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Magic: The Gathering -- Official Encyclopedia, Volume 1: The Complete Card Guide



Synopsis

A global games phenomenon, Magic: The Gathering is to the 1990s what Dungeons and Dragons was to the 1980s, but with the added dimension of collectibility. Here is the official reference to the biggest new teen/young adult fantasy game of the decade, complete with full-color reproductions of every existing Magic card. Foreword is by Richard Garfield, creator of the game. 2600 color illustrations.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am somewhat new to Magic, and this book is a great resource! Now I am excited to look at all the other encyclopedia volumes.

Great condition for this product.

This was not what I expected, trying to find a price guide for value of older magic cards. Still looking???

Volume 2 covers Mirage, Visions, 5th Edition, Weatherlight, Portal, and Arena League (only 1 page for this last). As always, this volume covers ONLY those expansions released between the publication of the 1st and 3rd volumes of the encyclopedia, and ends with a "Deckbuilder's Indexes"

section. This last is the only reference to other expansions of Magic, so it actually isn't useful anymore; the deckbuilder information for the most current volume should be used instead. Frankly, this volume should not have been released until a few more expansions were out; it's skimpy, but if you want complete coverage of all Magic expansions, you're pretty much trapped; the 2 stars are for the material not available in other volumes. The introductory material (i.e., the section before the expansions are presented) is a bare minimum in this volume: "How to Use this Guide" and "A Visual Guide to Magic Cards". The book isn't intended to teach a newcomer to play the game, or to explain much of Magic strategy; seek elsewhere for that sort of thing. On the other hand, each expansion covered in Volume 2, as usual, is provided with its own introduction, describing any new twists added for that set (including new types of decks that came about as a result), any noteworthy cards in that set, and a very brief description of the storylines affected by the expansion). Consequently, the entertainment value of the introductions is in inverse proportion to the number of broken cards in the expansion and the severity of the flaws, so the introductions in this volume are much more bland than those of Volume 1. For example, Mirage's introduction, the longest in the book, covers the introduction of "instant enchantment" and "Charm" cards, and two special abilities introduced with this expansion, "flanking" and "phasing". The descriptions of these characteristics compare them with pre-existing (i.e., volume 1) spells and game mechanics, so you need to be familiar with Magic to get anything out of this. Similarly, new cards introduced as toned-down versions of old spoiler cards don't come with a detailed description of the old card (e.g. Final Fortune vs. old Time Walk). The story line description is given in 4 paragraphs, padded with lots of white space, followed by two equally padded pages of details of famous Mirage cards: Grinning Totem, Celestial Dawn, Hammer of Bogardan, Maro, Tombstone Stairwell, and Political Trickery. After each expansion's introduction, all its individual cards are listed in alphabetical order, shown at about 3/4 actual size. The versions of Magic that included those cards (at the time of printing) are specified, as well as any errata. The artwork came out fairly well, but the flavor text for red cards is hard to read. My copy suffers from other printing problems as well (the non-flavor text came out blurred for some Mirage cards). Each card's name is printed separately below the card, but it's annoying to pay money for this.

The collectable card game Magic: The Gathering was first released in 1993. Since then, dozens of expansion editions have been created and discontinued. This first Encyclopedia (made in 1996) shows every card from the first 8 editions - from Arabian Nights to Alliances (made in 1996) - as well as the whole 4th Edition (the Basic set at the time). Most interestingly of all the cards that were Discontinued before the 4th Edition are also displayed. All of the cards pictured in the book have

been out of print for at least half a decade, so this is most likely the only place where you will be able to see them. The guide is well made, all in colour, official looking, and excellently laid out by the people who created the game. The card images have been shrunk by about 25% so that 12 of them can be fitted onto a side, however, the artwork and text are still clear. The rarity of each card is also detailed. As well as the encyclopedia images, there is a foreward by the game's creator, an introduction to each set (with each sets best cards highlited), deckbuilder's indexes, images of promotional cards, misprinted cards and oddities, a history of the game, and a visual guide to Magic cards (teaching how to identify ones from different sets, e.g. cards in the Alpha set have more rounded edges). I have owned this book for three years and I still refer to it regularly....

This book has pictures of every card up to Alliances, and with its sequel is the ultimate guide to Magic. Always having the exact original text at hand is cool, and it lets you look at entire sets at once. It's great for persual and finding what's rare and what's uncommon. However... the book's missing everything after Alliances, much of the errata has been changed, sometimes because the Encyclopedia was blantly wrong, and the indexes can't even compare to a computer based database, of which there is several on the Internet for free. Unless you are in the several thousand card range dedicated player like I am, this book is probably not the best buy. On the other hand, the dedicated Magic player can find this book very enjoyable.

I am currently organizing the hundreds of Magic cards I have in a box by common, uncommon, rare, lands, and discontinued cards so I can put them in a card binder, and the Magic encyclopedia has been a very big help. It shows me the common, uncommon, etc. cards, and I cannot find anything else that tells that info. You can also see what cards you don't have so you can look for them. If you are a Magic Card Collector, please buy this book if you don't have it. It is great. Also, buy Volume 2 of the Magic encyclopedia.

Among all 4 volume published, this is the most comprehensive, it contains every cards in magic during that time and this is the first - First Official Guide. Before having this guide, collectors have to keep track with Duelist or Inquest for a full list (in text). This book is not only a good book with all coloured pictures, it is also the best reference for any Magic Collectors. Highly recommended.

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