

HOW DO I PLAY A SPELL OR ACTIVATED ABILITY?

You can play spells and abilities only when

- it's your main phase,
- nothing is on the stack,
- and you have priority.

Instants and activated abilities are the exception. You can play them on your opponent's turn and when another spell or ability is on the stack waiting to resolve. You can play them whenever you have priority.

When do you get priority? The **active player** (the player whose turn it is) gets priority at the beginning of each **step** and each main phase—except for the **untap step** and the cleanup step. (See *Section 3: Turn Structure* for more on phases and steps.)

When you get priority, you can **play a spell or ability** or **pass**. If you pass, your opponent gets priority. Also, after a spell or ability resolves, the active player gets priority again. When that player passes, the opponent gets priority again. This goes back and forth until both players pass in a row. (This isn't really as complicated as it sounds. Just remember that you get the first chance to do things on your turn.)

To play a spell or ability, follow these steps:

1. Tell your opponent what spell or ability you're playing. If it's a spell, show the card to your opponent.
2. If the spell or ability uses the word "target," choose the target(s). If the spell or ability's text starts with "**Choose one**—", make the choice. If the spell is an Aura enchantment, choose the permanent you want to attach it to.
3. For a spell, pay the mana cost. For an activated ability, pay the activation cost. If the spell or ability has **X** in its cost, you choose the value of **X** and then pay that amount of mana.
4. That's it! You've played the spell or ability and it goes on the stack. See "The Stack" and "How Do Spells and Abilities Resolve?" below to find out what happens to the spell or ability after you play it.

HOW DO I PLAY A TRIGGERED ABILITY?

You don't play triggered abilities. A triggered ability waits for its trigger event to happen. When it does, the ability goes on the stack automatically as soon as any player gets priority.

The player who controlled the permanent with the triggered ability makes the choices and picks the target(s) when the ability goes on the stack. Once the ability is on the stack, the player who would've gotten priority gets it back.

What happens if more than one ability triggers at the same time? The active player's abilities are put on the stack, in whatever order that player chooses. Then the opponent's abilities are put on the stack, in whatever order the opponent chooses.

THE STACK

The stack is where spells and abilities wait to resolve after they've been played. They stay on the stack in the order they were added to it.

How does it work? A player with priority plays a spell or ability, and it goes on the stack. That player can add more spells or abilities to the top of the stack or pass. If the player passes, the opponent gets priority and may add spells or abilities to the top of the stack or pass. Priority goes back and forth this way until both players pass in a row.

When both players pass, the spell or ability *on the top of the stack*—the one played last—resolves. After each spell or ability resolves, the active player gets priority again.

Here's an example. You control Glory Seeker, a 2/2 creature. Your opponent plays Shock to deal 2 damage to it. Shock goes on the stack. You [respond](#) to the Shock with Giant Growth, which gives the Glory Seeker +3/+3 until the end of the turn. Giant Growth goes on the stack, *on top of Shock*. That means Giant Growth resolves first, making the Glory Seeker 5/5 until the end of the turn. Then Shock resolves, but it doesn't deal enough damage to destroy the pumped-up Glory Seeker.

