

# Common Confusion

Plaid Hat Games maintains a FAQ for Ashes Reborn, which can be found [here](#). Other sources of confusion are listed below.

## Combat (Master set rules, page 10)

### "Blocking" vs "Guarding"

Blocking is when one or more of your units intercept opposing unit(s) attacking your Phoenixborn.

Guarding is when either your Phoenixborn or a unit with the ability **Unit Guard** is put in front of an opposing unit attacking one of your units. Using your Phoenixborn to guard is usually referred to as "PB Guard" and can only be done once per round. When playing with physical cards, using the Phoenixborn Guard is represented by turning your PB sideways.

A unit that blocks or guards must counter. See the section "When can you choose to not counter with a unit?" below for when you can choose for a unit to not counter.

In PvE, unexhausted aspects with the **Defender** ability will block for the Chimera, or guard for other aspects that do not have the Defender ability. Like any other unit that blocks or guards, they will counter.

### "In battle" and Tame

The definition of "Battle" on page 22 of the Master set rules provides more clarity on what a battle is: "An attacker is in battle with the unit or Phoenixborn it is dealing attack damage to." This means that even if there are 2 attackers and 2 blockers, each attacker and each blocker is only in battle with 1 other unit, and effects that are limited to "units in battle with this unit" only affect the battle the unit with that ability is in.

Example: A [Hammer Knight](#) and [Iron Worker](#) attack the opposing Phoenixborn. The player of the targeted Phoenixborn blocks the Hammer Knight with a [Beast Tamer](#) and the Iron Worker with a [Mindfog Owl](#). The Beast Tamer's **Tame 1** ability only affects the Hammer Knight, because neither the Iron Worker nor the Mindfog Owl are in battle with the Beast Tamer.

Based on the ruling for [Bastion Badger](#), units are "in battle" as soon as they are declared as attackers. As such, if Tame reduces a [Shade Prowler](#)'s attack below the threshold needed to trigger **Predator 3**, it will not trigger. This can happen if the Prowler attacks a Beast Tamer or an [Essence Druid](#) directly.

## When do units exhaust as part of combat resolution?

For attackers, exhaustion tokens are placed after resolving their battle, if their wounds do not exceed their life.

For blockers and unit guards, exhaustion tokens are placed as a result of **countering** an attack. The **Alert** ability (e.g. [Hammer Knight](#)) prevents exhaustion being placed as a result of countering. A guarding Phoenixborn does not get an exhaustion token; they are turned sideways to indicate that they have guarded this round.

It is possible due to the resolution of effects and abilities that a defender does not exhaust if the attacking unit they are blocking is removed from combat before countering occurs. One example is [Crystal Archer](#)'s **Preemptive Shot 1** which can destroy a 1-life attacker when the Archer is declared as a blocker.

## When can you choose to not counter with a unit?

If an unexhausted unit you control is directly attacked, and you do not or cannot guard it, you may choose to not have that unit counter (and thus, it won't exhaust). If the unit is already exhausted, it cannot choose to counter.

## Targeting

### When does a card or ability "target?"

Any card that says "target (something)" targets a card. Examples include "target unit," "target Phoenixborn," and, in the case of Whiplash (from the Corpse of Viros expansion), "target leftmost unit." Cards that have an effect that do not say "target," do not target (e.g. [Nature's Wrath](#)). Cards that target may be stopped by the appropriate card that cancels the effect ([Golden Veil](#) for units, [Vanish](#) for Phoenixborn or players).

Alterations target when they are attached, as per definition in the Master set rules, page 22.

### The Concealed ability

The Concealed ability (present on [Stormwind Sniper](#), [Shadow Hound](#), and Lurk) is only active while the unit has no exhaustion tokens on it, and does not prevent abilities and effects that do not target. Cards like [Mist Typhoon](#) will still affect these units even when they have no exhaustion tokens. [Chaos Gravity](#) is trickier; it cannot place an exhaustion token onto these units as a part of the first effect, but it can move an exhaustion token to these units, because it does not target during that portion of the card ability.

Once the unit with Concealed is exhausted, it may be targeted as any other unit, as the exhaustion token renders their abilities blank.

## Area of Effect (AOE) Selection and Resolution (Master set rules, page 17)

Some abilities and spells are card "area of effect" spells, because they do not target (e.g. [Mist Typhoon](#)). When these spells and abilities resolve, only the cards currently in play may be affected. In some cases, the affected cards may change during the resolution process, however, their initial selection does not get undone; they are still affected by the ability or spell. These spells and abilities affect units with **Concealed** (such as [Stormwind Sniper](#) or The Corpse of Viros's Lurk aspect), as **Concealed** only protects from targeted spells and abilities.

Example of resolution: [Survival of the Fittest](#) is played, and one player controls a [Gilder](#) and a [Blood Archer](#), neither with any tokens. If the player who played Survival selects the Gilder first, and places the status token from the Gilder's **Inheritance 1** ability onto the Blood Archer, the Blood Archer is still destroyed as a part of the resolution of Survival of the Fittest, as it did not have a token when it was selected as an affected unit.

## Turn Structure

### How/when fatigue works (Master set rules, page 6)

Fatigue damage occurs during the Prepare Phase (start of a round) when you have to draw until you have at least 5 cards in hand. For every card below 5 you are unable to draw, you take 1 damage on your Phoenixborn; this is referred to as fatigue damage. For example, if you have 3 cards in hand, and only 1 card left in your draw pile, you will take 1 fatigue damage that round. If you already have, or draw up to, at least 5 cards during the Prepare Phase, you will not take fatigue damage.

There are other cards that can punish having an empty draw pile but these are not fatigue damage, and the damage effect is stated on the card. For an example of this, see [Abundance](#).

### "End of the round" (Master set rules, page 13)

Abilities and effects that trigger "at the end of the round," like **Cursed 1** on [Blood Puppet](#), happen after the Recovery phase. These effects are outside of the Player Turns phase, which means Reaction cards and abilities *cannot* be played during this phase. However, abilities that trigger off of effects caused by any end of round abilities will still trigger.

Example: At the end of the round, a player using [Jessa Na Ni](#) has a [Chant of Revenge](#) and a [Blood Archer](#) with [Fade Away](#) attached. After the recovery phase, Fade Away triggers, destroying the Blood Archer and removing it from the game. Jessa cannot use **Screams of the Departed**

because the ability states "Once per turn," and it is not during a turn. Chant of Revenge, however, gets a status token.

## Reactions

You can only play reactions during the Player Turns phase; this means that the Prepare and Recovery phases do not allow for reactions or reaction abilities (blue text boxes, such as the one on [Swift Messenger](#)). As such, you are not allowed to use [Summon Sleeping Widows](#) or [Final Cry](#) as a reaction to a unit you control being destroyed at the end of the round due to an effect like [Fade Away](#) or the **Fade** ability.

There is a difference between Reaction spells and Reaction abilities, but only for cards that explicitly differentiate between them ([Law of Sight](#)). However, there is no difference between them in terms of Reactions per turn limit; if a player plays a Reaction ability in a turn, they are not allowed to play a Reaction spell later that same turn, or vice versa.

It is possible to play a Reaction to a Reaction. If a unit you control is destroyed by damage, and you respond with Summon Sleeping Widows, your opponent may then respond with [Ice Trap](#) to destroy one of the Sleeping Widows, provided they have not already played a Reaction this turn.

## Specific cards

### Void Pulse and Return to Soil

Older versions of these cards read "if that destroys the unit, after it is destroyed" clause that begins a sentence. Under the rules in the rulebook, this meant there were two contradictory timing windows in which the cards' second abilities would trigger: either after the unit is destroyed (a specific step in the destruction process), or, after the unit had been placed in the discard or conjuration piles (abilities are separated by periods). The prior ruling was that these effects took place in the destruction process, preventing the Return to Soil player from removing the destroyed unit (it hadn't yet hit the discard pile), or allowing the Void Pulse player to attempt to prevent Reactions based on destruction triggers (like [Summon Sleeping Widows](#) or [Final Cry](#)).

These cards' language has been cleared up to remove the ambiguity: the second and subsequent abilities happen after the unit has been placed in either the discard pile or the conjuration pile.

### Rowan Umberend

[Rowan](#)'s Exhume ability allows you to replay an ally, which will trigger both "when this unit comes into play" and "when this unit is destroyed" abilities, such as both the abilities on [Knowledge Seeker](#).

## Miscellaneous

## Printed vs Resolved Card Values and "X"

For "printed" values, X is X and no other value. It is not zero, nor is it the value of X at the time of resolution. Example: [Rile The Meek](#) will never get to deal a damage from a [Wishing Wing](#), even if it has zero status tokens on it.

For non-printed values, X is its current numeric value as given by its definition (unless looking at magic play cost, which the rules explicitly calls out as zero). Example: [Amplify](#) may be played on a [Wishing Wing](#), if and only if it has zero status tokens on it.

## Using a Die Power from the Exhausted Pool

When a card allows you to choose a dice from your exhausted pool and resolve its dice power, that die does not have to be on its power side; you only have to match the die type.

Examples:

- [Blessing of Lightning](#)
- [Silver Paladin](#)
- [Pride](#)
- [Radiant Light](#)
- [Chimera Charmer](#)
- [Shining Stag Mount](#)
- [Snake Bite](#)
- [Rayward Recruit](#)

[Summon Mind Fog Owl](#) is a little different than the above; it specifically calls out the dice used to pay the cost, so while resolving the power does not care about the side the die is on, the focus ability itself does.

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