Magic The Gathering® Old School
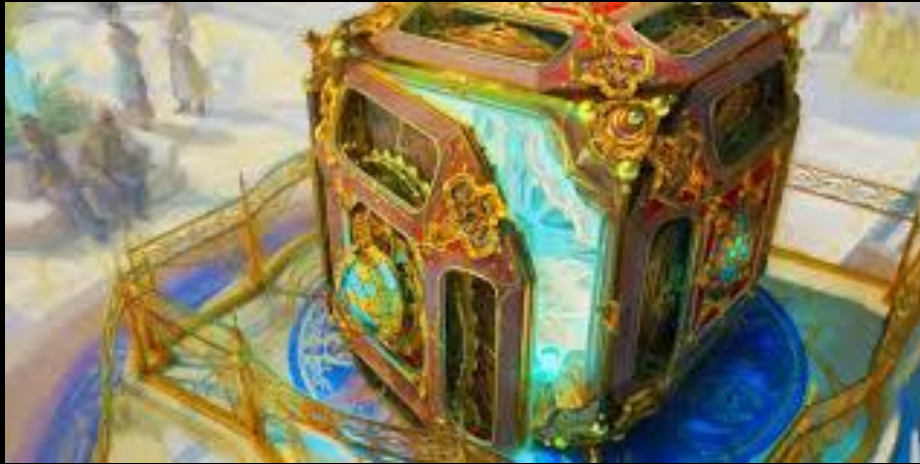

How to draft?

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Introduction

The best way to use this resource is by first checking out the table below.

If you know how many people you want to draft with, how many cards you have at your disposal (ie, how large your cube is), or how much time you have, you can easily pick a format to play. Then, once you've picked a format, scroll down until you find the appropriate entry.

I am using the following definitions in this primer:
- "Pack" refers to a set number of randomized cards which will be used to draft. In a normal draft, you receive 3 packs of 15 cards each.
- "Deck" refers to a central or personal stack of randomized cards which make their way into the draft. In the context of this post, it will **not** mean the decks constructed post-draft.
- "Pile" refers to a small grouping of cards—most often between one and ten—taken from decks or packs, which supplement draft environments.
- "Draft a...(card, pile, etc)" refers to the act of selecting a card from the draft environment and adding it permanently to your card pool. At the conclusion of the draft, each player will use their card pool (and unlimited basic lands) to construct 40-card decks.

This guide is for drafts only. I don't comment on deck building or gameplay, but you should totally click on the links I included (hint: they're in the names of each format) for more information and so that credit can be given to those who deserve it.

In cube you can always add basic lands as needed from outside the cube after you are done drafting to create your deck.

REMEMBER:
- **most of these formats can be easily adapted to accommodate for more or less players and/or cards. Be creative!**

OVERVIEW OF DRAFT METHODS

Draft Format	Players	Total Cards Used	Expected Pool	Cards seen per player	Draft Time	Skill Level
Winston	2	90	30-60	45-79	15-20 min	*Medium*
Winchester	2	84	21-63	84	15-20 min	*Easy*
Grid	2	162	45-54	162	15-20 min	*Easy*
Solomon	2	90	0-90*	90	20-30 min	*Medium*
Lawyer	2	128	40	88-128	5-10 min	*Hard*
Continuous	3	132	44	132	20-30 min	*Easy*
3-player Solomon	3	135	0-135*	135	30-45 min	*Hard*
4-player Grid	4	240	44-48	240	20-30 min	*Easy*
Tenchester (old)	4	360	36	360	20-30 min	*Medium*
Tenchester (new)	4	360	36	276	15-20 min	*Medium*
Normal	4-8	45 per player	45	276 (8 players)	15-20 min	*Medium*
Rochester	4-8	45 per player	45	180 (4 players) - 360 (8 players)	30-45 min	*Medium*
Rotisserie	4-8	360	45	360	45-60 min	*Easy*
Team	4-8	45 per player	45	276 (8 players)	15-20 min	*Hard*
Sealed	2-8	90 per player	90	90	0-5 min	*Medium*
Glimpse	2-8	135 per player	45	243 (8 players)	20-30 min	*Hard*

Two-player Cube Drafts:

Winston Draft

(http://magic.wizards.com/en/articles/archive/winston-draft-2005-03-25)

1. Make a single deck of 90 cards.
2. Choose someone to draft first, then put the top three cards from the deck face down next to it as three new small piles of one card each.
3. The first player looks at the first small pile. That player may choose to draft that pile or not:
   a) If that player drafts it, he or she replaces that pile with a new face-down card from the deck.
   b) If that player doesn't draft it, he or she puts it back and adds a new card from the deck (face-down), and moves on to the next pile, where this process is repeated.
   c) If the first player arrives at the third pile and does not want to draft it, he or she adds a card to it (face-down), then drafts a random card from the top of the deck.
4. One the first player has drafted from a small pile or from the top of the deck, it becomes the second player's turn to draft.
5. Continue alternating until all 90 cards have been drafted.

Winchester Draft

(http://magic.wizards.com/en/articles/archive/latest-developments/winchester-draft-2011-05-20)

1. Each player makes a deck of 42 cards each. Decide which player will draft first.
2. Simultaneously, each player takes the top two cards from his or her deck and lays each in their own pile face up
3. The first player will draft one of these four piles.
4. Once a card is drafted, each player will simultaneously take the top two cards from his or her deck and lay each on the four existing piles face up—in doing so, he or she will be replenishing the pile taken with a new card and adding an additional card to each of the other piles (lay them out in order, don't look at the cards and decide where each one should go).
5. The next player will draft one of these four piles.
6. Repeat step 4 and 5 until both decks and all piles have been drafted.

Grid Draft
(http://www.channelfireball.com/articles/cube-design-grid-drafting-and-more/)
1. Make 18 packs of 9 cards each.
2. Lay a pack face-up in a 3x3 grid (lay them out in order, don't look at the cards and decide where each one should go).
3. The first player drafts a row or column.
4. The second player drafts a remaining row or column. This will be either two or three cards, depending on how the first player drafted. Discard the undrafted cards, which will be 3 or 4 cards per pack.
5. Alternate who picks first from each pack until all packs have been drafted.

Solomon Draft

(https://magic.wizards.com/en/articles/archive/limited-information/limited-alternatives-2004-09-13-0)
1. Make 10 packs of 9 cards each.
2. Lay a pack face-up on the table. A player will separate this pack into two piles. The piles do not need to be even (for example, you could have a pile of 1 and a pile of 8. I'd be very surprised if you were able to make even piles, seeing as you have 9 cards to separate).
3. The other player will draft one of these piles
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3, alternating players until all packs have been drafted.

Lawyer

(http://www.mtgsalvation.com/forums/the-game/the-cube-forum/articles-podcasts-and-guides/576611-cubing-with-two-a-guide-to-two-player-draft)

1. Make a deck of 128 cards. (note: counting is not necessary; you can just draft from the top of your cube to save time)
2. Lay the top 6 cards on the table face up.
3. The first player may either add a face-up card to their hand or add an unknown card from the top of the deck to their hand. If a face-up card is added to a hand, replace it with a card from the top of the deck (this rule will apply throughout the drafting process).
4. The second player may either add a face-up card to their hand or add an unknown card from the top of the deck to their hand.
5. Now, players have three options:
    a) Add a face-up card to their hand
    b) Add an unknown card from the top of the deck to their hand
    c) Exchange a card in their hand for a face-up card **and** add an unknown card from the top of the deck to their hand
6. Repeat this process, alternating players until each player has 5 cards in their hand. Each player will then draft those 5 cards (setting them aside in their card pool--they may no longer exchanged). Discard all remaining face-up cards.
7. Repeat step 6 until the entire deck is drafted/discarded (8 rounds).

Three-player Cube Drafts:

Continuous Draft

(https://magic.wizards.com/en/articles/archive/limited-information/limited-alternatives-2004-09-13-0)

1. Make single deck of 132 cards.
2. Lay four cards face-up on the table.
3. A player will draft one of these four cards. The next player will draft two of the remaining three cards. The final player will draft the remaining card.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until the entire deck is drafted, rotating who drafts first each round.

Three-player Solomon Draft

1. Make 9 packs of 15 cards each.
2. The first player lays out 15 cards face-up and separates them into two piles. The piles do not need to be even.
3. The second player selects one of the piles. Both the first and the second player separate their piles into 3 smaller piles each. The piles do not need to be even.
4. The third player drafts one smaller pile from each of the first two players (two small piles total). The first two players retain (draft) the undrafted smaller piles.
5. Rotate draft order and repeat until all packs have been drafted.

Four-player Cube Drafts:

Four-player Grid Draft

(http://www.channelfireball.com/articles/cube-design-grid-drafting-and-more/)

1. Make 16 packs of 15 cards each.
2. At the start of each pack, lay out the first 9 cards in a 3x3 grid face-up.
3. The first player drafts a row or column. Then, replace the drafted cards in the grid with three cards from the same pack.
4. The second player drafts a row or column. After the second player selects a row or column, replace those cards with the remaining three cards from the pack.
5. The third player drafts a row or column.
6. The fourth player drafts a remaining row or column. This will be either two or three cards, depending on how the first player drafted. Discard the undrafted cards, which will be 3 or 4 cards per pack.
7. The player who chose their cards last in one pack chooses first in the next pack.
8. After 8 packs, change the drafting rotation (from clockwise to counter-clockwise).
9. Continue until all packs have been drafted.

Tenchester Draft

(http://www.channelfireball.com/home/grid-tenchester-and-cutting-a-color-from-the-cube/)

1. Make 36 packs of 10 cards each.
2. Lay out the first pack. The first player picks a card, then each player follows in turn. After all players have selected a card, discard the remaining six cards and lay out a new pack.
3. The person who selected last in the previous pack selects first in this pack. Continue drafting in the same direction.
4. Continue until all packs have been drafted

As a result of feedback, he created an updated version:

1. Make 36 packs of 10 cards each.
2. Each player takes a pack, drafts a card, and passes the remaining 9 cards to their left, continued until each player has drafted a card from each pack.
3. Then, pass the 6-card packs to the drafter who started with them. Drafters can then examine the pack's contents before discarding them. (They do not select a second card from the pack).
4. Each player takes a new pack, and the order of drafting is reversed.
5. Continue until all packs have been drafted.

Multi-player Cube Drafts:

Rochester Draft
(http://www.mtgsalvation.com/articles/16221-aimless-wanderings-the-basics-of-rochester-draft)

1. Make 3 packs of 15 cards each per player. Give each player three packs.
2. The first player lays his or her pack face up on the table. That player drafts one card.
3. The next player in clockwise order drafts one card. Repeat this process until the last player is reached.
4. Once the last player is reached, that player may draft two total cards from the pack.
5. Draft order is reversed, until the pack has been completely drafted.
6. The second player lays out his or her pack on the table, repeating steps 2 through 5.
7. Repeat this process until all players have drafted their first pack. Then, reverse draft order (clockwise to counterclockwise). Once all players have drafted their second pack (each player should have one pack remaining), reverse draft order again.
8. Continue until all packs have been drafted.

Rotisserie Draft
(http://www.channelfireball.com/articles/a-practical-way-to-rotisserie-draft/)

1. Lay the entire cube face-up on the table.
2. Players rotate drafting one card at a time from the available cube.
3. Continue until each player has drafted 45 cards or the cube is exhausted. [Team Draft]
4. Assign players into two teams of an equal number of players.
5. Sit in alternating draft positions (the players to your left and right should be on the opposite team).
6. Make 3 packs of 15 cards each per player. Give each player three packs.
7. Proceed with normal drafting rules.

Sealed
(https://magic.wizards.com/en/game-info/gameplay/formats/sealed-deck)

1. Each player is given a card pool of 90 cards.
2. Sealed games can also be build from six unopened booster packs. Additionally, you may add as many basic lands (Plains, Islands, Swamps, Mountains, and Forests) as you'd like, even if they weren't in the booster packs you opened. These games are 1v1 and can be played as best of one or best of three.
3. A minimum deck size of 40 cards
4. Sideboard for your deck is any of the cards you from the packs or the remaining from the 90 card pool you have been allocated

Glimpse Draft

(http://www.mtgsalvation.com/forums/the-game/the-cube-forum/568751-glimpse-burnfour-draft-thread-my-and-wtwlf123s)

1. Make 9 packs per player of 15 cards each.
2. Each player takes one pack and drafts a card from it.
3. Each player discards 2 cards from their pack (removing them from the draft entirely). Then, each player passes the pack to their left.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until both packs are entirely drafted/discarded. Each player should have drafted 5 cards and discarded 10.
5. Repeat for all 9 packs, alternating the direction players pass packs.