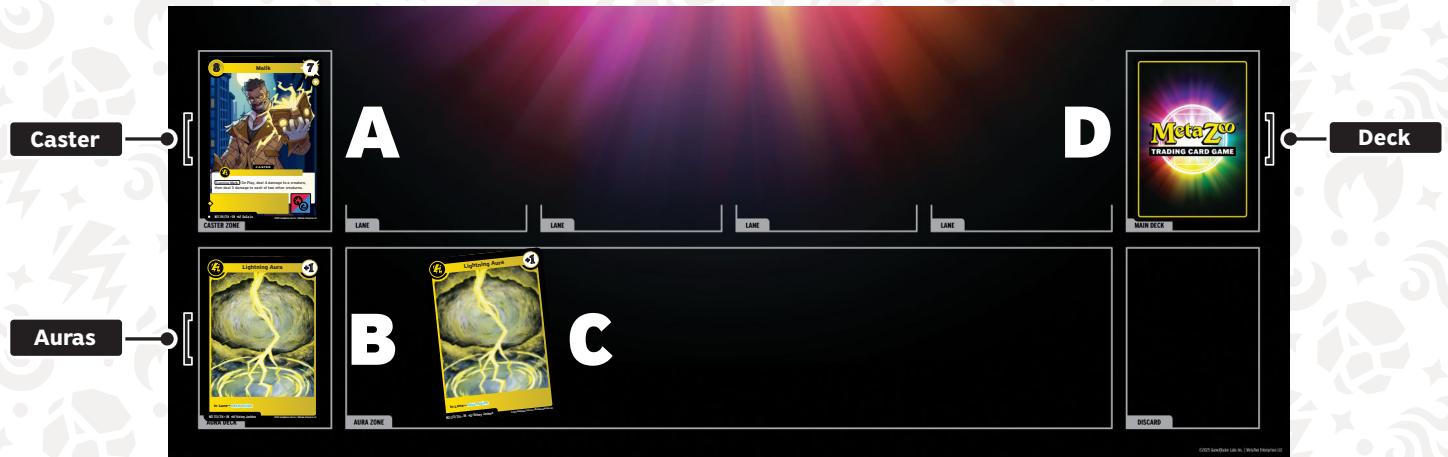
## Pre-Game Setup

To play MetaZoo TCG:

- Place your Caster face-up on your side of the field.
- Shuffle and place your Aura deck just below your Caster.
- Place 1 Aura from your Aura deck in your Aura zone. (These will all be your primary Aura type.)
- Shuffle and place your main deck.
- Draw 5 cards from your deck.

Randomly determine who will choose to be the Priority or Non-Priority player.

- The player who goes first has Priority. The other player is the Non-Priority player.
- Starter Terra of each player are placed in alternating lanes. The Priority player places first, setting one of their Starter Terra in their leftmost lane. The Non-Priority player places beside it, and so on until all four Terra slots are filled.



**Your side of the field**

## Understanding Lanes

There are four (4) lanes that represent different conflicts in MetaZoo.

- Lanes exist even without a Terra in them. They are temporarily “razed” but resolve as normal and still reward Mission Points when resolved.
- Lanes are where missions take place.
- Lanes have two sides, a friendly side (your side) and a rival side (your opponent’s side).

Your cards occupy friendly (your side) lanes.

- Lanes have space for exactly 1 Terra at their center and a maximum size of 5 legal units per side. (Legal unit types that can occupy a lane are creatures, Casters, equipment, and tokens. Enhanced Aura also counts toward the limit but are not considered units in any other sense.)
- The Terra in a lane, no matter who placed it, does not count toward either player’s lane size limit.
  - If a friendly lane already contains 5 of your units, you can’t add any more, and you can’t discard or remove a unit or Aura from a friendly lane to make room for anything else (except by an effect).
- Creatures, equipment, and enhanced Aura in lanes contribute Influence (as does enhanced Aura, but more on that later) to the mission in that lane.
- Having the most Influence in a lane is the most common way to win missions and gain Mission Points (MP).



## Gameplay

Each round has 3 phases: the draw phase, the Aura phase, and the action phase. The first two, the draw phase and the Aura phase, are simultaneous, short, and set up the action phase (which is when most of the game is played). The general flow of the action phase will be to alternate back and forth between players, each taking one action until all lanes have been resolved, which signifies the end of the round.

### Draw Phase

During the draw phase:

- Trade priorities (except for the first round).
- Draw 1 card from the deck and add it to your hand. (There is no maximum hand size.)

### Aura Phase

During the Aura phase:

- Draw 1 Aura from your Aura deck and add it to your Aura zone. (*This means that before play in the first round, you will have 2 Aura in your Aura zone.*) Once you have 10 Aura in your Aura zone, including Aura temporarily in lanes through enhancement, no more Aura can be added, but you can Trade Aura.

**Note:** When adding additional Aura, it must be the primary Aura type from your Aura deck. To access allied Aura, you must Trade Aura.

- Untap all Aura in the Aura zone.
- Untap your units in play.
- Ready all lanes. They can once again be resolved.





## Action Phase

During the action phase, players go back and forth taking one action at a time. The player with Priority goes first. Available actions are:

1. Pay the Aura cost of a card in hand and play it.
2. Enhance a lane with Aura (adding +1 Influence and Destruction).
3. Trade Aura from that player's Aura zone with one of their allied Aura.



4. Pay the cost of an ability on a friendly unit in play (including that player's Caster) and use that ability. Currently, no ability can be used more than once per round.
5. Declare a mission and resolve the lane.



The action phase ends when all four lanes have been resolved. Players can't pass their action. If a player does not have other actions they want to take, they must declare a mission in an unresolved lane.



## Action Details

### Play a Card

To play a card, you must pay its Aura cost. Tap the amount of Aura in your Aura zone equal to the Aura cost of the card.

Note: You are required to pay at least one Aura of a card's Aura type to play it (e.g., Fire, Earth, etc.). The rest can be paid using any combination of Aura in your Aura zone.

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 two Piasa Birds would.

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 unit with an Aura enhancement in the lane, represented by this Enhancement Symbol just below their Influence number.



To enhance the lane, move an untapped Aura into a lane as an action. It cannot be tapped to pay any costs while in a lane. Enhancing a lane can be done multiple times by using further actions. 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. The Aura itself is not considered to have Influence. Tapping that Aura, or if a friendly creature is not present in the lane, nullifies its +1 Influence.

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.

### Trade Aura

To Trade Aura, tap one Aura in your Aura zone as an action to pay the cost of the trade. Then, swap any primary Aura card in your Aura zone for an allied Aura card that you have set aside before the game (allied Aura cards are not in your Aura deck). The incoming traded Aura enters play in the same orientation as the Aura you used for the swap (it is either tapped or untapped).

Zero-cost cards in allied colors cannot be played until you have an allied Aura of that color in your Aura Zone.

### Use Card Abilities

You may use tap and activated abilities on any of your units (creatures, Casters, tokens, or equipment) as an action. This includes:

- **Tap abilities**
  - Something must be untapped to use its tap ability. To show it is tapped, turn it 90 degrees.
  - Tapping can be a cost you pay to perform an action.
  - Tapped units do not contribute their Influence when resolving a mission, regardless of its Influence value.
  - Tap abilities can be used more than once per round, if you are able to untap the unit.
  - Other effects that may force a unit to tap do not activate the tap ability.
- **Activated abilities**
  - Tap Aura matching all Aura symbols in the ability cost to use the ability.
  - Some activated abilities may require another form of payment in addition or instead of Aura. This could include Sacrificing a unit or simply marking the ability as used for the round.
- **Casters** may have Caster Powers that are active in the Caster zone (on some Casters) these work the same as activated abilities.

**Note:** Each activated ability may only be used once per round. Find a simple way to mark this as a reminder.

**Note:** Equipment has additional restrictions on when you can use its abilities.

**Note:** Taking an action will sometimes cause multiple effects to happen at once. If this occurs, the active player (the player currently taking their action, not necessarily the player who has priority) will choose the order in which those separate effects resolve.

## Declaring Mission, Resolving a Mission

Declaring a Mission triggers any “On Mission Declaration” effects and abilities before moving automatically to “On Mission Resolution.”

To determine the winner, add Influence from each player’s side:

If players are tied, whether there is a creature in the lane or not, 0 MP is awarded.

Otherwise, the player who has the higher Influence:

- is awarded 2 MP if the opponent has no creature in the lane.
- is awarded 1 MP if the opponent has a creature in the lane.

**Note:** Make sure to take into account the Soar keyword and “During Mission Resolution” effects when determining points awarded.

**Note:** You can play equipment to a lane without a creature, but it does not contribute Influence until a friendly creature is in the lane.

- Resolve effects that are contingent on mission outcomes such as Overwhelm and Destruction.
- If the winning player has a Destruction keyword in the lane (often on an Aura), for each instance of Destruction on the winning side, force the losing player to Shatter one of their units in that lane. At the end of the round, all Aura are returned from the lanes to their Aura zones, whether used for Destruction or not.
- **Note:** Be sure to read the section above on Aura Enhancement!
- Mark the lane to indicate it has been resolved for this round.
- **Note:** You can do something simple like turning the Terra card 90 degrees to indicate a lane is resolved.

If resolving the lane boosts a player’s total score to 30 or more Mission Points, the game is over. In the rare event that both players reach 30 or more MP at the same time, play continues until a player is ahead by at least 1 point; that player immediately wins.

## Damage

Damage is one of the ways that a unit can be removed from play. If the amount of damage equals or exceeds its current Influence, it is removed. Put it into its owner’s discard pile. (Any unit moved from play to the discard pile from damage, Shatter, Sacrifice or other effect is called *Dispelled*.)

Damage, if not enough to immediately remove something from play, is tracked on units for the remainder of the round. If enough cumulative damage has not been dealt to the unit by the end of the round, all damage is removed.



# Card Types

## Creatures

Creatures are cryptids, myths, and Casters. Creatures are played to lanes and provide Influence and can have abilities that affect some part of the field or lane.

All creatures have:

- **Name**  
The name of the creature. Remember, only 1 non-token creature or equipment with the same exact name can be per lane, per side.
- **Cost**  
Tap this many Aura, with at least one matching its Aura type, to play the creature card.
- **Influence**  
This is the creature's base Influence. If it reaches zero, the creature is immediately Shattered and placed in its owner's discard pile.
- **Card Type**  
This is either "Creature" or "Creature (Unique)"  
Unique creatures are limited to one copy in play at a time, per side.
- **Traits**  
These descriptors are often referenced by other cards.



Some also have:

- **Aura Enhancement**  
The Aura Enhancement symbol permits you to enhance a lane with Aura(s) to increase Influence and use its Destruction power.
- **Card Ability and Rules Text**  
Creatures may have abilities with effects On Play, ongoing abilities, or abilities that happen when certain conditions or actions occur, often called "triggers."

## Tokens

Tokens have special exceptions:

- Tokens are set aside (outside the game) and retrieved for use when "created" by card play abilities.
- Tokens are removed from play if they are Shattered.
- Tokens may never be in your discard pile, hand, or deck. Effects that would send tokens to any other zone remove them from the game instead.
- If you don't have a token card, or enough token cards, you may represent them with something else.
- Normally, tokens do not follow the "name" rule and you can have duplicates of tokens in the same lane. (Lane size limits still apply.)





## Equipment

Equipment cards represent the gear, weapons, and accessories used to outfit your creatures. Equipment cards are not attached to any single creature and do not belong to any single creature.

- If an equipment is in a lane without a friendly creature, its Influence and card abilities cannot be used (including On Play abilities).
- It has Influence, even if all friendly creatures are tapped, but like creatures, it provides no Influence if it is tapped.

All equipment have:

- **Name**  
The name of the equipment. A player may have 1 non-token equipment with the same exact name, per lane, per side.
- **Cost**  
Tap this many Aura with at least one matching its Aura type to play the equipment card.
- **Influence**  
This is the equipment's base Influence. If it reaches zero, the equipment is immediately Shattered and placed in its owner's discard pile.
- **Card Type**  
This is either "Equipment" or "Equipment (Unique)"  
Unique equipment are limited to one



copy in play, at a time, per side.

- **Traits**  
These descriptors are often referenced by other cards.  
Some also have:
- **Aura Enhancement**  
The Aura Enhancement symbol permits you to enhance a lane with Aura(s)

to increase Influence and use its Destruction power.

- **Card Ability and Rules Text**  
Equipment may have abilities with effects On Play, ongoing abilities, or abilities that happen when certain conditions or actions occur, often called "triggers."

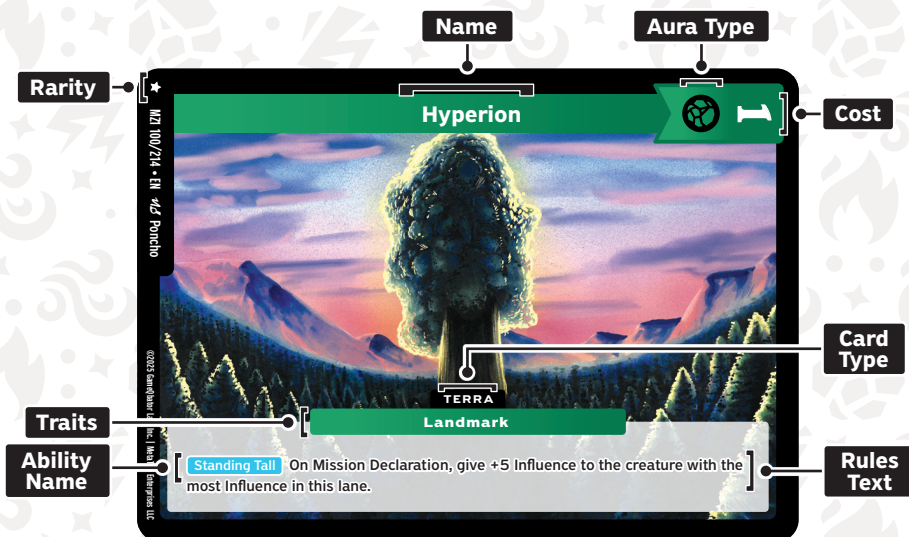
## Terras

Terra cards are played into the Terra slot of a lane and their effects apply to all relevant cards, regardless of who played the Terra. Terra do not count toward either player's base lane size limit, but they may modify it. Only one Terra may occupy the Terra slot in each lane. (A razed lane is a lane with the Terra slot unoccupied.)

Players can play a Terra to a razed lane or replace a Terra card in a lane with a new one from their hand (by paying the new Terra's cost), causing the current Terra to be put in its owner's discard pile.

All Terras have:

- **Name**  
The name of the Terra representing an environment on MetaZoo.
- **Cost**  
Tap this many Aura to play the card. (Starter Terra are played for free at the beginning of the game but have a cost if



played from your hand.)

- **Card Type**  
This is either "Terra" or "Terra (Starter)"  
**Note:** you cannot start with Terras that are missing "Starter" beside the card type.

- **Traits**  
These descriptors are often referenced by other cards.
- **Card Ability and Rules Text**  
Terra abilities apply to *all* cards in the lane and affect both players (such as a Terra that would give a card to the player who lost a mission).

## Strategy Cards

Strategy cards provide a variety of one-time effects. After resolving the strategy card, place it in its owner's discard pile. These cards are not placed in lanes.

All strategy cards have:

- **Name**
- **Cost**

Tap this many Aura with at least one matching its Aura type to play the strategy card.

- **Card Type**

This is "Strategy"

- **Card Ability**

A strategy card has an ability that is resolved immediately, then the card is discarded.



## Casters

Casters are similar to creatures with a few exceptions:

- Casters start the game in the Caster zone.
- While in the Caster zone, they are not considered creatures.
- In the Caster zone, they cannot be targeted by cards and effects that do not explicitly affect Casters.
- Casters can be played to a lane by paying their Aura cost.
  - When Casters are in a lane, they are considered both creatures and Casters
- They count against the base lane size limit.
- Some Casters have Caster Powers. These are abilities that appear in the bottom left box in the same color as the Aura Type, and they are always "on." Abilities in the normal rules text box can be used as an action while the Caster is in the Caster zone or in a lane.
- Unless a Caster Power says otherwise, it functions the same whether the Caster is in a lane or in the Caster zone.



- Casters can only be in a lane or in the Caster zone. If an effect would send them anywhere else, that effect Shatters the Caster instead.

If a Caster is Shattered, return them to the Caster zone but flipped face down. They become unavailable for all purposes EXCEPT that players can still Trade Aura even if the Caster has been removed from play.



## Aura

Aura is the resource that allows players to cast their cards. Aura is divided by Aura types. At this time, the four Aura types are Air, Earth, Fire, and Lightning (with Water slated as a fifth Aura type to be added later this year).

- Aura decks can only ever have your primary Aura type.
- Aura is never placed in the discard pile, main deck, or player's hands. Aura cannot be Shattered, damaged or returned to hand, while in a lane or the Aura zone, but some effects can place Aura back on the Aura deck. If an effect on an in-play Allied Aura would put it on the Aura deck, instead, it is sent outside the game. In its place, add an Aura of your primary Aura type from outside the game (you should have at least one that you traded in the first place) and return that primary Aura to the deck.
- See the sections on Trading Aura, Aura Enhancement, and Pre-Game Setup for more information on Aura's interactions with other parts of the game.





# Keywords

## Give/Gain/Have & Has/Deal

In MetaZoo, these words have specific 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.
- **Have / has** is used for continuous effects. For example, Goofus Bird has +1 Influence continuously, but only if the condition is met that there is another friendly Soar creature in a different lane.
- **Deal** is similar to give, but for damage. It lasts only until the end of the round and is often given to an opponent’s unit.

## 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. An example would be if a card said “When a unit is *played* to this lane...”

Create



## Destruction

On Mission Resolution, this ability causes the losing side in a mission to Shatter one of its units. Immediately after Mission Resolution, if the Destruction keyword is present on the winning side of a lane, the losing player must choose which of their units to Shatter. They Shatter one unit for each instance of “Destruction” on the winning side.

Destruction

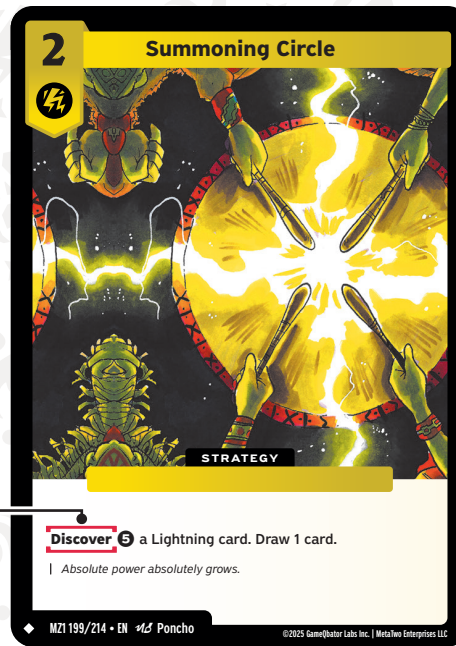




## Discover (X)

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.

### Discover



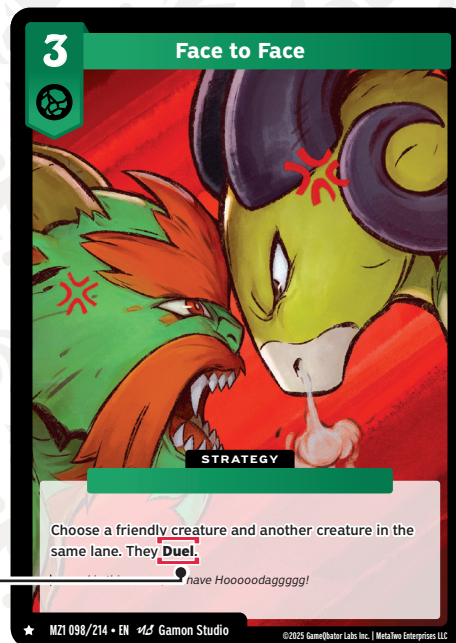
## Dispel / When Dispelled

The ability occurs when a card is Shattered or otherwise removed from play and is put in the discard pile. Sacrifice and damage are other common ways a card can be Dispelled. Strategies are not Dispelled, and Aura cannot be Shattered or Dispelled. Casters and tokens cannot be Dispelled because they can never be placed in the discard pile.

## Duel

A Duel ability causes two creatures to deal damage to each other equal to their respective Influence. (If at any time a unit has taken damage equal to its Influence or higher, put it into its owner's discard pile). If the damage is not enough to defeat a unit, like other damage, it remains until the end of the round, when all damage is removed.

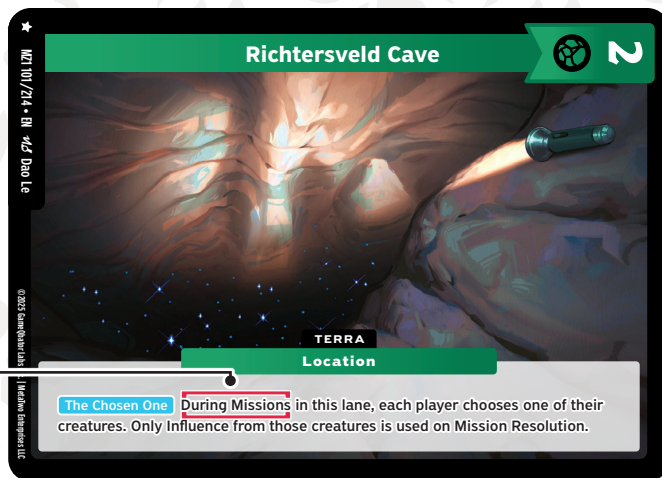
### Duel



## During Mission

The ability occurs while determining the Influence of each side and the Mission Points awarded.

During Mission



## Influence

Is the measure of a unit's ability to contribute to winning a mission. It also represents the amount of damage a unit can receive before it is defeated.

## 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 or lane size limit rules.

Move



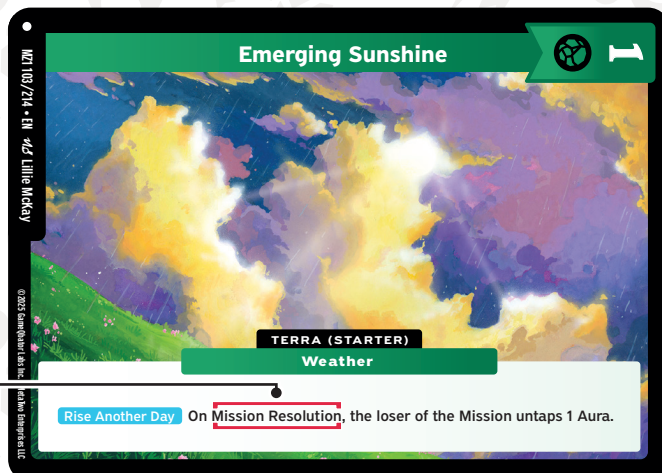
## On Mission Declaration

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 Mission Points have been awarded.

Mission Resolution





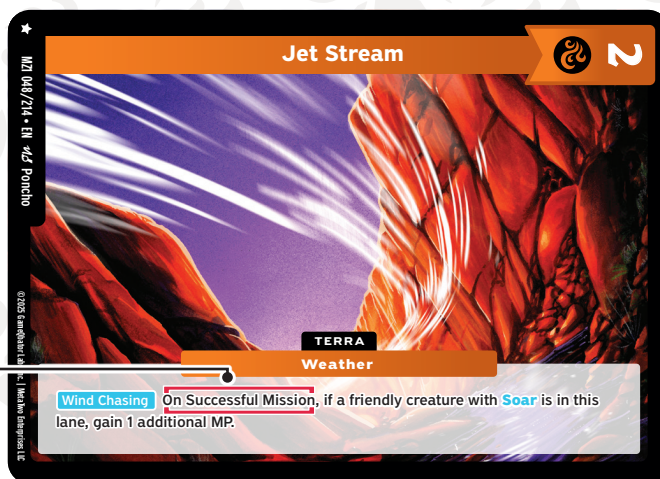
## On Play

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



## 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.



## Overwhelm (X)

On Mission Resolution, this effect triggers if it is on the winning side of a lane won by a difference of (X) or more Influence. (X is the number on the Overwhelm effect, the threshold of difference required to succeed.) This difference is determined when the lane is resolved, before On Mission Resolution effects are applied.



## Sacrifice

Sacrifice sends a card to the discard pile from play. It is not Shattered, sacrifice cannot be prevented, and this is most often used as an additional cost to pay for an effect. (Any unit moved from play to the discard pile from damage, Shatter, Sacrifice or other effect is called Dispelled.)

### Sacrifice



## Shatter

The Shatter effect moves a unit from play to the discard pile, often ignoring its Influence. (Any unit moved from play to the discard pile from damage, Shatter, Sacrifice or other effect is called Dispelled.)

### Shatter





## 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.

Soar



## Tap


Tap is an ability that nullifies the Influence contribution of units as long as they remain tapped. Units normally untap during the Aura phase. Turn a unit 90 degrees to show it is tapped. Untapped Aura can be tapped by opponents, which prevents you from spending that Aura. Tapping only affects a unit's Influence. Its (non-tapping) activated abilities and keywords may still be used.

Tap





## Tap (Action)

Tapping, as in the tap symbol, , indicates an action used to pay a cost. Turn the unit 90 degrees to show it is tapped. It no longer contributes its Influence to missions this round. Tapping Aura is similar. Untapped Aura can be tapped to pay Aura costs of cards or unit abilities. Tapping Aura is not an action on its own, but part of the action it is paying for.



## 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.