

COMMANDER BRACKETS

A tool for the conversation before the game, not a score your deck earns. **The turn the game ends is an indicator, not a rule.**



MAGIC: THE GATHERING · COMMANDER

CASUAL MINDSET

COMPETITIVE MINDSET

The difference is **THEME**

The difference is **STAPLES**

The difference is **SPEED**

The difference is **METAGAME**

1 Exhibition

Built around a bit, a creature type or a flavor idea rather than winning efficiently. The build is the point.

GAMES TEND TO RUN

9+ turns

Nobody is trying to end the game. One ending early means something is in the wrong deck.

DECK RESTRICTIONS

- No Game Changers*
- No Mass Land Denial
- No Extra Turns*
- No 2-Card Combos*

SAY THIS AT RULE 0

"Built for the bit. Slow, and it might not work."

2 Core

The precon experience: a coherent plan with real removal and ramp, but no fast mana and no tuned combo package.

GAMES TEND TO RUN

8+ turns

Wins are incremental and telegraphed on board, so the table can see one coming and answer it.

DECK RESTRICTIONS

- No Game Changers
- No Mass Land Denial
- No Chaining Extra Turns
- No 2-Card Combos

SAY THIS AT RULE 0

"About precon power. It takes a while to get going."

3 Upgraded

Real upgrades — better mana, tighter card quality, efficient interaction — short of a dedicated combo or stax plan.

GAMES TEND TO RUN

6+ turns

Can win from hand in one turn once resources have accrued, so the clock tightens late rather than early.

DECK RESTRICTIONS

- 0-3 Game Changers
- No Mass Land Denial
- No Chaining Extra Turns
- No 2-Card Combos before turn 6

SAY THIS AT RULE 0

"Tuned, but nothing early. I close around turn seven."

4 Optimized

Lethal, consistent and fast: fast mana, tutors, a real combo or lock package, and a curve built to deploy it.

GAMES TEND TO RUN

4+ turns

Closes around turn 7. The parts with no clock behind them is an Upgraded deck holding expensive cards.

DECK RESTRICTIONS

- **No deck restrictions**

SAY THIS AT RULE 0

"Built to win. Fast mana, tutors, and I will try to end it."

5 cEDH

Built for the cEDH metagame: win quickly or generate overwhelming resources, with every card justified by efficiency.

GAMES TEND TO RUN

Any turns

Speed is the plan rather than a symptom of one, and the game can end on any turn including the first.

DECK RESTRICTIONS

- **No deck restrictions**

SAY THIS AT RULE 0

"Full cEDH. Assume fast wins and interaction on the stack."

The turn you win is an indicator, not a rule.

The restrictions define the bracket.

The clock is how you notice you guessed wrong, not the thing you are graded against.

Speed raises a bracket. It never lowers one.

A slow deck holding four Game Changers is a slow Bracket 4, not an Upgraded deck.

A bracket reads the list, not the table.

If your pod keeps ending on turn five, the number on paper is the thing that is wrong.

*Exceptions for highly thematic cards, by agreement. Every line here starts the Rule 0 conversation rather than settling it.