



Keyword Cheat Sheet

A set's new keywords have reminder text to explain what they do. But what about keywords that have been around for a while? Below are explanations of the keywords that pop up on modern cards without reminder text—or will in the near future.

Deathtouch

Whenever a permanent with deathtouch deals damage to a creature, that creature is destroyed.

Defender

Creatures with defender can't attack.

Enchant

All Auras have enchant. The keyword is followed by a description of a permanent, card, or player that tells you what the Aura can be attached to. When you play the Aura, you must target something the enchant ability describes. The Aura comes into play attached to it. If the Aura is ever attached to something that doesn't match the description, the Aura is put into its owner's graveyard.

Equip

All Equipment have equip. You can pay the equip cost to attach the Equipment to one of your creatures. It doesn't matter if the Equipment is unattached or is attached to a different creature. You can play this ability only at the time you could play a sorcery. The equip ability targets the creature you're moving the Equipment onto.

Fear

A creature with fear can't be blocked except by artifact creatures and/or black creatures.

First Strike & Double Strike

Creatures with first strike deal their combat damage first, and creatures with double strike deal their combat damage twice.

When you reach the combat damage step, check to see if any attacking or blocking creatures have first strike or double strike. If so, an extra combat damage step is created just for them. Only creatures with first strike and double strike get to deal combat damage in this step. After that, the normal combat damage step happens. All remaining attacking and blocking creatures, as well as the ones with double strike, deal combat damage during this second step.

Making a creature lose first strike after the extra combat damage step doesn't allow it to deal damage again during the normal combat damage step.

Flash

A card with flash can be played any time you could play an instant.

Flying

A creature with flying can't be blocked except by creatures with flying or reach.

Haste

A creature with haste isn't affected by "summoning sickness." It can attack as soon as it comes under your control. You can also play its activated abilities with Ⓢ in the cost.

Landwalk

Landwalk is the name for a group of keyword abilities that includes plainswalk, islandwalk, swampwalk, mountainwalk, and forestwalk, as well as some more unusual abilities. A creature with landwalk is unblockable if the defending player controls at least one land of the specified type.

Lifelink

Whenever a permanent with lifelink deals damage, its controller gains that much life.

Protection

A protection ability always lists what it's giving protection from. It might be protection from red, for example, or protection from Goblins. Protection does several different things for a creature that has it:

- All damage those kinds of sources would deal to the creature is prevented.
- The creature can't be enchanted by those kinds of Auras or equipped by those kinds of Equipment.
- The creature can't be blocked by those kinds of creatures.
- The creature can't be targeted by those kinds of spells or by abilities from those kinds of cards.

Players or other permanents can also have protection. In those cases, apply as many of the above aspects of protection to that player or permanent as you can.

Reach

A creature with reach can block a creature with flying.

Shroud

A permanent with shroud can't be the target of spells or abilities—not even your own. Players can also have shroud.

Trample

If an attacking creature with trample becomes blocked, and at least enough of its combat damage is assigned to the creatures blocking it to destroy all those creatures, then any leftover damage can be assigned to the defending player.

Vigilance

When a creature with vigilance attacks, it doesn't become tapped.

Questions?

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