

Deck Evolution Planner

FROM IDEA TO INTENT

A guided space for building, testing and refining your own path.

DREAM • BUILD • TEST • EVOLVE

Flow Index

Build forward. Diagnose backward.

BUILD PATH

I **I WANT THIS**
Identity → boundaries → lock

II **I CAN BUILD THIS**
Engine → resources → interaction → feasibility

III **I WILL BUILD THIS**
Commit → scrutiny → allocation → opening sequence

IV **THIS CAN WIN**
Conversion → evidence → diagnosis

DIAGNOSE PATH

1-III	Identity drift / theme disappeared	2-I	Engine package is too thin
2-II	Resources, fixing or empty-hand stall	2-III	Cannot answer, protect or recover
2-IV	Collection or budget blocks the build	3-II	Too many uncertain choices
3-IV	Opening hands do not function	4-I	Engine works but cannot close
4-II	Unsure whether the problem is real	4-III	Recurring problem needs a controlled change

NEXT THOUGHT ***Start with the idea. What am I actually trying to build?*** Go to 1-I

1-I

Deck Identity

CHAPTER 1 - I WANT THIS

Name the idea before you solve it.

The one-sentence idea

I want this deck to...

What defines it?

- [ ] Leader / focal card
- [ ] Creature type / faction / theme
- [ ] Mechanic or engine idea
- [ ] Story / aesthetic
- [ ] Challenge / restriction
- [ ] Something else

How should it feel?

- [ ] Fast / explosive
- [ ] Methodical
- [ ] Resilient
- [ ] Reactive
- [ ] Political
- [ ] Value-driven
- [ ] Strange / expressive

When this deck is working, I want...

NEXT THOUGHT *I know the idea. What must survive optimisation?* Go to 1-II

1-II

Protect the Dream

CHAPTER 1 - I WANT THIS

Set the boundaries that keep the deck recognisably yours.

Non-negotiables

Cards, mechanics, flavour or play experiences I refuse to optimise away.

Things I do not want

Strategies, staples, price points or play patterns that would make this stop feeling like my deck.

Build constraints

- [ ] Collection-first
- [ ] Budget-first
- [ ] Format / ruleset
- [ ] Single-copy allocation
- [ ] Personal restriction

Budget ceiling

Set a ceiling, not a target to spend.

NEXT THOUGHT *The boundaries are clear. Can I state what this deck is now?* Go to 1-III

1-III

Identity Lock

CHAPTER 1 - I WANT THIS

This is a gate, not a formality.

This deck is now...

Current identity check

- [ ] This describes the deck as it exists now.
- [ ] I am not forcing it back toward an older version.
- [ ] The primary plan is clear.
- [ ] The secondary package does not contradict it.

Card / idea filter

- [ ] Fits the identity.
- [ ] Performs a useful job.
- [ ] Supports an important piece.
- [ ] Affordable / already owned.
- [ ] A flavour trade-off is deliberate.

Gate

- [ ] LOCKED - I can explain what belongs and what does not.
- [ ] NOT LOCKED - return to 1-I / 1-II before building.

NEXT THOUGHT ***I know what it is. What packages make it function?*** Go to 2-I

2-I

Archetype & Engine Needs

CHAPTER 2 - I CAN BUILD THIS

Break the idea into the packages that actually make it happen.

Core packages

Primary engine _____

Secondary package _____

Fuel / enablers _____

Payoffs _____

Where must key pieces be?

- ☐ Hand
- ☐ Library
- ☐ Graveyard
- ☐ Battlefield
- ☐ Leader / command zone
- ☐ Other

PACKAGE DENSITY

Package	Target	Current	Gap	Status

STATUS: Enough / Thin / Missing / Intentionally Light

MULTI-ROLE RULE: one physical card occupies one slot, but it may cover more than one functional job. Count deck slots once; count functional coverage wherever it genuinely applies.

NEXT THOUGHT *I know the machinery. Can I feed it consistently?* Go to 2-II

2-II

Resources & Card Flow

CHAPTER 2 - I CAN BUILD THIS

Can I pay for the plan and keep seeing useful cards?

Starting reference - adjust to your format and strategy

For a 100-card multiplayer singleton deck, a useful starting point is roughly 36-38 core resources, 8-12 acceleration pieces, and 8-12 sources of card access. These are prompts, not quotas.

QUANTITY AND QUALITY

Function	Reference	Target	Current	Gap	Status
Core resources					
Acceleration					
Card access					
Curve support					

Resource quality

- [ ] Correct colours / resource types.
- [ ] Fixing is reliable enough.
- [ ] Early costs are actually payable.
- [ ] Top end is supported by the curve.
- [ ] Acceleration arrives early enough.

How do I keep cards flowing?

- [ ] Draw
- [ ] Selection / filtering
- [ ] Recursion
- [ ] Leader / focal-card access
- [ ] Repeatable engine
- [ ] Other

NEXT THOUGHT *I can pay and keep playing. Can I answer an opponent?* Go to 2-III

2-III

Interaction & Resilience

CHAPTER 2 - I CAN BUILD THIS

A multiplayer deck must survive contact with other plans.

Starting reference - function before card type

A rough interaction starting band may be 8-12 pieces, with around 2-4 broad answers in many multiplayer builds. Count what the card actually does - not whether it is an instant, creature, artifact or enchantment.

Function	Target	Current	Gap	Status
Answer one threat				
Answer multiple threats				
Proactive disruption / prevention				
Protect key pieces				
Recover / rebuild				
Flexible answer				

Table-contact check

- [ ] I can stop something that threatens my plan.
- [ ] I can respond when more than one permanent / player matters.
- [ ] I can protect the piece my deck depends on.
- [ ] I can rebuild if the board is disrupted.
- [ ] At least some answers are flexible rather than narrow.

NEXT THOUGHT ***The structure can survive a table. Is it actually feasible for me?*** Go to 2-IV

2-IV

Feasibility Gate

CHAPTER 2 - I CAN BUILD THIS

Turn the structural check into a real build decision.

FUNCTIONAL STATUS

Area	Status	Blocker ref	Next fix
Engine package			
Resources / card flow			
Interaction / resilience			
Collection			
Budget			

Collection reality

- [ ] Owned
- [ ] Allocated elsewhere
- [ ] Need to buy
- [ ] Affordable alternative exists
- [ ] Upgrade can wait

Outcome

- [ ] Build now
- [ ] Build with substitutions
- [ ] Needs purchases
- [ ] Rework concept
- [ ] Park for later

Main blocker / reference

NEXT THOUGHT ***The idea is feasible. What exact version am I committing to?*** Go to 3-I

3-I

Commit to a Version

CHAPTER 3 - I WILL BUILD THIS

Stop browsing. Lock the version you are actually making.

Version identity

Version _____ **Date** _____

Name / short note _____

Committed direction

Chosen engine _____

Support package _____

Provisional finish _____

Accepted weakness _____

Carry-forward targets

Role	T	C	Gap

Build rule

- [ ] Every slot has a reason.
- [ ] Theme cards may stay when the trade-off is deliberate.
- [ ] Known weaknesses are visible, not hidden.
- [ ] Target / Current / Gap reflects the version I am actually building.
- [ ] I am not buying upgrades before a real problem exists.

NEXT THOUGHT ***The version is locked. Which choices still deserve scrutiny?*** Go to 3-II

3-II

Scrutiny Slots

CHAPTER 3 - I WILL BUILD THIS

Track uncertain choices without turning this into a second deck list.

Use this only for cards or ideas that are identity-sensitive, expensive, awkward, multi-role, or still under test.

Card / idea	Why I want it	Job(s)	Keep / Watch / Cut

What would make me change my mind?

NEXT THOUGHT *The uncertain choices are visible. What do I already own, allocate or need?* Go to 3-III

3-III

Allocate & Spend Deliberately

CHAPTER 3 - I WILL BUILD THIS

Solve the slot before spending money on the slot.

O = Owned A = Allocated elsewhere B = Buy ALT = Alternative U = Upgrade later

Need	O / A	Buy	Alternative	Upgrade later

Committed spend

_____

Budget remaining

_____

One purchase I can postpone until testing proves I need it

NEXT THOUGHT *The build is committed. What does a functioning start look like?* Go to 3-IV

3-IV

Opening Hand & Sequence

CHAPTER 3 - I WILL BUILD THIS

Know what a functioning start looks like before judging the deck.

Opening-hand intent

- ☐ Minimum resources are present.
- ☐ Resource types / colours work.
- ☐ I have an early enabler or useful setup piece.
- ☐ The hand is not overloaded with finishers or dead cards.

I KEEP WHEN...

I MULLIGAN WHEN...

Sequencing intent

Priority 1 _____

Priority 2 _____

Priority 3 _____

Do not deploy too early _____

Engine is online when _____

EXPECTED ENGINE WINDOW

☐ Early ☐ Mid ☐ Late Turn: _____

Ready-to-build gate

- ☐ Core engine and support packages are represented.
- ☐ Known functional gaps are solved or deliberate.
- ☐ Collection conflicts and spending decisions are resolved.
- ☐ The build still resembles the original dream.

NEXT THOUGHT *The deck can start. How does operation become a finish?* Go to 4-I

4-I

Conversion Map

CHAPTER 4 - THIS CAN WIN

Doing the thing is not enough; show how it becomes a finish.

CORE CONVERSION

ENGINE
What starts?

→

ADVANTAGE
What accumulates?

→

LEVERAGE / PRESSURE
Why does it matter?

→

FINISH
How does it end?

Primary route

Backup route

If disrupted, the deck can...

Likely choke point

NEXT THOUGHT *The finish is visible. What actually happens in a game?* Go to 4-II

4-II

Playtest Evidence

CHAPTER 4 - THIS CAN WIN

Record the symptom before trying to fix it.

After a game

- [ ] The deck started.
- [ ] Resources worked.
- [ ] Cards kept flowing.
- [ ] I could interact.
- [ ] I could protect / recover.
- [ ] The finish became realistic.
- [ ] The deck still felt like itself.

What stopped me?

- [ ] Resources
- [ ] Fixing / resource type
- [ ] Cards / access
- [ ] Engine
- [ ] Interaction
- [ ] Protection / recovery
- [ ] Sequencing
- [ ] Finish
- [ ] Opponent pressure
- [ ] Unclear

EVIDENCE NOTE

Observation	OBS / SUS / UNK	Next test

NEXT THOUGHT *I have an observation. Is the problem real, and where should I return?* Go to 4-III

4-III

Diagnose, Change & Checkpoint

CHAPTER 4 - THIS CAN WIN

Change one thing on purpose and preserve the lesson.

Change hypothesis

Problem observed _____

Recurring pattern or one-off? _____

Proposed change / swap _____

Expected improvement _____

What would make me revert? _____

Before changing

- ☐ Preserves identity
- ☐ Solves a real job
- ☐ Affordable / available
- ☐ Worth testing now

After testing

- ☐ Worked - keep
- ☐ Mixed - tune
- ☐ Failed - revert
- ☐ Need more games

Checkpoint and route-back

Return to section _____

☐ KEEP ☐ TUNE ☐ REBUILD ☐ FINISHED FOR NOW

NEXT THOUGHT ***Retest the relevant section, then return to evidence.*** Go to 4-II

Index / Language Library

Use the same references while building, troubleshooting and revisiting your deck.

Roman reference map

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2-II	Resources & Card Flow
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4-III	Diagnose & Change

Language library

Engine
The system that repeatedly creates value.

Fuel
What feeds or enables the engine.

Payoff
What rewards the engine activity.

Leverage
How advantage begins constraining the table.

Finisher
How the deck actually closes.

Functional source
A card that performs a required job.

Overlap
One slot covering multiple functional jobs.

Gate
A decision that must be resolved before continuing.

Route-back
The section to revisit after diagnosing a problem.

Shorthand and troubleshooting

O Owned **A Allocated elsewhere** **B Buy** **ALT Alternative** **U Upgrade later**

E Enough **T Thin** **M Missing** **IL Intentionally Light**

OBS Observed **SUS Suspected** **UNK Unknown** **TEST Next test**

Identity drift → 1-III Engine thin → 2-I Resources/cards → 2-II Interaction/recovery → 2-III

Opening/sequence → 3-IV Cannot finish → 4-I Is it real? → 4-II Controlled change → 4-III

Notes

Whatever did not fit the boxes still belongs in the process.

DECK / PROJECT

DATE

Use this page for custom observations, reminders, remedial changes or anything worth carrying forward.