

# METABALOIDS TRADING CARD GAME - Core Tactical Multiplayer Mode

Core Tactical Mode is the full battlefield format featuring reserve strategy, column control, and structured multiplayer combat.

## INTRODUCTION

Chaos stirs as the Metabaloids' metabolisms spiral out of control! With tensions rising and every creature fighting for survival, it's your chance to command the wild. Outthink, outfight, and outlast your opponents — do you have the metabolism to win?

## WINNING THE GAME:

**Game length & Reshuffle:** When a player's draw pile is empty, reshuffle that player's discard pile and continue play. If playing without reshuffling (short game), the game ends when a player cannot draw a card. Winner is determined, using the rules below.

- **2-Player:** The player who cannot draw a card during the draw phase loses.
- **Multiplayer (3+):** When any player cannot draw during the draw phase, the game ends. The player with the fewest cards in their Lost pile wins. Ties are broken by fewer cards in play.

## Elimination Variant (Optional):

Players who cannot draw are eliminated. Continue play until one player remains.

## KEYWORD TERMS:

**Promo Identifier:** Marks special event cards.

**Rarity/Cost:** Top left sphere & color; Green = Common, Blue = Uncommon, Red = Rare, Purple = Super Rare. Shows card cost, which is used to play cards and added during battle when drawing a card.

**Attack:** The value used to determine damage during battle.

**Metabaloids:** Cards from your hand, excluding the card being played, are discarded to pay card costs.

**Defense:** The value added to your total to reduce incoming damage during battle.

**Card Name:** Max 4 copies per deck. Rarity can be mixed into a deck.

**Scientific Name / Type:** Identifies what kind of card it is.

For creatures, it shows biological classification (e.g., Arachnid, Insect). Other cards show their card type (e.g., Event, Terrain) and descriptors.

**Abilities:** Effects on cards that can be activated by paying their cost.

**Collector Info:** Shows promo (if any), Promo Identifier, Set, Rarity and Card number, for instance, 1 C 1, check website for listings.



## SPECIAL RULES / GAME ZONES:

**Play Area:** Active cards in columns (max 3x3). If none remain at turn's end, lose 2 cards from draw pile.

**Column Size:** Adjust to have max 3 x 3 grid. No columns can be deeper than the columns width. If this occurs for any reason, immediately move cards to restore a legal grid.

**Reserve Area:** Cards played here with Metabaloids are safe until deployed. After cards are placed in reserve you can't move them until the deploy phase. After drawing, all cards in reserve must be deployed.

**Draw Pile:** The deck you draw from. Players may not look at cards in their draw pile unless a card ability allows it.

**Discard/Used Pile:** Where discarded or paid/used cards go. Cards here must remain face up and cannot be reordered or rearranged. Players may look through this pile, but may only take or move cards when a card ability allows it.

**Voluntary Discard:** On your turn, after the Draw Phase you may discard a card from your hand to the Discard pile, only if you drew a card during the Draw Phase.

**Lost Pile:** Where defeated/lost cards go. Cards here must remain face up and cannot be searched, reordered, or rearranged unless a card ability allows it.

**Unfinished Actions:** If an ability you activate does not fully resolve, place 1 card from your draw pile into the Lost Pile.

**Event Cards:** Special cards placed separately; after resolving, place the card in the discard pile unless stated otherwise.

**Damage Payment:** When you must pay damage (from the defense icon), you may use your own cards from hand, draw pile, discard pile, play area, and reserve, unless stated otherwise.

## GAME SETUP

**Determine First player:** Each player cuts and reveals the Cost number. Highest starts (ties repeat).

**Draw Starting Hand:** Shuffle your deck, draw 7 cards into your hand. This is your starting hand



Playmats not included (sold separately)

**Initial Deployment:** Now each player takes turns placing a card in the play area for free, up to 7 total cost points. Once 7 points are reached, they are done placing cards. One or more players could be done before turn order is done. Once you return to the starting player, that player takes his normal turn. See game play overview mechanics.

### TURN STRUCTURE

- |                        |                                |                              |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Draw Phase          | 2. Use Abilities (at any time) | 3. Move Cards                |
| 4. Deploy From Reserve | 5. Attack Phase                | 6. Restock Reserve/ End Turn |

### GAME PLAY OVERVIEW / MECHANICS

**Draw Phase:** Draw until you have 7 cards in hand (no draw if 7+). After drawing, you may discard a card, but you do not draw a replacement. No discarding a card, if you were unable to draw in your draw phase.

**Use Abilities:** Abilities can be used at any time during any player's turn and can only be used from the play area, unless otherwise noted. Abilities on a card refer to that card unless the text states otherwise. Card text overrides the rules when a conflict occurs. Players must announce when activating an ability. Each card's ability may be used once per card during each player's turn, including your own and opponents' turns, as long as you can pay its cost and perform the action. Some abilities are exceptions to the play area rule or activate specifically during attacks. Player A's card ability must fully resolve before Player A activates other card abilities. If multiple players wish to activate abilities at the same time, resolve them starting with the next player in turn order. If abilities are played in response to one another, resolve them in reverse order of activation. Some cards may stop actions, but only before the action fully resolves. Example: During drawing, but before all cards are drawn. During an attack, but before the bonus card is drawn.

**Move Cards:** You may move cards from one column to another column. However, it will cost you 1 Metabaloid point to move one card and must be paid from your hand.

**Deploy From Reserve into Play Area:** All reserve cards must be deployed into columns in play area, obeying the column size rule. Cards remain in play area unless, moved by another card's effect. If the play area is full (3x3 grid), any undeployed reserve cards are sent to the lost pile. If you have no cards in the play area at the end of your turn, lose 2 cards from your draw pile to the lost pile. When the last reserve card is deployed, the deploy action ends.

**Attack Phase:** In multiplayer games, you may initiate attacks against multiple opponents each turn. Each attack must use a different one of your cards in that card's column. You may not attack the same opponent more than once per turn. Pay one Metabaloid to initiate each battle; that card goes to your discard pile. You must initiate at least one attack per turn or lose 1 card from your draw pile to the lost pile. If you have no cards in play that are able to initiate an attack, lose 2 cards from your draw pile instead.

- Attacker: choose column and card, then turns the card sideways, this notes the attacking card.
- Attacker: picks the defenders column and the card he is attacking and then turns that card sideways.
- Both players draw a card. Add its Cost value to the attack or defense. After combat resolution, discard the drawn card.
  - Attacker adds, Attack numbers from each card in their column, plus card bonuses and the drawn card cost value.
  - Defender adds, Defense numbers from each card in their column, plus card bonuses and the drawn card cost value.
- Results: The higher total wins. In the case of a tie, both players lose the drawn card to the lost pile. The losing side calculates losses as follows.
  - If damage is less than attacked card's defense, that card still takes damage and is sent to the lost pile. Even if it is one point of damage, or the damage is negated, the creature's metabolism surges, burning off the remaining points.
  - If the damage exceeds the card's defense, the attacked card absorbs damage up to its defense and is always lost, then pay the difference using Damage Payment (see Special Rules). The additional points needed to pay come from the number on the defense icon.
  - If paying from the discard pile you must take the top card and use the defense number. If the defense number is zero or defense icon doesn't exist, that card is still lost at zero points and you move to the next card.
  - Card losses may also be paid from cards in player's hand, calculated based on card's defense.
  - If you decide to take the points from the draw pile, then each card on the draw pile is considered only one point as you can't look at the cards in your draw pile. If a card takes one point of damage it is lost.
  - If a card in the attacked column is lost due to damage, turn all cards in that column sideways. These cards are safe from attacks until reinforcements are deployed to that column. Cards in safety can't use abilities or initiate attacks.

**Restock Reserve Area:** Restock cards into your reserve area if you want to. Pay cost using Metabaloid points from hand. Discard cards from your hand to pay cost. Excess points are lost. If a card costs less than the amount of Metabaloids you have, you don't save the difference, the amount in excess is lost.

### DECK BUILDING

**Deck Size:** A starter deck is 45 cards. Build using any combination of cards up to 125 cost points and no more than 45 cards, with a max of 4 copies per card name. Quick start option: all players use the standard 45 card starter deck. Promo cards are extra and may be swapped in, but decks must stay at no more than 45 cards and a max of 125 cost points.

**Note:** The rules included in this deck are current at the time of printing. For updates and clarifications, visit [Metabaloids.com](https://www.metabaloids.com). The online rules supersede the printed rules.

**More Information:** Visit [TWHGames.com](https://www.twhgames.com) (publisher) or [Metabaloids.com](https://www.metabaloids.com) (official site).