

MIT OpenCourseWare
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

CMS.608 / CMS.864 Game Design
Spring 2008

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.

David Butler, Joshua Campoverde, Justin Moe, Kenny Peng
CMS.608 Game Design
Revised May 15, 2008

Pokémon: The Board Game Rules

Players

2 – 3 Players

Goal

The goal is to be the first player to collect all 8-gym badges, which earns the title of Pokémon League Champion.

Setup

There is a deck of Pokémon cards. On the back, it shows to what group they belong. The three starting pokemon are marked. The starting pokemon are those which trainers may select as their first pokemon at the beginning of the game. In addition, if the Pokémon is supposed to be placed on a particular route, the route section is on the back of the card. The rest of the Pokémon belong to the evolution deck, which is set aside. In the rules, there is often need for generic counters: feel free to use any kind of piece for this purpose. Also, feel free to use any marker for the player movement, as long as they are differentiable.

The players roll dice to determine who will go first. The player with the highest roll goes first, and selects their starting pokemon. Continuing clockwise, the other players select a starting pokemon from the center of the table. The pokemon that may be selected as starting pokemon are Charmander, Squirtle, and Bulbasaur. Normal play begins once each player has selected a starting pokemon. The player with the highest roll starts their turn.

Normal Play

Players have two choices of actions on their turn:

1. Move: Roll one die, then move forward or backward up to the number rolled
2. Battle Wild Pokémon (only applicable when on a colored path area): Select the top card from the deck for the current route. A Wild Pokémon battle begins.

After the player moves, one of three possible events may occur:

1. Landed on a Gym: Players may choose to battle the Gym Leader
2. Landed on a Pokémon Center: Players remove all damage counters from all Pokémon in their team
3. Landed on a square with another player: The player who already occupies the square may choose to battle with the player who landed on the square. If they do, a Player vs. Player battle begins.

After any battles have resolved, play continues clockwise.

General Battle Rules

Notation: PvP – Player vs. Player, PvW – Player vs. Wild, PvG – Player vs. Gym

Battles, in general, will be limited to a max of 3 Pokémon vs. 3 Pokémon. The Wild Pokémon in WP battles and Gym Leaders' Pokémon in PvG battles are predetermined. Otherwise, the players

will select their Pokémon to use. When a player gets to choose, he/she, in private, places the Pokémon he/she will use in the battle, and the Pokémon they will send out first, face down in the center arena area. The details of battle execution are explained later. A battle ends when one player is knocked out, i.e. they have no more Pokémon that they can use in the (up to) three they selected to participate in that battle. All damage from battles remains in effect until a player lands on a Pokémon Center, which heals their Pokémon.

Battle Mechanics

Battle progression is turn based. The player who initiates the battle goes first. During each player's turn, he/she may take one of two actions.

1. Attack: Select one of the attacks on the active Pokémon, and use it.
2. Switch: Switch the currently active Pokémon with one of the Pokémon on their bench.

Status Modifiers

Certain moves may include modifiers, which apply to either the opponent's Pokémon, or the player's Pokémon. All modifiers have duration of two opposing player's turns. At the end of the opposing player's turn, one counter should be removed from the modifier indicator. When there are no remaining counters, the modifier is no longer effective. There are three categories of status modifiers: status effects, damage modifiers, and accuracy modifiers.

Exclusive Status Effects

Paralyze, Confusion, Burn, and Poison are the four status effects. Only one of these four can be active at a time. If another type of exclusive status effect would be inflicted, it is instead simply ignored.

- Poison: Each time you remove a counter from poison, add a damage counter.
- Burn: Your attack power is reduced by 10.
- Confusion: Roll a dice, if it is 3 or lower, your attack succeeds. If it is 4 or higher, add one damage counter to yourself.
- Paralyze: Roll a dice, if it is 3 or lower, your attack succeeds. If it is 4 or higher, you are fully paralyzed, and your attack does not occur.

Damage Modifiers

The second category of status effects are damage modifiers. These status effects increase or decrease the damage done or taken. These status effects can stack with exclusive status effects, accuracy modifiers, and damage modifiers of the opposite effect. All damage modifiers affect the damage in increments of 10 (as specified on the card).

Accuracy Modifiers

The third category of status effects are accuracy modifiers. These status effects can stack with exclusive status effects, damage modifiers, and accuracy modifiers of the opposite type. Accuracy modifiers reduce the necessary dice roll by one (or as specified on the game card).

Gym Battles

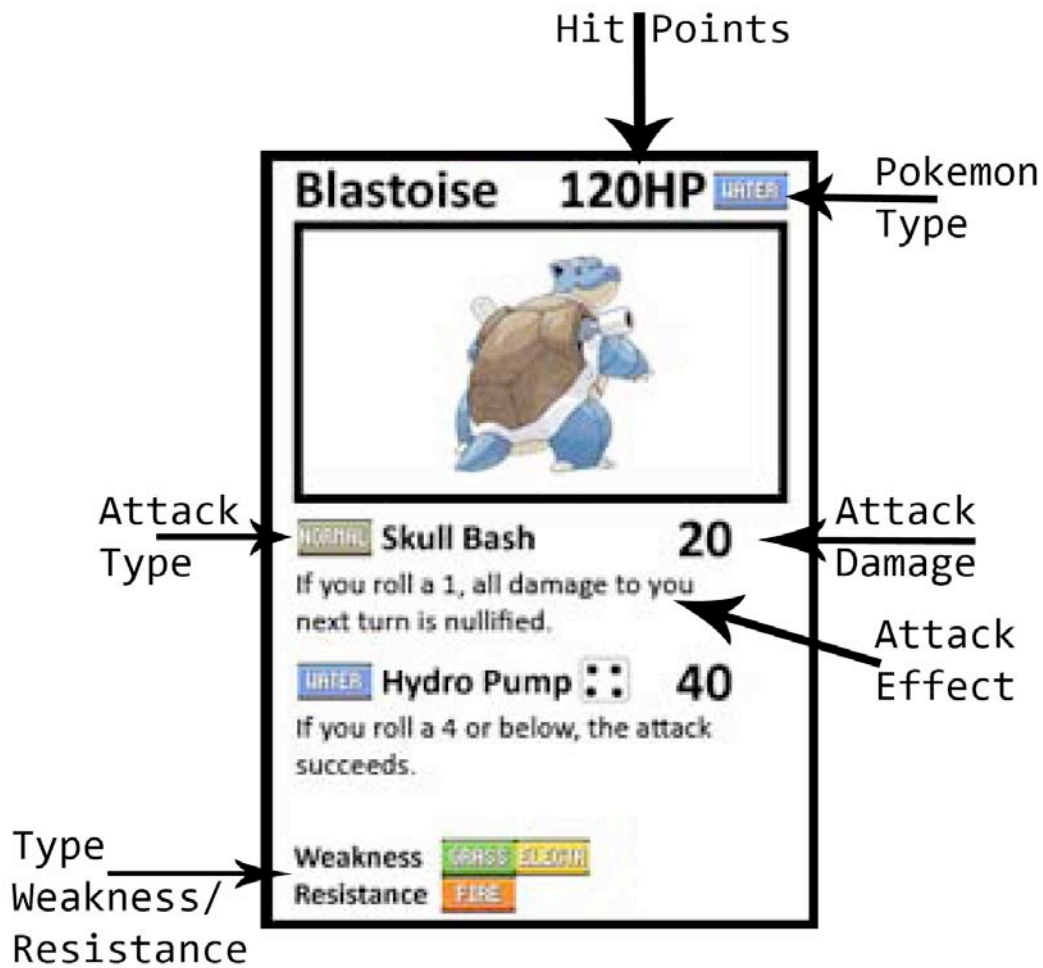
On a turn when a player has moved onto a Gym square, labeled with a G on the board, they may elect to battle the Gym Leader. Each Gym Leader has a different set of Pokémon that they will use. In the case of a Gym battle, the (up to) two uninvolved players flip a coin to determine who will play the role of the Gym Leader. The number of Pokémon allowed for use by the player is the same as

the number of Pokémon the Gym Leader has, e.g. if the Gym Leader has 1 Pokémon, the battle is a 1v1.

Weaknesses/Resistances

Weaknesses and resistances both affect the damage taken from an attack. A weakness will increase the damage taken from an attack by ten. Resistances reduce the damage taken from an attack by ten. However, the damage taken from an attack cannot be reduced below ten damage. The weaknesses and resistances are applied based on the type of the attack, which is specified with the type indicator to the left of the attack name.

Card Anatomy



Gym Leaders

Brock

Location: Pewter City

Badge: Boulder Badge

Pokémon: Onix

Misty

Location: Celadon City

Badge: Cascade Badge

Pokémon: Starmie

Lt. Surge

Location: Vermillion City

Badge: Thunder Badge

Pokémon: Raichu, Electrode

Erika

Location: Celadon City

Badge: Rainbow Badge

Pokémon: Oddish, Gloom

Koga

Location: Fuchsia City

Badge: Soul Badge

Pokémon: Machoke, Primeape

Sabrina

Location: Saffron City

Badge: Marsh Badge

Pokémon: Abra, Kadabra, Alakazam

Blaine

Location: Cinnabar Island

Badge: Volcano Badge

Pokémon: Rapidash, Flareon

Giovanni

Location: Viridian City

Badge: Earth Badge

Pokémon: Raticate, Pidgeot, Persian

If the player defeats the Gym Leader, they receive that badge. If they are defeated by the Gym Leader, the player is moved back to the Pokémon Center they most recently passed. The Gym Leader's Pokémon automatically heal after each battle, so they are always at full health when a bat-

the begins. Player's Pokémon do not automatically heal, so all damage is retained after a winning battle.

If the Gym Leader uses an attack which knocks out the opposing player's last Pokémon, which has an effect which knocks out their last Pokémon, the Gym Leader is still victorious, and the player does not receive the badge, and is moved back to the last Pokémon Center they passed. If the player uses an attack that knocks out the Gym Leader's last Pokémon, which has an effect that knocks out their last Pokémon, the player is still victorious; they receive the badge, but are also returned to the last Pokémon Center they passed.

Player vs. Player Battles

Player vs. Player battles follows all of the general battle rules. The player who was on the square is considered the initiator of the battle, and moves first. Otherwise, all of the general battle rules are followed with no modification. The losing player is moved to the last Pokémon Center they passed.

If a player uses a move which knocks out their opponent's last active Pokémon, but has a side effect which knocks out their last active Pokémon, both players are moved to the last Pokémon Center that each player passed. They do not have to move to the same Pokémon Center.

Wild Pokémon Battles

A wild Pokémon battle begins when a player has elected to search for a wild Pokémon, and drawn a card from the route they are currently on. The rules for a wild Pokémon battle are somewhat different. The player battling the wild Pokémon may choose up to 3 of their Pokémon to use against the wild Pokémon. The player attacking the wild Pokémon is the initiator, so they attack first. They may elect to do one of three actions:

1. Attack: Select one of the moves on their Pokémon to use
2. Switch: Switch the current active Pokémon for one of the Pokémon on the bench.
3. Use Pokéball: Attempt to capture the wild Pokémon with a Pokéball.

To use a Pokéball, the player rolls a single die. The success of the capture depends on the roll and the HP of the Pokémon. If the Pokémon has 10 HP, the roll must be 5 or less. If the Pokémon has 20 HP, the roll must be 4 or less. If the Pokémon has 30 HP, the roll must be 3 or less. If the Pokémon has 40 HP, the roll must be 2 or less. If the Pokémon has 50 HP, the roll must be 1. If the Pokémon has 60 HP or more, the Pokéball is ineffective and cannot capture it. If the wild Pokémon is knocked out during the battle, it is shuffled into the stack from which it was drawn.

The wild Pokémon chooses its moves according to a random generation: another player (arbitrary who it is) rolls a die and if it is 1-3, the Pokémon uses the first move it has, otherwise, the second.

If the player captures a Pokémon, and has more than 6 Pokémon in total, they must select one of the Pokémon to release into the wild. The released Pokémon is returned to its original stack and shuffled in. If the player elects to release their starter, it is removed from the game.

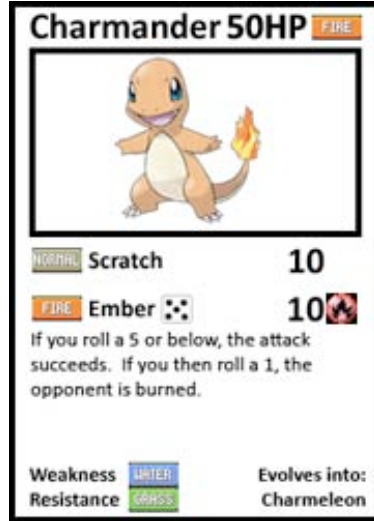
Evolution

Certain badges unlock the power inside your Pokémon, allowing them to evolve to the next stage. To evolve a Pokémon from stage 1 to stage 2, you must first win the Cascade badge. To evolve a Pokémon from stage 2 to stage 3, you must first win the Soul Badge.

Evolution can only occur when you have won any type of battle. However, the type of battle has an effect on the chance your Pokémon will begin to evolve.

After winning a battle against another player or a Gym Leader, you may elect to evolve a Pokémon. The Pokémon must have been a participant in the battle, being on the bench is sufficient, and must be active. To attempt to evolve, roll a die. If the roll is 4 or less, the Pokémon was successfully evolved, and can move to the next stage. The player replaces the Pokémon that was evolved with the next evolution stage. If the Pokémon being evolved was a wild Pokémon, the lower stage is shuffled into the stack for the route it was captured on. Otherwise, if it is a starter, it is removed from the game, or if it is an evolved form, it is returned to the evolution stack. If the roll is 4 or more, the evolution failed and nothing happens.

After winning a battle against a wild Pokémon, the roll of the die must be 2 or less for successful evolution. All other evolution rules are the same.

Mock Battle Example

This is a 1v1 example battle. Player 1 sends out Charmander and Player 2 sends out Bulbasaur. They are face down in the arena, so neither player knows the opponent's Pokémon. The battle commences once the players flip the cards over. Player 1 initiated, so he will go first. As noted, both Pokémon start with 50 HP.

Player 1 uses Ember against Bulbasaur. Player 1 rolls a 5, so the attack succeeds and since Bulbasaur is weak to Fire, there is an extra 10 damage. Bulbasaur now has 30 HP. Player 1 rolls the die again, gets a 1, and Bulbasaur is burned.

Player 2 uses Vine Whip. He rolls a 5, so the attack succeeds. Although normally there is a -10 damage penalty since Charmander has resistance to Grass and -10 damage for being burned, damage cannot be reduced below 10, so the attack still does 10 HP. Player 2 then rolls a 1 and Charmander is poisoned. Charmander has 40 HP.

Player 1 uses Ember again, but rolls a 6 and the attack does not hit. Charmander loses 10 HP from Poison damage, and it is now at 30 HP.

Player 2 uses Tackle. Since description does not say otherwise, the attack always hits and Charmander is now at 20 HP. This is the second turn with Burn status, so it goes away after the turn ends.

Player 1 uses Ember and succeeds, but does not pull off another Burn status. Bulbasaur is at 10 HP. Charmander loses 10 HP from Poison and will recover from the Poison this turn (it has been 2 turns). Charmander is now at 10 HP.

Player 2 uses Tackle and he reduces Charmander's HP to zero, knocking Charmander out and giving Player 2 the victory.