Ashes Beginner Tips - How to Avoid Autolosing

By Timothy Cathcart

Losing by Default

Fairly often I see new players make the same mistakes over and over again in Ashes Reborn PvP and sometimes I even make these mistakes myself when I lose focus while deckbuilding or playing. Of course, this is fine! Making mistakes is part of the fun of playing any game and its important to have a healthy relationship with losing.

However, these mistakes can often almost instantly lose you the game since Ashes can be pretty brutal and low variance and every small advantage matters. If you are trying to improve your decision making and tweak your gameplay, its almost pointless to focus on the small stuff until you really get the big stuff down. Here is a few tips to avoid plays that will pretty quickly lose you the game, regardless of anything else you do!

Spend All Ten of Your Dice in Round 1!

Sometimes after a game I will discuss what went wrong with my opponent. Sometimes it was all about a big Phoenixborn Guard at the wrong time, or an attack that should have been against a different unit. But none of that will really matter if your opponent is spending all 10 of their dice and you are not!



I've been the victim of this mistake as well. I've built a new deck and I chosen my First Five. Rats! The total costs of the cards in my hand only adds up to 9 dice! Big oof. At that point there are some clever ways out, namely spending your extra dice on dice powers. Nature dice power sides are really the exception here since its not that terrible to spend 1 dice for 1 direct damage, but you're still in a bit of hole to climb out of. Really you should just avoid this problem in the first place by making sure your planned First Five adds up to ten dice.

Spend All Ten of Your Dice in Round 2+!

Just like in round 1, if your opponent spends all of their dice on great cards in round 2 and you spend fewer, chances are you will lose! Now this isn't quite as catastrophic as round 1 so you might still be able to pull off the win if you are already in an advantageous position, but you really want to avoid this as much as possible.

Making sure you can spend 10 dice in round 2 and onwards in a bit trickier than in round 1 since you don't know what cards you'll draw. Count up the summon costs of whatever spellboard cards you have in your first five and possibly your PB ability cost. The rest will **have** to come from costs of cards in hand. This is where deckbuilding is super important, you should mentally set aside dice for your spellboard when choosing cards not in your First Five.

Here is an example deck dice spread:





iv









And Aradel's Ability also costs 1 nature dice.



In round 1 the dice costs of every card adds up to 10. Excellent!

Now, in round 2 if you summon every single unit and activate rejuvenate and activate the shade prowler it will cost a total of 9 dice. This is actually quite unusual and a very expensive spellboard, so with a hand of 5 cards it will be easy to spend that extra 1 dice! However its still worth noting **which** dice will be available! It wont be the illusion dice since that will be spent on the **Shade Prowler**. It also wont be the time dice, since that will be spent on the **Cloudburst Gryphon**. With 9 dice spent on this spellboard, only a **Nature** or **Divine** dice will be left! So a safe deckbuilding strategy would be to fill this deck with 1 cost nature and divine cards!

Things will be more difficult with a more common, cheaper spellboard. With say only 5 dice to spend on summons each round you'd better make sure the cards in your deck can easily be played using the 5 remaining dice! If you end up not being able to spend all 10 dice in round 2+ then you'll probably lose, and will need to go back to deckbuilding!

Of course, you wont want to summon everything all the time every round, you might want to forgo summoning something to play more cards from hand...

Don't Spend the Wrong Dice on Basics!

A classic mistake that even I sometimes still make that can instantly lose me the game is being unable to spend my last dice on a card I wanted to, because I forgot that I needed to keep back a dice to pay for it! If you have lots of basic costs then you can think you have a lot of wiggle room to spend dice in different combinations, but then forget you need every single dice of a colour **as** its colour.

Here is an example:









These are the cards available to you in round 2 and your remaining unspent dice are:



What are your options here really? If you summon the **Seafoam Snapper** and play the **Farewell** for 1 dice each you will be unable to pay the summon costs of both **False Demon** (2) and **Shadow Hound** (3). That would leave you with a dice unspent, terrible!

So if all the illusion dice here are required for the **Shadow Hound** and the **False Demon**, then you face a decision, **Farewell** or **Seafoam Snapper**. In this way, in Ashes you sometimes have to choose what you are going to play, long in advance before you play it! Be careful and mentally (or even physically) set aside dice that you will need in the future for paying costs.

Don't Pass When You Have Spent Fewer Dice!

So we've established that spending dice is important, and spending fewer dice than your opponent is a recipe for disaster!

A classic mistake I see is the incorrect pass. This one can be devastating and immediately lose you the game! If you pass and your opponent passes the round will end early, before each player has spent all of their dice. If you have spend more dice than your opponent, you've probably got more value that round! And, if you've spent fewer dice, you might be in real trouble! Just because you think your next move might not work out too well, don't lose sight of the round's natural end! A incorrect pass is something even the best players can fall foul to. "That was probably a mistake" is a classic message to see after a double pass ends the round early.

Learn the Rules First and the Exceptions Later

If you are an experienced player you will possibly disagree with some of these tips, on principle that there are exceptions to these rules! In round 1 its impossible to justify spending only 9 dice when your opponent has spent 10, but you might plan to spend that dice on something risky like a card you draw or a backup dice power. In round 2 you might have a better play that involves spending 1 dice instead of 2 and leaving 1 unspent, but it would have to be a **really** good play to convince me.

Once you get better at the game, passing early is also going to be something a bit more subtle than simply counting dice spent. Depending on your opponent's fast agro gameplan, passing with fewer dice spent might be the better play if it slows down the game which suits you better in that moment,

Improving Your Ashes Play

Ashes can be a brutally difficult game with a high skill ceiling, but you might be surprised how much more of an even playing field it is when you are no longer handicapped by these game losing mistakes. Once you are ensuring you spend all 10 dice every round and aren't making mistakes with which dice you spend, you can really start focusing on more subtle ways of improving your gameplay and deckbuilding!

Revision #2
Created 2025-02-11 16:50:53 UTC by Ninja Dance Mat
Updated 2025-03-22 10:54:29 UTC by Ninja Dance Mat