



ARCOMAGE - TABLETOP RULEBOOK

A duel of two archmages. You each command a tower, a spellbook, and an army of conjured things, and you fight across a contested field until one wizard's Life reaches zero. There is NO luck in ArcoMage - no shuffled draws, no random dice, no hidden top-deck. Every spell in your book is available to you on every single turn. You win by out-thinking your rival, not by out-rolling them.

This book teaches the PHYSICAL game. Read Sections 1-6 to set up and play your first duel; the later sections are the full reference for spells, creatures, conditions, and edge-case rulings.

1. WHAT'S IN THE BOX

- **1 game board** - the 24-hex field (a fat diamond, rows of 4-5-6-5-4).
- **2 spellbooks** (ring binders) - each holds your entire deck of spell cards in sleeves. There is no draw pile and no hand: your whole book is castable at all times (see 5.1).
- **Spell cards** (A5, six-ring). 556 spells across eight Circles (see 11).
- **2 wizard figures** + a stand each - one PURPLE wizard, one BLUE wizard.
- **Creature & artifact tokens** - placed on hexes when you summon them.
- **2 character sheets** (dry-erase) - your dashboard. Tracks your six vitals, your worker assignments, and any conditions you are suffering (see 2, 14).
- **Counter dice** - used as adjustable number counters, NOT rolled (see 2).
- **Condition markers** - poison, burning, lock, trap, and the rest.
- **1 sand timer (hourglass)** - optional 60-second turn clock (see 4.6).

1.1 The dice are COUNTERS, not rolled

ArcoMage has no dice rolls. The dice are **adjustable counters**: you set a die to show a current value and turn it up or down as that value changes (a creature's marked damage, a worker count, a small resource). Your six big vitals - Tower, Wall, Moat, Life, Mana, Intelligence - live on the value tracks

printed on your character sheet, because they climb well past what one die can show.

2. YOUR CHARACTER SHEET

Everything about your wizard that is not physically on the board lives here. The sheet has three sections:

- **Core Resources** - your six vitals: TOWER, WALL, MOAT, INTELLIGENCE, MANA, LIFE.
- **Worker Assignment** - how many workers you have staffing each building, plus your Unassigned pool (see 9).
- **Status Effects** - the 38 conditions that can be on your wizard, so you can mark what is currently afflicting or blessing you (see 14).

Keep it current every turn - it is the single source of truth for your side.

3. GAME SETUP

1. **Lay the board** between the two players.
2. **Choose colors.** One player is PURPLE, the other is BLUE.
3. **Place your wizard.** The board has two marked wizard-start hexes on the center row: the **PURPLE hex at the top** and the **BLUE hex at the bottom**. Each player sets their wizard figure on their own colored hex. Wizards do not move from that hex unless a Form later grants them Speed (see 8, 15).
4. **Take your kit:** your spellbook binder, a character sheet, your wizard figure, and a share of counter dice / condition markers.
5. **Set your starting values** on the character sheet (both players identical):

Vital / Resource	Start	What it is
TOWER	12	Innermost damage-soak layer (see 6.1)
WALL	10	Middle damage-soak layer
MOAT	10	Outermost damage-soak layer
LIFE	20	Lose this to 0 and you lose the game
MANA	100	Spell currency (see 8.1)
INTELLIGENCE (INT)	4	Sets your cast ceiling: Circles I-IV at start (8.2)

Starting workers: 2 on the **ALTAR**, everything else at 0, Unassigned pool 0. (Two altar workers means you bank +2 Mana every turn from the very first turn.)

- Decide who goes first** (roll off, or let the challenged player choose). Then take alternating turns (see 4).

That is the whole setup. No shuffling, no opening hand - you begin with your entire spellbook already open to you.

4. THE WIZARD, AND WHAT WIZARDS DO

Your wizard figure is YOU. It is the piece the enemy is trying to kill (reduce your Life to 0) and the piece that everything you build - Moat, Wall, Tower - exists to protect.

- You cast every spell from your wizard.** Your wizard is the origin point of your magic.
- Your wizard is a FIXED piece.** It stays on its start hex and does not move, UNLESS a Form spell grants it Speed (then it can move and fight in melee - see 15).
- Cast range (the 1-hex rule).** When a spell summons a creature or places something on the board, and the card does NOT print its own range, you must place it **within 1 hex of your wizard** (an empty, passable hex adjacent to you). Some cards print a longer range or a special placement - those override this default. Spells that target an existing creature, building, or

the enemy wizard have whatever range the card states (most reach the whole board).

5. THE BOARD

The field is 24 hexes in rows of 4-5-6-5-4 (a fat diamond). Your wizard sits on the center row at your end; your rival is directly across from you at the far end.

5.1 The Nexus (the two impassable center tiles)

The two dead-center tiles - the angel-statue hex and the tile directly above it - are the **NEXUS**. They are IMPASSABLE. No wizard, creature, or token may ever stand on, or move through, a Nexus tile. Treat them as solid rock.

Because the Nexus plugs the middle, the open ground splits into an **UPPER LANE** and a **LOWER LANE**. A creature crossing the field must commit to one lane. This is the heart of ArcoMage board play: hold a lane, threaten a lane, punish an over-committed lane.

5.2 Distance and adjacency

Adjacency is the six hex edges. "Distance N" means N hex-steps along open, passable terrain - never counting a Nexus tile, and never passing through an occupied hex.

6. HOW YOU WIN

There is exactly ONE structural way to win: **reduce your rival's LIFE to 0**. A few special "alternate win" cards end the game their own way; those cards spell it out in full. There is NO tower-height victory - your Tower, Wall, and Moat are damage-soak layers, not a win counter.

6.1 The damage cascade (MOAT -> WALL -> TOWER -> LIFE)

When damage would reach a wizard, it is absorbed by that wizard's layers in a fixed order, spilling to the next layer only once the current one is gone:

Order	Layer	Notes
1st	MOAT	Outermost. Soaks first.
2nd	WALL	Soaks next. Flying damage skips the Wall.
3rd	TOWER	Soaks next.
4th	LIFE	Whatever reaches here comes off your Life. At 0 you lose.

- **Overflow** past a destroyed layer continues to the next layer the same instant.
- **Flying** combat damage skips the WALL (Moat -> Tower -> Life). It does NOT skip the Moat.
- **Direct** damage (a card that says "directly to Life") ignores all three layers.
- **Wizard armor** (Protection, Stone Form, Lich Form, Wraith Form, Shielded - see 14) is subtracted BEFORE the cascade and always leaves at least 1 damage getting through a hit that was going to deal any.

Lose your Life and you lose immediately, even in the middle of combat.

7. ANATOMY OF A TURN

Players alternate whole turns. On your turn, work through the phases in order:

#	Phase	What happens
1	READY	Straighten (untap) your creatures and your Lands/Artifacts; each may act again this turn.
2	UPKEEP	Resolve start-of-turn triggers and ongoing conditions (burning, poison, bleeding, regeneration - see 14). Your Tower workers fire their volley now (9.1).
3	PRODUCE	Collect income: +1 MANA per Altar worker, +1 WALL per Quarry worker (see 8, 9).
4	MAIN	Cast spells, summon creatures, and reassign workers (9.4), in any order you can pay for. Move your wizard here if a Form gave it Speed.
5	COMBAT	Your ready creatures attack (see 12.5).
6	END	Resolve end-of-turn triggers; durations tick down; marked combat damage is wiped from all creatures (12.5). Pass to your rival.

There is **no draw step, no hand, no mulligan, and no discard** - ever. Those concepts do not exist in ArcoMage. Your book is always fully open.

4.6 The clock (optional)

Your turn - and each time you respond to an opponent's spell - has a **60-second budget**, matching the online version's clock. Flip the hourglass when your turn (or your response window) begins; if the sand runs out, that turn or that response simply passes. Using the timer is **OPTIONAL** - set it aside for an unhurried game. The rules are identical either way.

8. RESOURCES AND THE ECONOMY

8.1 Mana

Mana is your spell currency. You gain **+1 Mana per Altar worker** every Produce step (you start with 2 altar workers, so +2/turn). Unspent mana carries over turn to turn. Mana is never random. You pay a spell's mana cost to cast it.

8.2 Intelligence and your cast ceiling

Every spell has a **CIRCLE** (I through VIII) - its power level. You can only cast a spell whose Circle is at or below your **cast ceiling**:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{cast ceiling} &= \text{INTELLIGENCE} + \text{Mage Tower workers} \\ &\quad + \text{Cunning (+1)} - \text{Feeblemind (-2)} - \text{Stone Form (-1)} \end{aligned}$$

You start at INT 4, so you can cast Circles I-IV out of the gate. Raise your Intelligence, or staff workers on your Mage Tower, to reach the higher Circles. A spell above your ceiling cannot be cast at all, no matter how much mana you have.

8.3 The Circle table (level, INT needed, mana cost)

Mana cost in ArcoMage is fixed by Circle - a higher Circle always costs the same, whatever the card does:

Circle	Cast ceiling needed	Mana cost	Feel
I	1	0	Free cantrips - always castable
II	2	1	Cheap tricks and small summons
III	3	5	Workhorse spells (Fireball, Poison, Wall of Stone)
IV	4	10	Solid removal and mid creatures (Lightning, Greater Heal)
V	5	20	Heavy summons and board swings
VI	6	30	Rare power (Dispel, Obsidian Tide)
VII	7	45	Game-benders (Meteor Swarm, Chain Lightning)
VIII	8	60	Legendary finishers (Earthquake, Resurrection, Worldshatter)

9. BUILDINGS AND WORKERS

You have three **defensive buildings** (already covered as your damage layers) and a set of **worker buildings** you staff with workers to produce resources or attack.

9.1 What each building does

Building	Staffed by	Effect
Tower	Tower Defenders (workers)	Damage layer (6.1). Each upkeep, your Tower workers strike the enemy wizard for damage equal to their number - your turn-start artillery.
Wall	Wall Defenders (workers)	Damage layer (6.1). When an enemy creature attacks your Wall, your Wall workers deal their number in damage back to that attacker (retaliation).
Moat	(none)	Damage layer (6.1). Soaks first; cannot be staffed.
Quarry	Quarry workers	+1 WALL per worker each Produce step (rebuilds your wall).
Altar	Altar workers	+1 MANA per worker each Produce step.
Mage Tower	Mage Tower workers	+1 to your cast ceiling per worker (8.2) - reach higher Circles.
Graveyard	(necromancy)	Holds the corpses of creatures that die with a body; necromancy spells draw on it (see 12.2).

9.2 Tower Defenders in detail

Workers assigned to the Tower are **Tower Defenders**. They do two jobs: they add to your Tower's damage-soak, and at the start of every one of your turns they loose a volley at the enemy wizard for damage equal to how many of them there are (3 Tower Defenders = 3 damage per turn). **If your Tower is ever destroyed, its Tower Defenders are lost with it** - so stacking a tall Tower with many defenders is powerful but fragile.

9.3 Wall Defenders in detail

Workers assigned to the Wall are **Wall Defenders**. They add to your Wall's soak and **punish attackers**: any enemy creature that strikes your Wall takes damage back equal to the number of Wall Defenders. **If your Wall is breached (destroyed), its Wall Defenders are lost.**

9.4 Reassigning workers (the Unassigned pool)

Workers you gain (from cards) arrive in your **Unassigned pool** on the character sheet. Unassigned workers do nothing until you post them to a building.

During your **Main phase** you may move workers, ONE worker per move, between the Unassigned pool and any staffable building (Tower, Wall, Quarry, Mage Tower, Altar):

- **Assign**: take 1 worker from Unassigned -> add it to a building.
- **Recall**: take 1 worker from a building -> return it to Unassigned.

To shift a worker from one building to another, recall it to the pool, then assign it onward. There is no cap on how many single moves you make in a turn, so you can re-tune your whole workforce between defense (Tower/Wall), economy (Altar/Quarry), and reach (Mage Tower) as the battle changes. A destroyed building's workers are lost (9.2-9.3), not returned to the pool.

10. CASTING SPELLS

10.1 Steps to cast

1. **Announce** the spell and choose its targets (10.3). An illegal target = you cannot cast it.
2. **Check the gates**: the Circle is within your cast ceiling (8.2), you can pay the mana (8.1), and you are not prevented from casting (Silenced, Stunned/Paralyzed, in a no-cast Form, or the spell is LOCKED - see 16).
3. **Pay the mana**. The spell goes on the STACK.
4. **Your rival may respond** with an armed reactive spell (a counter, a springing trap, Magic Reflection, etc.).

5. **Resolve** the spell (do what it says), then remove it from the stack.

Once per turn. You may cast each spell in your book once per turn; the limit resets every turn, so a spell you spent this turn is available again next turn. This is why ArcoMage is a game of planning, not drawing.

10.2 The stack (last in, first out)

If several effects are waiting, the **LAST** one added resolves **FIRST**. A countered spell is removed before it resolves - but you still paid for it. The once-per-turn limit is what keeps a counter-war finite: each counter can only fire once per turn.

10.3 Targeting and cast range

A spell hits what it says: an enemy creature, any creature, an empty hex, a building, a wizard, or a spell in a book. Spells that place something on the board with no printed range use the **1-hex rule** (4). If, at resolution, a target has become illegal (the creature died), the spell does as much as it still legally can and ignores the rest (17.3).

10.4 "Nearest," defined

Some effects strike the **Nearest** creature or wizard. Distance is counted in hexes (5.2). When two or more legal targets tie for Nearest, break the tie by board position - never by choice or chance:

Sweep clockwise from twelve o'clock. Picture a clock face centered on the acting piece, 12 o'clock toward the top of the board. Take the tied target you reach first going clockwise (12 -> 1 -> 2 ...).

Position is the only property guaranteed unique (two creatures can share every stat but never a hex), so a tie always resolves identically for both players.

11. CARD TYPES

Your 556 spells come in seven types. The type tells you **WHEN** you may cast the card and what it leaves behind.

Type	When you cast it	What it does	Count
Instant	Any time you have priority - on your turn OR in response to the enemy's spell	A one-shot effect (a bolt, a heal, a counter), then it is spent. The only cards you can cast on your opponent's turn.	124
Sorcery	Only on YOUR Main phase, only when the stack is empty	A one-shot effect, same as an Instant but slower - no responding with it.	72
Enchantment	Your Main phase	A lasting effect that stays in play (a condition on a creature or wizard, a persistent field). Removed by Dispel or when its duration ends.	124
Summon Creature	Your Main phase	Puts a creature token onto the board within cast range (4). It can act after your next Ready step.	86
Summon Artifact	Your Main phase	Puts an artifact permanent into play - usually a construct creature or a machine with a tap ability. Artifacts leave no corpse.	61
Land	Your Main phase	A terrain permanent you place, often with a tap ability you use once per turn (income, ramp, utility).	85
Split Spell	Per the card	A card with two modes printed on it; you choose one when you cast it.	4

11.1 The eight Circles

Every card also has a Circle I-VIII (its level and its mana cost - see the table in 8.3). Circle sets what you need to cast it; type sets when and how.

11.2 Rarity

Rarity is a collector/print-distribution mark, not a power gate - a Common can be a staple, a Legendary can be situational:

Rarity	Count
Common	273
Uncommon	160
Rare	103
Legendary	14
Epic	6

11.3 A sampler of iconic spells

Spell	Circle	Cost	Type	Effect
Magic Arrow	I	0	Instant	2 damage to a creature or the enemy wizard
Heal	I	0	Instant	Restore 3 Life to your wizard or a creature
Sleep	II	1	Enchantment	An enemy creature skips its next turn
Magic Trap	II	1	Enchantment	Rig a hex; first creature to enter takes 3 and stops
Fireball	III	5	Instant	4 damage to a creature or wizard
Poison	III	5	Enchantment	1 damage per turn to a creature until cured
Wall of Stone	III	5	Enchantment	Impassable wall on up to 3 hexes for 3 turns
Lightning	IV	10	Instant	5 damage, ignoring armor
Greater Heal	IV	10	Instant	Restore 8 Life
Mana Drain	IV	10	Instant	Enemy wizard loses 3 mana
Dispel	VI	30	Instant	Remove an enchantment/condition, or destroy a Conjured creature
Meteor Swarm	VII	45	Instant	3 damage to ALL creatures on the board
Chain Lightning	VII	45	Instant	4 to a creature, arcing to the 2 nearest foes
Earthquake	VIII	60	Instant	Each enemy creature takes damage equal to its Speed
Resurrection	VIII	60	Instant	Return a creature destroyed this game

12. CREATURES

12.1 Stats (P / T / H / S)

Each creature token tracks **Power / Toughness / Health / Speed**:

- **Power** - damage it deals in combat.
- **Toughness** - how much marked damage it can take in one turn before dying; also the value that "-1/-1" permanent effects lower.
- **Health** - persistent hit points where a creature has them; at 0 it dies.
- **Speed** - hexes it may move per turn (see 13). Speed 0 = Rooted (never moves). **All flyers move at Speed 6; ground creatures cap at Speed 4** (there is no Speed 5).

12.2 Summoning

Summon a creature onto an EMPTY, PASSABLE hex within cast range (4) - never a Nexus tile, never an occupied hex. A newly summoned creature is **summon-sick**: it cannot attack or move until it has been through one of your Ready steps.

When a creature dies, it dies for good. A **corporeal** creature (beast, humanoid, lich, angel) leaves a body in the **Graveyard** for necromancy to use. A creature with no body - ghosts, spirits, daemons, elementals, blade-spirits, and every artifact creature - leaves no corpse.

12.3 Conjured creatures and Dispel

Many summons are **Conjured** - ephemeral magical constructs (elementals, spirits, daemons, blade-spirits, magical constructs). **Dispel destroys a Conjured creature outright**. Non-Conjured creatures (undead, celestials, natural beasts) are immune to Dispel's kill and need dedicated removal.

12.4 Keywords

- **Flying** - combat damage skips the enemy WALL; can only be blocked by a flyer or a creature that blocks air.
- **Shade** - CANNOT BE BLOCKED (every Ghost has Shade; Wraiths and the Vengeful Spirit carry it too). Beaten by Nightsight (see 12.6).
- **Invisible** - cannot be blocked AND cannot be targeted. Absolute.

- **First Strike** - deals its combat damage before the creature it fights.
- **Taunt** - must be blocked/attacked before other targets.
- **Rooted** - Speed 0, never moves.
- **Vampiric** - the damage it deals heals your Life.

12.5 Combat

On your Combat step each of your ready (non-summon-sick, non-paralyzed) creatures attacks. For each attacker the defender may assign a legal blocker (subject to Flying / Shade / Invisible):

- **Blocked:** attacker and blocker deal their Power to each other simultaneously; then apply deaths (17.4).
- **Unblocked:** the attacker's Power hits the enemy wizard through the cascade (6.1), Flying skipping the Wall.

Marking damage. Combat damage is MARKED against a creature's Toughness for the turn, not permanently subtracted. A creature with Toughness T that has taken D damage this turn survives while D is LESS than T; it is destroyed the instant D reaches T. Example: a 3/3 and a 2/4 trade - the 3/3 deals 3 to the 2/4 (survives, 1 left), the 2/4 deals 2 to the 3/3 (survives, 1 left). Neither dies.

Cleanup clears damage. At the END of every turn all marked combat and spell damage is wiped from every creature - each returns to full Toughness. Only PERMANENT changes carry over: a "-1/-1" that lowers Toughness itself, death, or a lasting condition.

12.6 Shade, Nightsight, and "as-though"

Shade means "can't be blocked." **Nightsight** (a wizard ward) reads: "your creatures may block enemy creatures AS THOUGH they had no Shade." An "as-though" permission specifically overrides a "can't" (17.2) - so a Nightsighted defender CAN block Shade creatures. **Invisible** still can't be blocked even against Nightsight; "can't be blocked or targeted" is absolute and Nightsight only speaks about Shade.

13. MOVEMENT AND ZONE OF CONTROL

13.1 Basic movement

A piece moves up to its Speed in hexes per turn, one step at a time along adjacent, passable, UNOCCUPIED hexes. You may not enter or pass through a Nexus tile (5.1) or a hex occupied by any creature or the enemy wizard.

13.2 Zone of Control - creatures GUARD lanes

A creature exerts a **Zone of Control** over the six hexes around it. If a mover is ADJACENT to an enemy creature (standing in its zone) it may move **at most ONE hex this turn** - it cannot sprint past the guard. A mover that steps INTO a guarded hex must STOP there. Park a creature in a lane and it GUARDS that lane: an enemy can slip by only one tile at a time, giving your guard a chance to trade. A friendly creature never restricts your own movement - only ENEMY creatures guard against you.

13.3 Teleport and blink

Effects that TELEPORT a piece ignore Zone of Control and intervening pieces (they don't "walk"), but still cannot land on a Nexus tile or an occupied hex.

14. CONDITIONS (the 38 status effects)

Conditions are on/off flags on a wizard or creature. They **do not stack** - re-applying one just refreshes it; magnitudes are fixed by this book, not by how many times you apply them. Mark the ones affecting your wizard in the **Status Effects** grid on your character sheet. On a WIZARD, damage-over-time comes off your Life; on a CREATURE it permanently lowers Toughness (which is what kills it, since creature combat damage clears each turn).

14.1 Wards and armor (protect the wizard)

Condition	Effect
Reactive Armor	Reduce incoming damage and reflect 2 back at a melee attacker.
Protection	Flat -2 to damage that reaches your wizard.
Resistant	-2 to SPELL damage you take (players and creatures).
Magic Reflection	The next spell that targets you bounces back at its caster.
Shielded	One-shot ward: absorbs up to 3 from the next hit that reaches you, then shatters.
Bless	Your creatures get +1/+1 and you get +1 Int while blessed.
Strength	Your creatures deal +1 combat damage.
Agility	Your creatures are nimble: +1 Speed.

14.2 Mind, sight, and stealth

Condition	Effect
Cunning	+1 Int - cast one Circle higher. Fixed +1, non-stacking.
Night Sight	Your creatures can block Shade (unblockable) creatures.
Incognito	You are disguised: enemy spells that target "the enemy wizard" fizzle until your next turn.
Invisibility	Your wizard cannot be targeted by enemy spells until you next cast.
Poison	Lose 2 Life each upkeep until cured.
Paralyze	You skip your next action - you cannot cast.
Curse	The cursed target takes +1 from ALL damage (the mirror of Bless).
Weaken	Your creatures deal -1 combat damage.

14.3 Afflictions and forms of the flesh

Condition	Effect
Feeblemind	-2 Int - your cast ceiling drops by two Circles.
Clumsy	-1 Speed, and the creature cannot block (loses its zone of control).
Burning	Lose 3 Life each upkeep for 3 turns, then it burns out.
Bleeding	Lose 3 Life each upkeep for 3 turns (Blade Spirits inflict it).
Wraith Form	(Form) You become an incorporeal wraith: armored against physical damage, but take +2 from spells; gains Speed to move and maul.
Blood Oath	A pact: any creature that damages your wizard takes equal damage back.
Corpse Skin	The target's fire/poison resistances are stripped: it takes +1 SPELL damage.
Horrific Beast	(Form) You become a monster: regain 5 Life at end of turn and fight in melee, but you CANNOT cast spells.

14.4 Dark pacts and holy zeal

Condition	Effect
Vampiric Embrace	Your damage heals your Life (lifedrain).
Lich Form	(Form) Undead: +2 armor and immune to poison and curse, but you CANNOT be healed.
Pain Omen	The next hit on the marked target deals +2, then Pain Omen is consumed.
Pain Spike	A stabbing affliction: the target loses 2 Life/Toughness each upkeep.
Divine Fury	Empowered by zeal: your creatures deal +1 this turn.
Enemy of One	Name one enemy: your wizard and creatures deal +1 to that single target.
Consecrate Weapon	Your creatures' attacks are blessed: +1 damage that ignores armor/Resistant.

14.5 Warrior's edge and illusions

Condition	Effect
Confidence	Steadfast: you cannot be Paralyzed, Stunned, or Silenced while Confident.
Counter Attack	The next enemy creature to strike your wizard takes its own Power back.
Evasion	The next attack that would hit your wizard is dodged entirely (negate the first hit).
Lightning Strike	Your creatures gain First Strike and their damage ignores Wall armor.
Momentum Strike	When your creature destroys its blocker, it carries through and strikes again.
Mirror Image	The next spell that targets your wizard hits a decoy instead (negate the first spell).
Stone Form	(Form) Living granite: +2 armor and immune to poison/burning/bleeding/weaken, but -1 to your cast ceiling.

Note on determinism: ArcoMage has no dice, so "dodge"-style conditions (Evasion, Mirror Image) are written as "negate the next one," never as a random chance.

15. FORMS (wizard self-transformations)

Some spells transform your wizard into a **FORM** (Wraith, Lich, Horrific Beast, Stone, Reaper, Animal). Rules:

- A wizard is in **AT MOST ONE Form at a time** - a new Form ends the old one.
- A Form may grant SPEED (letting your fixed wizard move and fight - see 4, 13), armor, regeneration, or damage riders; some Forms **prevent casting** until they end (you are a beast, not a mage - e.g. Horrific Beast).

- Forms end when dispelled or when the card's duration runs out; your saved stats return.
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16. LOCKS AND TRAPS (attacking the spellbook)

Your rival can attack your BOOK, not just your board.

16.1 Magic Lock / Unlock

- **Magic Lock** - seal one of the enemy's spells shut; a locked spell cannot be cast until freed. Mark that card with a Lock token.
- **Unlock / Dispel** - free one of your own locked spells (remove the Lock token).

16.2 Magic Trap / Untrap

- **Magic Trap** - rig one of the enemy's spells. The NEXT time they cast that spell the trap springs (damage + poison), then it is spent. The spell still resolves - they just got burned casting it.
 - **Hidden information:** the victim is told THAT one of their spells is trapped (a face-down marker, or the app shows a trap count) but NOT which one. This is the one place ArcoMage keeps a secret.
 - **Magic Untrap** - sweep your own book clean, removing every trap at once.
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17. THE GOLDEN RULES (edge-case rulings)

When the board and a card seem to disagree, resolve it with these, in order. They mirror the Magic: The Gathering comprehensive rules, keeping only what applies to ArcoMage (nothing about hands, drawing, mulligans, or discarding, because ArcoMage has none of those).

1. **The card beats the rulebook.** If a card's text contradicts a rule here, the CARD wins for that interaction. This book is the default; cards are the exceptions.
2. **"Can't" beats "can."** If one effect says something CAN happen and another says it CAN'T, the "can't" wins. Exception: an "as-though" clause

(like Nightsight's) is a granted ability handled by the layer system (17.6), which is why it legally lets you block a Shade creature.

3. **Do as much as you can; ignore the impossible.** If part of an instruction is impossible (target gone, resource missing), do every part you still legally can and ignore the rest - unless the card says "if you can't, ...".
4. **State-based checks.** After anything resolves, immediately apply all automatic results at once: a creature with lethal marked damage or 0 Health dies; a player at 0 Life loses; a building at 0 is destroyed. Two creatures that kill each other die simultaneously.
5. **Simultaneous choices: active player first (APNAP).** If an effect makes both players choose at once, the active player (whose turn it is) decides first, then the other; results then happen together.
6. **Continuous effects apply in layers.** When several ongoing effects modify one creature, apply them in this order (so the result never depends on cast order): (1) copy, (2) control-change, (3) text-change, (4) type-change, (5) ability add/remove (Shade / Nightsight / Flying grants), (6) Power/Toughness: "set to X" first, then "+N/-N," then counters. Within a layer, apply in timestamp order.
7. **Last-known information.** If an effect needs info about something that has left the board, use its last-known values at the moment it left.
8. **Once resolved, it's resolved.** A resolved effect doesn't un-happen if the situation later changes; ongoing effects keep applying, one-shots are done.

18. QUICK REFERENCE

Starting values: Tower 12 - Wall 10 - Moat 10 - Life 20 - Mana 100 - Int 4 - 2 Altar workers. Wizards on the purple (top) / blue (bottom) start hexes.

Damage cascade: MOAT -> WALL -> TOWER -> LIFE. Flying skips the Wall; Direct skips all three; armor is subtracted first.

Turn: Ready -> Upkeep (Tower workers fire, conditions tick) -> Produce (+mana, +wall) -> Main (cast, summon, reassign workers) -> Combat -> End (clear marked damage).

Cast ceiling = Int + Mage Tower workers (+Cunning, -Feeblemind, -Stone Form). Circle costs: I=0, II=1, III=5, IV=10, V=20, VI=30, VII=45, VIII=60.

Workers: Altar +1 mana each - Quarry +1 wall each - Mage Tower +1 ceiling each - Tower Defenders strike the enemy each turn - Wall Defenders retaliate against attackers. Reassign one at a time through the Unassigned pool on your Main phase.

Win: reduce your rival's Life to 0.

Tabletop edition. Version 1.0.