

# How To Run a Prerelease

Prereleases are a lot of fun, where everyone gets to play with the new cards for the first time. This document will help you prepare to run a prerelease.

## Preparation

Read yourself up on the Release Notes that are posted on [www.dailymtg.com](http://www.dailymtg.com) approximately one week before the prerelease. Here you will get information about all the new keywords and mechanics of the set, as well as card-specific notes for most of the individual cards. Pay attention to 2HG cards if you will be running a 2HG event.

If anything is unclear, reach out to other judges on JudgeApps to discuss it.

Make sure that the Tournament Organizer has enough basic lands for each basic land type to lend out to the players in the tournament.

## Pre-tournament instructions

First, check how the prerelease product is distributed. Are there special Guildpacks or seeded packs? Do you need to take special considerations when distributing the products?

You should make an announcement including number of players, number of rounds, time for each round and other relevant information. Please see the “How to make Head Judge Announcements” for more details.

Briefly go through how to build a deck from the 6 boosters that players will open. See “Construction Phase” below.

If any player is uncertain about Sealed Deck procedures and construction, now is the time to ask them if they have any questions.

## Prize Structure and Number of Rounds

The most common prerelease structure is 4 or 5 rounds, with prizes based on record. Top 8s are not encouraged, but occasionally the player base insists.

If you give prizes based on record, encourage the TO to have the same total pack payout for 4-0/3-1 as for 3-0-1/3-0-1. This prize structure removes the incentive for bribery.

Also, occasionally players will have a record that would get prizes, but they want to leave early. Please ask the TO what their policy is in this regard

## Deck Construction

The player's must now construct their decks. Ideally, the players should have no contact with any cards except their Sealed Deck and basic lands provided by the judge.

Using the cards opened, plus any basic lands provided by the judge, the players should now construct a 40-card minimum deck. All remaining cards become their sideboard. Unlike constructed play, Sealed Deck rules allow for any number of a single card to be used in a deck, and not limited to 4 of a kind.

Per the MTR, the build period for a Pre-Release is 45 minutes (75 minutes for 2HG). You may increase this time if needed. Also, if everyone is done construction, you can start before the build period would normally end.

It is rare, but not unheard of for a Tournament organizer to require pool registration. When this occurs, it is typically in response to concerns over cheating. If you have to do this, please provide decklist and an additional 20 minutes for pool registration.

## The Tournament

Tournament rounds progress very similar to other tournaments. Pre-releases do have continuous construction. This means decks can change between games, and do not have an 'original configuration' to return to. Players may talk to others about how best to build their decks. At other tournaments this is not allowed, but at Pre-releases this is fine.

## The Final Round

Please be sure to remind your players of the rules regarding bribery and determining the winner through random means.

Additionally, towards the end of the round, players will want to collect their prizes. If you did prizes based on record, you can distribute these prizes before other matches are complete.