EMBER
The Magical Card Game

Overview

Ember is a game for **two** to **five** players where players draw cards to form *sets* which they can then discard to conjure creatures worth **Victory Points** (**VP**). The winner is the player with the highest number of **VP** at the end of the game.

From the Ashes Game Contents

31 x creature cards, 12 x Elemental Dragon cards, 5 x Artifact cards, 7 x Tutor cards (**Wizard** cards sold in **Ember Core Set**).

Draw Deck: Wizard Cards

The **Draw Deck** is a set of **52** cards depicting a silhouette of a magical wizard in one of four elements: Air (white), Earth (green), Fire (red), and Water (blue). Each element is made up of thirteen cards ranked from low (1) to high (13).

The **Draw Deck** also contains three **Archmage** cards which have no number and are purple with gold trim.

Figure 1: Wizard Card

The Pool: Creature Cards

The **Pool** is made up of Creature cards: the mythical monsters each player can **Conjure** during a game of **Ember**. There are 13 groups of creature cards, each arranged in the **Pool** in order of **VP** value from 1 to 13.

Each creature card also contains the following information:

Creature name

Victory Point value

Conjuring Name followed by the number and type of Wizard cards that need to be discarded to **Conjure** this creature

Ability name and unique ability

*Figure 2: Creature card aligned in the **Ready** position.*

Setting Up The Game

1. Place the **Pool** in clear sight of all players sorted in groups according to their **VP** value. *All cards of VP8 form one group while the VP7 creatures make up another.* If you own more than three cards in any one **VP** group - shuffle all the cards in that group and put only *three* in play.

2. Turn the **VP7** to **VP13** groups *face down*; the player taking the first turn will reveal them as the game progresses.

3. Arrange the **Elemental Dragons** in piles according to their matching name, with the **Head** on the bottom, the **Body** in the middle, and the **Tail** on top.

4. Shuffle the **Artifact** cards, randomly deal three, and put them to one side of the **Pool** in clear sight of all players.

5. Shuffle the 52 **Wizard** cards and the 3 **Archmage** cards to create a **Draw Deck.** Place the **Draw Deck** within reach of all players and allow space for a **Charred Deck** (the face-up discard pile) beside it.

6. Dealer deals *five* cards from the **Draw Deck** to each player.

7. Deal one face down **Tutor** card to each player (this is kept secret from the other players until the end of the game).

8. Play starts with the player to the Dealer's left.

Game Length

Deciding how many **VP** you have to gain before you make "the Call" is an important part of **Ember**. You can play a short game (20 **VP**) all the way to an epic game (100 **VP**). Don't expect to see many **Elemental Dragons** unless you play to 60+ **VP**.

Revealing The Pool

At the start of the game, only **VP1** to **VP6** creature cards are face up and available for **Conjuring** in the **Pool**.

At the start of their turn (except for the first), the player going first turns the next face-down group of 3 cards in the **Pool** face up until *all* creature cards are face up in turn 8.

In-Game Terms

- **Advance:** Turn a creature card one (or more) steps toward being **Ready**. Unless specified, an **Advance** is just one step.
- **Burn:** Turn a creature card *face down*. Only an **Archmage** or specific creature ability can **Regenerate** a **Burned** card.
- **Charred Pile:** The (face up) discard pile. When the last card in the **Draw Deck** is taken, shuffle the **Charred Pile** into a new **Draw Deck**.
- **Drain:** To permanently exhaust an **Artifact**. Once **Drained**, it is **Burned** and its basic per-turn power cannot be used.

- **Exhausted / Flip:** A card in one of three orientations that is *not* **Ready** (see **Reviving Creatures** page 2).
- **Lesser Creature:** A *lesser* creature has a VP score *lower* than another creature *(the Raven VP1 is lesser to the Wraith VP2)*.
- **Ready:** a creature that is face up in the **Ready** position.
- **Regenerate:** to turn a **Burned** card face up (and **Ready** it).
- **Regress:** to turn a creature back one or more steps (but can never go beyond the **Exhausted** position).
- **Revive:** to **Advance** a creature to the **Ready** position.

The Game Turn

Each turn has the following steps:

1. **Advance Creatures:** You *may* **Advance** (Rotate creature cards 90 degrees to the right) any or all of your non-**Ready** creatures.

2. **Recycle / Draw a Card:** You may draw one card at the start of your turn if you have *fewer* cards in your hand than your permitted **Hand Size** (5 cards, unless modified by other cards). If you have cards equal to or greater than your **Hand Size**, you *must* **Recycle** (discard a card) to draw a card. The Draw Phase is not compulsory; you do not have to draw a card at all. OR:

   Refresh: You may discard *all* of the cards in your hand and replace them with an equal number of cards from the **Draw Deck**. If you choose to **Refresh**, you may *not* **Conjure** a creature this turn.

3. **Conjure a Creature:** To **Conjure** a creature, you must meet its **Conjuring Cost** with the Wizard cards in your hand. *Example: The Phoenix requires a "Spellbook" to Conjure, which is any four of the same wizard (cards with the same picture and number).*

   If you can meet the **Conjuring Cost** *and* the creature is available in the **Pool**, show your chosen Wizard cards to the group before placing them face up in the **Charred Pile**, then claim your creature from the **Pool** and place it face up in your play area in the **Ready** position. **Note:** You can only **Conjure** one creature per turn and you can **Conjure** any creature in a **VP** group (you don't have to **Conjure** the top creature card).

   After you have **Conjured**, replenish your hand (draw a number of cards equal to the number of cards used in that **Conjure**).

4. **End Your Turn:** You must discard down to your **Hand Size**.

Creature Abilities

Creatures have one of two types of ability: **Exhaust** (Flip) and **Ongoing**:

Exhaust abilities rotate a **Ready** card *ninety degrees to the right* to activate its magical power. Once a creature has been **Exhausted**, you cannot use its ability again until it is once again **Ready** (see **Reviving Creatures**, below).

Ongoing abilities are always in effect and are disabled only when the creature is **Exhausted** or **Burned** (see **Burned**).

To use an ability, state you are using an ability to the group, then rotate that card 90 degrees to the right and apply its effects to the game. You can use a creature's ability at any time (even outside of your turn) with one exception: You *cannot* affect a player with an ability once they have announced they are **Conjuring**.

Reviving / Advancing Creatures

Using an ability drains that creature's magic, but it regenerates over time, allowing you to reuse its powers every few turns. This is reflected in the rotation of each creature as it recovers its essence. An **Exhausted** card is always put in the Stage 2 orientation (below).

❶ Creature in **Ready** position. Abilities may be used at any time.
❷ Creature in **Exhausted** position (after using ability).
❸ Creature orientation at the start of the next turn.
❹ Creature's final orientation becoming **Ready** at the start of its owner's next turn.

Burned Creatures

Some creatures (and **Archmage** cards) have the ability to flip a creature face down. These **Burned** creatures remain face down until **Regenerated** (turned face up) again. Only the *owner* can look at a **Burned** card.

Spectral Cards

Spectral cards marked with a *negative* **VP** cost are played *on* an enemy player. The **Conjuring** wizard earns **VP** tokens for the **Conjure** (as listed in the **Conjuring Cost**), while the target player receives a **VP** penalty while they own that card. Spectral creatures can be **Conjured** once more (as a standard **Conjure**) by the owning wizard and transferred to another player, at which point the earned **VP** are transferred to the most recent **Conjuring** wizard. *Summary: there are only ever **one** set of VP in circulation for **Conjuring** a Spectral creature.*

Elemental Dragon Gods

Made up of three separate parts, the **Dragons** are beings of great power. When a player has **Conjured** all three parts: the **Head**, the **Body**, and the **Tail**, the **Legendary** ability becomes available to them (so long as at least *one* part of the **Dragon** is **Ready**).

Conjuring: If you control the preceding part of a **Dragon**, the next part's **Conjuring Cost** is equal to the lowest numbered sequential part of that Dragon you control. *Example: If you control the **Tail (1)**, the **Body (2)** will cost the same as the **Tail**. If you do not have the preceding part, each unique part of an **Elemental Dragon** costs the full **Conjuring Cost**.*

Tutor Cards

Tutor cards are revealed at the end of the game when the final scores are about to be tallied. Each **Tutor** modifies its owning player's final score with the creatures they control.

Artifact Cards

Artifacts are magical items that have three effects. The first listed ability is always working (as long as the **Artifact** is **Ready**).

Exhaust: The **Artifact's** second ability is activated by **Exhausting** the **Artifact**.

Drain: Using an **Artifact's Drain** ability **Burns** that **Artifact**. Thereafter, no card - not even an **Archmage** - can **Regenerate** or restore its magical energy. **Drain** abilities *cannot* be used once **The Call** has been made.

The Archmage

The **Archmage** is a card that gives a player a variety of abilities. Used in the same way as any creature ability, you may use just *one* of the following effects whenever you play an **Archmage**:

♦ Act as a wild card. The **Archmage** can be used as *any* other card in the game when used in a **Conjuring**.
♦ **Advance** one of your creatures to the **Ready** position.
♦ **Burn** or **Regenerate** any one creature in play.

Making The Call

When a player has reached the agreed **VP** threshold for a game, he can "make the call", bringing the game to an end. All enemy players get one final turn, before, starting with the "caller", each player uses their creature abilities - one at a time - until everyone passes. The final **VP** totals are then counted and the winner is the player with the highest **VP** score.

In the case of a tie, add up the points value of all the wizard cards in your hand (the **Archmage** is worth 5 points).

Any in-game timing issues are always resolved by the **Active Player**.

Credits