Magic The Gathering® Old School

MTG OLD SCHOOL PHRASES YOU SHOULD KNOW

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MTG 93/94 Phrases to know

Old School Magic, like many games and subcultures, is filled with jargon, or words that are often impossible to understand when not faced with an avalanche of context. This document is designed to provide you with at least one set of meanings for many pieces of Magic jargon and slang.

Aggro - Short for 'aggressive', aggro is used to define a deck or archetype which is highly dependent on creature combat and aggressive attacks (also 'beatdown'). The aim is to develop an advantage in the early game before the opponent gets started. Usually, Aggro decks have a low mana curve and try to overwhelm the opponent before they can build any board presence or stabilize. Aggro decks want to kill an opponent as quickly as possible. They often sacrifice powerful effects and long-term strategy for simple, repeatable threats that need immediate answers. Aggro decks can sometimes dip into disruptive strategies or even combo elements to pull off a quick win.

Aggressor - Being the aggressor in a match means to be the one pacing the game for a conclusion. It can also be a role you strategically have based on playing an aggro archetype deck or you can act as the aggressor in a specific phase of the game.

Aggro-control - A deck archetype which incorporates elements of both aggro and control decks. Aggro-control is similar to - and in many cases used synonymously with – tempo deck.

Allied colors - The five pairs of colors which are adjacent on the color wheel: ({W}/{U}), ({U}/{B}), ({B}/{R}), ({R}/{G}) and ({G}/{W}).

Alpha Strike - To attack with all of your creatures. Usually this is done in the hope of pushing enough damage through to win this turn or next.

Alter/Altered – refers to when a card has been modified or customised with art from private artists, signatures from original artist or other altering. The altered card used for altering must still be a card from a legal series in the format. In a formal tournament there are 4 requirements an altered card must fulfil: 1) the card's name and mana cost cannot be obscured or changed. 2) the altered art must still be recognizable and cannot contain offensive images 3) the altered art cannot contain substantial strategic advice and 4) it's important to ensure that altering your cards doesn't make them recognizable while they're in your deck

Archetype

1) A specific branch of very influential or competitive decks in a metagame. Deck archetypes tend to revolve around a particular card, combo, or strategy.
2) Any of the core strategy groups a deck can fall into**: control, combo**, **Midrange (Control-aggro)** or **aggro (beatdown)** (or some hybrid of these "pure" strategies).

Generally speaking, Aggro is strong against Control because it doesn't suffer as much from Control's disruption spells due to redundancy; Control is strong against Combo because it can disrupt Combo's win conditions; and Combo is strong against Aggro because it can deal lethal in a way that Aggro is ill-equipped to deal with.

However, these are general archetypes. In Magic decks will sometimes fit squarely in one of those archetypes or they will possess the qualities of two archetypes. As such, we really have nine archetypes: the three general cases of Aggro, Control and Combo, and the six permutations that result from combining them. Those permutations are Aggro-Combo, Combo-Aggro, Combo-Control, Control-Combo (Prison), Control-Aggro (Midrange), and Aggro-Control (Tempo).

Bait - to play a card which you expect your opponent to counter so that they will not be able to counter your next (presumably better) spell.

Banned card –A card from a legal MTG series that is include in a format or tournament – but which is banned (cannot be played with) in the specific format or tournament. (see also illegal)

Beatdown - The art of attacking well. A beatdown deck is a deck which is built on aggressive attacking with several creatures.

Bear – A 2/2 creature (named after the Grizzly Bear card)

Bin - The graveyard. Also used as a verb to describe sending something to the graveyard.

Bounce - Cards that return permanents to their owner's hand are frequently called bounce spells. (Also used for cards that return only creatures.). "Boomerang is the archetypical bounce spell."

Bolted - Dealing three damage to a target, as with Lightning Bolt.

Broken - Broken can refer to a card or combo. Broken cards are usually way above the power level or way below the cost of other cards in the same environment. When a card is officially broken is of some debate within the Magic community

Burn - Slang term that most people use in place of the more technically correct "direct damage." (See Incinerate, Fireball, etc.)

Burn out - To kill your opponent using burn spells.

Bury - This is the old school way of saying "Destroy XXX. It cannot be regenerated."

Chump block - To block a creature with no hope of trading or living through the block.

Colourhoser - A hoser can be something that destroys, prohibits, or prevents something specific. "Color hosers" are cards that punish players for playing a particular color

Color Screw - A term used to describe the situation where you have enough mana to cast spells, but not the right color(s) of mana.

Combat trick – or just trick: A spell or ability used by a player to alter the outcome of a combat. Common ways in which this is achieved include increasing or decreasing a creatures' power and/or toughness, by granting or removing abilities from a creature or even removing the creature entirely from combat or play. Giant Growth is a classic green combat trick.

Combo - Short for "combination," this refers to a combination of cards typically designed to win the game when they are put into play. This is also used as a category of deck archetypes that play combinations of cards designed to win the game in one fell swoop. Combo decks get the job done with unique interactions between cards that intend to win the game immediately if left uninterrupted. Often, that even means

"going infinite" by repeating a certain sequence until there's no possible way to lose. Combo decks often have controlling and tempo elements that allow them to survive until they can unleash their combo.

Control - Aside from its straightforward definition, control also refers to a category of deck archetypes designed to win the game by absorbing beatdown decks in early game before later taking control of the game, frequently via counterspells and removal. Where beatdown decks seek to win the game quickly, control decks play for the long game. They're usually built around answers and disruption, relying on draining an opponent's resources while protecting their own – meanwhile building card advantage. Once their opponent is out of cards and threats, that's when they go in for the kill, often with an extremely powerful or resilient threat that opponents have no hope of answering

Converted mana cost (CMC) - The converted mana cost of an object is an integer greater than or equal to zero. It is determined by converting each coloured mana symbol in the spell's cost to 1, then adding the results to the generic (colourless) mana cost of the spell. (For example, spells with mana costs of {2}{G} and {1}{G}{G} both have a converted mana cost of 3.)

The only case in which a spell's converted mana cost can ever vary is for spells with {X} in the mana cost. When an object with X in the mana cost is on the stack, X equals whatever value was chosen for it when it was put on the stack. In any other location, X equals 0.

Counter burn – (Counter burn deck) is a deck type that builds on the principle of playing blue for its strong counter magic, control abilities and card drawing - while red is used for artifact and creature removal as well as direct damage.

Cow – Nickname for Juzam Djinn card

Curve - The mean power level of cards. The power level of a card can be judged by players as being 'above', 'on' or 'below the curve'. For example, the power and toughness of most CMC 2 creatures is 2/2. A 2/2 creature with CMC 2 is considered on the curve, while a 3/3 of the same cost would be above the curve and a 1/1 creature would be below the curve. Often, but not always, creatures that are above or below the curve have a corresponding drawback or ability to balance the card.

Curve out - To cast a series of spells "on curve." For example, a 2-drop on turn 2, a 3 mana card on turn 3, and a 4 mana card on turn 4. See mana curve.

Damage race - A damage race (or simply a race) occurs when neither player is able to take firm control of the game. Their only course of action is to try to win the game before the other's creatures strikes the finishing blow. Races are most often driven by one or both players having creatures with evasion (flying, "can't be blocked", landwalk ability, protection from color etc.)

Deck, Decking - Slang term used to identify strategies that try to win by making an opponent draw a card from an empty library. See also: Mill

Dead card - A card in hand that is irrelevant or unplayable. This may also be expressed with the phrase dead draw if the card was just drawn from the deck.

Draws Hate - When a player or specific card in play gets targeted by their opponents due to the power of the card in play or another card.

Draw-Go

1) A stagnating period of gameplay in which each player simply draws a card and passes the turn. A draw-go situation can occur because each player is waiting for the other to make the first move, or when neither player has a beneficial spell to play and controls no important cards on the table. Common during the first few turns of a game when neither player has many lands.

2) A deck that, because of its reactive nature, often plays spells primarily during the opponent's turn.

Draw-7: Get seven new cards in your hand – typically by Time twister or wheel of fortune.

Drop - A permanent which can be played without major strategic consideration. Usually used in the context of "2-drop", "3-drop" etc., referring to the turn when a permanent can first be played, which is equal to its converted mana cost.

Dual Lands - Originally used to refer to the cycle of lands from Alpha through Revised that produced two colours (Taiga, Underground Sea, etc), this term has morphed over the years to become the generic category for all lands that produce two colours.

Enemy colours - The five pairs of colours which are opposite on the colour wheel: ({W}/{B}), ({B}/{G}), ({G}/{U}), ({U}/{R}) and ({R}/{W}).

Evasion - Any ability of a creature that improves its chances of damaging the defending player by restricting which creatures can block it, like flying, landwalk, protection from colour or "can't be blocked".

Fast Effects - Abilities that occur at instant speed.

Fatty/Fattie creature - This term is used to refer to creatures that would shop at the Big and Tall shop, you know, if creatures could shop for clothes. 4/4 or 5/3 is generally the minimum to be considered a fatty. A fatty is the opposite of a weenie creature

Fizzle - term for a spell that is not resolving because of no legal targets or target no longer existing.

Floating - Refers to mana in a player's mana pool that has not been used, especially after that player has just played a spell or ability. Usually, a player will only tap as much mana as required by the particular spell or ability they wish to play, and only when they wish to play it. However, in various situations a player may leave some amount of mana in their mana pool. The rules require a player who has mana in their mana pool after spending some, or when passing priority, to announce what mana is left. This is usually accomplished with a set of dice or a notepad.

Forfeiting - To quit the game. Formally Called Conceding a game that immediately causes the conceding player to lose that game. Forfeiting a games often happens due to the belief that one will soon or ultimately lose. This can happen during competitive tournament play, when a player may forfeit so he or she can play other games during his or her match in the time allotted

Goldfish – Solo playing without an opponent: drawing a starting hand and proceeding to play until an opponent who does nothing to stop you from accomplishing the gameplan is defeated. Used in basic initial deck testing.

Go – Term used when by players to indicate and declare that they conclude their "end step" and thus ending their turn (see also "turn")

Go over

1) To be able to deal more damage than your opponent or be able to trump their best card or play.

2) Attacking with flying creatures, which "fly over" your opponent's non-flying defenders.

Go tall

1) A creature-based strategy to overwhelm the opponent by attacking with small number of large creatures. These creatures often out-class or evade the opponent's creatures.

2) Strategy where things get stronger over time, e.g. green putting a lot of +1/+1 counter on its creatures.

Go wide - A creature-based strategy, often making use of tokens, to overwhelm the opponent by attacking with a huge number of small creatures, rather than a few very large creatures (which is called going 'tall').

Hack - To change the type of a card, as with Magical Hack.

Hippie – Nickname for the Hypnotic Specter creature card

Illegal card – Opposite of legal card. Can be either 1) A card from a legal series – but which is banned in the specific format or tournament (see also banned) 2) A card from an illegal MTG series that is excluded from play in the specific format or tournament. 3) A counterfeit card (see also Proxy).

Jank – (a jank deck) a deck of cards that work on paper but not in practice. Probably could be built more efficiently with better cards

Junk Rare - A rare card that is considered of little or no value and is quite cheap as a result.

Legal card – Opposite of illegal card. A card from a legal MTG series that is included in a specific format or tournament and which has not been banned (see banned)

Lock, lockdown - During a match, a period where a player, through card interactions, has made it difficult or impossible for the opponent to mount an effective defense. "Breaking out" of a lockdown takes skill and luck, but often an effective lockdown will allow the lockdown player to secure victory before the other player can break out. In many tournament communities, decks are built with the tools to break out of locks, reducing the effectiveness of most lockdown cards. As a result, some decks specialize in lockdown strategies and use an arsenal of locks to form an exceptionally strong lockdown, followed by a swift victory.

Machine Head – Archetype deck that isn't set in stone, but one thing is certain and that is that it involves Juzam Djinns. It usually involves big creatures like Erhnam Djinn, Juzam Djinn, Serra Angel, Shivan Dragon combined with Birds of Paradise to ramp into them. Other cards you usually see in this archetype are Dark Ritual and Elves of Deep Shadow for even more ramp. It's also not unusual to splash a third color or maybe even two. Last but not least, on card you can play if you really want to hit the opponent hard is Berserk, some decks even play a complete playset.

Mana Abbreviations - Since Magic is written about frequently and not everyone has access to the spiffy mana symbols in their text, a shorthand version was created for referring to colours. It looks like this:

W = White mana
U = Blue mana *(as B is already taken for Black)*
B = Black mana
R = Red mana
G = Green mana

Saying you are playing a G/W deck means you are playing a Green/White deck. When it comes to decks, players will sometimes use upper and lower case to show how one colour may make up most of the deck, while another colour may just be a "splash". So, if you see a deck described as G/w you'll know the deck is mostly green, but with a little splash of white thrown in as well.

Mana curve - The distribution of cards across casting costs in a deck. This is defined by the spread of spells in a deck by converted mana cost A deck is said to have a low curve if it has mostly cheap spells, while it can be said to have a high curve if it has more expensive cards. The top of the curve (or "top end") is the most expensive card or cards in your deck. A card is said to be played on curve if it is played as early as you could intend to cast it (usually on the turn corresponding to its mana cost). A well-designed curve allows a deck to use all or almost all of its available mana each turn, maximising its tempo advantages. This is usually of most concern to aggro and aggro-control decks.

Main deck - To have a card in your initial deck, not in your sideboard.

Mana bird – Nickname that refers to the card Birds of Paradise

Mana elf – Nickname that refers to the cards Lanowar Elves and the card Dark Elves that can be tapped to produce 1 mana.

Mana dork - A cheap-costed creature such as Llanowar Elves, Elves of Deep Shadow and Birds of Paradise that provides mana

Mana Flood - Description for what happens when you draw far too many lands and not enough spells.

Mana optimization - A theory that is the basis for the mana curve. Mana optimization theory states that a player who best uses the mana available to them in every turn will win the game. At its most basic level applies to the player who uses the most mana in a turn, e.g. a player who spends 5 mana in a turn will be able to do more and more powerful things than a player with only 3 mana available. Conversely, the player who spends fewer resources to produce the same effect will have greater mana optimization.

Mana rock - An artifact that taps for mana, such as Monolith, Mana Vault, Fellwar Stone, or the five Moxes.

Mana screw - Having too little mana, too much mana, or the wrong color(s) of mana.

1) When a player doesn't draw enough mana generation cards (usually land) for their deck to work effectively.
2) When a player doesn't draw cards that produce the correct colors for their deck to work effectively (also known as "color screw"). In multi-coloured decks, there is a chance of having lands that provide mana of one color and spells in hand that require another color.
3) When a player draws only land cards and/or mana sources (usually called "mana flood"). They won't have enough spells in hand to cast.

Mana threshold - The minimum amount of mana needed to be able to cast most of the spells in a deck or for the deck to work.

Metagame - The game outside the game – choices about what and how to play dictated by logic or community standards, rather than rules. The composition of deck archetypes in a specific format/tournament. This is also an advanced Magic concept where you chose to build opposite or hate decks based on the expected metagame at a tournament in an attempt to gain advantage against the

majority of the decks in the tournament or the archetypes that are expected to be the strongest in the tournament.

Midrange decks - A general archetype of deck focused on playing medium to larger sized creatures. They're slow out of the gate but tend to take over around turn four or five when they can start throwing larger creatures. Midrange typically features very few creatures in the 1-2 CMC range and instead tries to win with creatures in the 3-6 mana range while casting aggressive removal, board sweep, discard, and ramp cards in the early game.

A typical midrange deck plays either green/red

Mill, Milling - Strategies designed to win by leaving the opponent with 0 cards left in their library, thus making them unable to draw a card. The name for this arises from the card Millstone, first available in Antiquities. Also known as: decking. A "self-mill" deck is a deck built around drawing putting your cards in your own library into your graveyard, and then play cards that can put cards in graveyard into play directly

Mirror Match - Descriptive term for when you play an opponent running the same deck archetype as you. Two players battling with identical deck lists (same deck, same sideboard) would be referred to as a "75-card Mirror Match"

Misplay – When a player makes a mistake (either plays incorrectly against the rules or play the cards in an non-optimal way) or makes a blunder (simply forgetting to do something with his cards due to loosing overview of his cards or opponents cards)

Mull - Slang for mulligan

Narrow card - A card that is only effective in a specific set of situations.

Nonbo - An interaction between two or more cards that is disadvantageous instead of having a profitable effect (which would be a combo)

Outs – Ways, scenarios, options or specific cards that can bring a losing player to get back into the game

On the draw – the player who goes second but draws a card in round 1 (opposite to the starting player "being on the play")

On the play – the player who goes first and does not draw a card in round 1 (opposite to the second player "being on the draw")

Painland - Blanket category for lands that do one point of damage to a player in exchange for producing a color of mana.

Pauper - The Pauper Magic format, in which the only cards allowed are commons.

Permission - Another name for counter magic or decks that play a lot of counter spells. A style of play that involves hardcore/dedicated counter-magic. The permission player attempts to counter every important spell the opponent plays, and simply to draw plenty of extra cards to ensure more counters are available. The term "permission" comes from the way the opponent will end up asking whether each of their spells resolves or is countered.

Pimp/pimping – refers to pimping your deck by upgrading cards in the deck from e.g. white border to black border or altered cards

Playset - Four copies of a card. This phrase is generally used either when referring to the number of cards in a deck or the number of which a player is in possession. Cards are often sold in playsets.

Power House - A card that is extremely powerful.

Power 9 - Nine cards from Magic's Alpha/Beta/Unlimited sets that saw early restriction due to their power level. These are Ancestral Recall, Black Lotus, Mox Ruby, Mox Pearl, Mox Jet, Mox Emerald, Mox Sapphire, Time Walk, and Timetwister.

Prison – Refers to a deck type (Prison deck) that combines Control-Combo archetypes deck. This known as "a Prison deck". The deck type utilizes Control and Combo elements in non-linear gameplay in order to "lock down" the opponent, limiting what actions they can take while slowly whittling away at their life total. Prison uses semi-fair strategies that do suffer from some disruption of pieces, but not as much as pure Combo does due to having a higher degree of redundancy. Similar "lock" effects mean that even if a player manages to get around some of their restrictions, more can be placed on them.

Proxy - A proxy card is a card that represents another Magic card in casual play. A proxy may be a card with different text written over it, with a piece of paper with the text written on it taped over it, with the text paper inserted into its card protector over it, or anything else the players agree upon. Another use of proxy cards is to protect high-value cards. For instance when you do actually own a Black Lotus, you could put a proxy card of it in your deck while having the actual card in a special protector on the side, to prove that you actually own the card. However, when no proxy cards are allowed in the format you are playing it is illegal to include proxies. Proxy are most frequently used for playtesting before buying the real card or if just playing a game of casual kitchen table magic (and if your opponent has accepted the use of it). Production of "proxy" cards has become an industry in itself and some are so professionally made that they can pass as real Magic cards to the untrained eye and are therefore effectively counterfeits. The production of these cards is of course illegal.

Pumping - To temporarily increase a creature's power and/or toughness with a spell or ability. A "pump spell" is a spell that does just that (e.g. Giant Growth, Blood Lust, unholy strength etc.).

Pump Knight – The black and White knights from Fallen Empires set (Order of Leibtur and Order of the Ebon Hand)

Ramp - A card which "accelerates" your mana, giving you an additional, reusable mana source beyond the usual one land per turn. A good example is Llanowar Elves. A deck containing many such cards, usually combines it with larger creatures.

Reanimation - An effect that returns a card from a graveyard directly to the battlefield.

Reback - The technic to exchange the back of a MTG card for a new one (this technic was created for '93/'94 players) before Ultra Pro release the first sleeves in '95 so players avoid their cards considered marked for judges, they began to reback them to continue playing in the tournaments. Sets known with reback cards: Alpha, Beta, Unlimited, Arabian Nights, Antiquities and Legends. Some professional traders have also begun to reback CE (Collector's Edition) & IE (International Edition) - mainly Power nine cards, Dual Lands and other rares cards to get profit. These Rebacks are considered counterfeits and are illegal in most formats and tournaments (see also illegal and proxy)

Recursion- A combo in which a card that returns cards from the graveyard is itself returned from the graveyard, leading to a repeatable loop.

Removal - Spells that destroy or otherwise remove an opponent's permanents.

Resolve - check if a spell is resolved and its effects happen

Restricted card –Opposite of unrestricted. A card from a legal MTG series that is included in a format or tournament – but which is restricted to maximum 1 card in a given main deck or sideboard in the specific format or tournament. (see also unrestricted)

Robots – Other name for artefact creatures. A Robot deck is also a deck type (Robot deck) that builds on large artifact creatures like Triskelion, Juggernaut and Tetravus and Su-Chi.

Sac - Slang for "sacrifice."

Sandbag - To stockpile cards in one's hand rather than playing them. Sometimes done as a bluff but often for value, like holding lands to utilise Lands Edge, Ivory tower, Armageddon, Balance or voluntarily discards, or holding creatures to play around board sweepers.

Shard - A shard, or arc, is a series of three colours in an unbroken chain on the colour pie. The middle colour in a shard is its primary colour, allied to both of the shard's other colours. Following is used as names to describe a deck with 3 shard colours in it:
Bant {G}{W}{U}
Esper {W}{U}{B}
Grixis {U}{B}{R}
Jund {B}{R}{G}
Naya {R}{G}{W}

Sideboard - A group of additional cards the player may use to modify their deck between games of a match. In conventional games, each player is allowed to bring exactly 15 cards (in addition to a player's main deck) to a game. These cards are referred to as the sideboard. A sideboard helps a player address the weaknesses of their main deck against specific opponents or archetype decks

Singleton – Special format where only a single copy of a card can be included in a main deck and sideboard – except from basic lands.

Splash Damage - Strategic term coined by Mike Flores to describe when cards become unplayable in a particular metagame due to hate designed to hit other cards/decks already in the metagame.

Speed Bump - Depending on the person, this can mean either "chump block" or "to block a creature with trample with no hope of trading nor any hope of absorbing all the damage."

Spicy - (Spicy deck) a well-built deck with a twist designed to take the opponents by surprise. Can win with decent regularity unlike a jank deck

Strip/Stripping – Refers to the card strip mine and means "to destroy" a land

Swing - Slang for attacking. Tapping your creatures to declare attack

Stabilize - When one player is being attacked repeatedly, (i.e. by the beatdown player) they can be said to have "stabilized" when that player can no longer make profitable attacks, and the slower, or control, player is more or less in control of the game.

Stompy - An aggressive mono-green deck consisting of outrageously-cheap fatties, generally with a mana curve topping off at two, and pump spells. Several Stompy decks run only nine lands total and most tournament-quality decks run a minimum of twenty-four.

Synergy - The small, positive interactions of individual cards in a deck.

Tap-4: To draw a card. Reference to Jayemdae Tome card that can be tapped and pay four mana to draw a card.

Tech – Deck Technology or Deck tech. Cards or information that helps a player win. A previously undiscovered improvement to an existing strategy, deck or archetype. A card or use of a card which is an improvement on deckbuilding "technology" in the current metagame. Often an individual's innovation appearing in large tournament events, serving to throw other strategies off balance by changing some part of how a deck usually works. Tech is generally researched in secret by an individual or a team prior to a large tournament to keep competitors from knowing what tricks will be put into a competing deck. Tech cards are frequently advantageous in specific scenarios and are thus included in response to expectations of the metagame.

Tempo - How efficiently a player uses their mana. Also refers to a deck type that combines Aggro-Control archetypes deck. This known as "a Tempo deck". This deck type is a semi-linear, early-game orientated archetype that focuses on playing strong, early-game threats and controlling the flow of gameplay with efficient disruption spells. Unlike Midrange, which is flexible and can switch strategies when necessary, Tempo employs primarily aggressive strategies, utilizing disruption only when absolutely needed to protect their board state.

Threat - A card, usually a creature, which puts an opponent under pressure. A threat puts the opponent under a clock or forces them to have an answer in order to avoid losing the game.

Tier One - The decks at the top of the metagame. These are generally considered to be the best deck(s) in a particular format.

Timmy/Tim - Originally from Monty Python and the Holy Grail film and used by fans to describe the MTG Prodigal Sorcerer

Top deck - To pull the card or cards you need off the top of one's deck.

1) To play a card you just drew, especially at exactly the time you need it. The chances of a top deck are dependent on the number of "wanted" cards left in the deck. For a burn deck to top deck a X-damage card or lightning bolt is not as impressive as drawing a card of which there is only one or two copies of in the deck or a card which only covers a very specific situation.
2) To have no cards in hand, so that you essentially are top decking every card you draw.
3) To put a card on top of your library from somewhere else, usually your graveyard or elsewhere in your library.

Top deck Mode – Top decking: where a player has no cards in hand and relies solely on the cards they draw each turn to be able to play effectively. It is a situation players try to avoid as it means the player relies entirely on the luck of the draw.

Top 8 - In tournament play, a single-elimination tournament whose participants are chosen from those of a previous "Swiss" tournament. A "Swiss" tournament is a non-eliminating tournament format that features a fixed number of rounds of competition, but considerably fewer than for a "round-robin" tournament.

Thus, each competitor (team or individual) does not play all the other competitors. Winners will play each other in later rounds, and losers play each other for ranking. Placing anywhere in the top 8 is widely seen as a success for the player, his deck, and his team.

Turn – Formally refers to when players take alternately turns and goes through the phases/steps. The term "turn" is also used when players declare this to indicate that they conclude the end step and thus ending their turn (see also "Go")

Unrestricted card –Opposite of restricted. A card from a legal MTG series that is included in a format or tournament – for which 4 cards can be included in a given main deck and sideboard in the specific format or tournament. (see also restricted)

WinCon – It's short for win condition. Essentially, it's however your deck is going to win.. A win condition is any condition that leads you to a victory. It's a self-defining term. Aggro decks use burn or low-cost creatures as win conditions. Control decks use attrition or large finishers as win conditions. Combo decks will have a few cards which they rely upon to win.