

[http://www.ideabout.com/fan\\_design/completed/aliens/joker\\_v06.html](http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v06.html)  
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### Cosmic Encounter



### Cosmic Encounter

New version (v05) of JOKER to address the issue raised by Bill Martinson about the terminology "encounter card" which would create confusion re: FFG's definition of specific card types named in effects such as the Plague. We've also improved other language based on comments in yesterday's discussion about JOKER. Let's continue discussion and play test result feedback in this discussion. Thanks.

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### Fan Designed Cosmic Expansion Set - JOKER

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Game Setup: Take two joker wild cards. Add the remaining 8 wild cards into the deck at the same time that flares are added to the deck and the deck is shuffled. You will be dealt 6 additional cards as your hand.

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## Discussion



### Bill Eberle JOKER ADDS WILD CARDS TO GAME

You have the power to add wildness.

Game Setup: Take two joker wild cards. Add the remaining 8 wild cards into the deck at the same time that flares are added to the deck and the deck is shuffled. You will be dealt 6 additional cards as your hand.

Play: In an encounter, you may play a wild card face down instead of an attack or negotiate card. When cards are revealed, your power allows you to declare the wild card as any valid attack card or as a negotiate card. The wild card you played is removed from the game after the encounter. When you have your power, any other player may also play a wild card in an encounter and, when revealed, use your power to declare the wild card as any valid attack card or as a negotiate card. At the end of the encounter, any wild cards played in the encounter are given to you. Whenever a wild card is revealed, if you are zapped, any player who played a wild card loses and you do not collect the wild card.  
( All Players | Mandatory | Reveal/Resolution )

WILD When you are a main player, before cards are played, you may declare one attack card value to be "wild" for any player who plays such a card during that encounter.  
( Main Player Only | Reveal/Resolution )

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SUPER When you play a wild card, it is not removed from the game; it is discarded.  
( JOKER | Resolution )

History

The Fun-loving Jokers enjoy humiliating the conceited, mocking the powers that be, and causing general chaos. They seek not to rule, but to satirize the universe.

Text on Wild Card

Top and Bottom: (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Wild Card

After reveal: declare as any valid attack card or as a negotiate card.

Use when: Joker is in the game.

Card Type: until this card's value is declared, this card has no type (immune to Plague, etc.).

Notes

This is a Resource type power.

The card type at the top and bottom of the wild card is blank. The image for the center of the card is a Joker image.

We are also planning to create rules for a game variant that uses wild cards.

Art Comp by Christopher Aurel Oliveira

Friday at 12:06pm · Like



**Stephen Sloboda** So... I'm a little confused by the "let's guarantee Joker has wild cards." Pacifist doesn't get freebie Negotiates. Sure, Negotiates are more common, but you don't NEED them to win with the Pacifist because the threat that it MIGHT have a negotiate is enough to scare people.

Joker is seemingly more powerful, and he doesn't have to play mind games; everyone knows he has at least two wild cards. Everyone knows he has EXACTLY what he needs to beat you in almost any scenario. For free. I don't get it.

Friday at 12:41pm · Like · 1



**Bill Martinson** I'm sorry, but this does not address the issue I raised at all. The part that was changed was correct before, but is not correct now. There is no need to call out attack and negotiate cards specifically, and this is confusing because it ignores Morphs.

I will try to explain again:

Friday at 1:18pm · Like · 2

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**Bill Martinson** \* The wild cards themselves must have a card type.

\* 'Encounter' is not a card type.

\* Therefore the wild cards' card type must be an existing type like Attack, or must have a \*new\* card type invented for them.

\* The new invented card type should not be 'encounter', and should not be 'wild'. Just about anything else will work, as long as it is not a term already in use in the game.

So in summary, there was (and still is) a problem with the wild cards having no type, or a non-type type, or an ambiguous type. There was not before, but now is, an incorrectness in the alien power of saying 'instead of an attack or negotiate card', because players do not actually choose 'an attack or a negotiate card', they choose an \*encounter\* card ... so that was the correct terminology in the prior version on the alien power.

I think at this point I am doing more harm than good since we are moving backwards, so I will step aside and let others help move this forward.

Friday at 1:23pm · Like · 1



**Jefferson Krogh** Bill, why can't the Wild cards simply be immune to Hate/Plague/etc.?

Friday at 1:43pm · Like



**Jefferson Krogh** And does it really cause any confusion with Wild flares or Wild destiny? I don't think so. D&D uses the term "level" for about 100 different things that never really lined up either, and there's little confusion there. I see no reason why a card named "Wild" in the deck, with clearly non-Flare text on it, will get confused with a Wild Flare or a Wild Destiny.

Friday at 1:45pm · Like



**Jefferson Krogh** Basically, my point is: insisting that every card be subject somehow to the "card type" classification for Hate and Plague is tidy, but constricting. We exempt various cards from getting messed with for specific aliens all the time (Miser, The Claw) -- exempting Joker's special cards from these effects is no different.

Friday at 1:50pm · Like

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**Jack Reda** I feel like the "wild" cards should just be called Jokers. The jokers are what is wild, and the Joker power lets you make them wild. Without his power, they aren't wild at all. And they should definitely not be immune to Hate or Plague!

Friday at 2:27pm · Like



**Bill Martinson** Do whatever you want with it. If it is too hard to come up with a new card type for a new type of card, then just let the FAQ sort it all out later.

Friday at 2:31pm · Like



**Bill Martinson** Actually, Jack, without his power they are still wild, according to the latest version.

Friday at 2:32pm · Like



**Bill Martinson** Thanks for letting me participate.

Friday at 2:32pm · Like



**Bill Eberle** @Bill Martinson - I think we should use "Joker" as the name of the card type. I'll also revert to the "encounter card" language which is defined by FFG as having one of three "varieties" - attacks, negotiates, and the morph card, and later in the rules, in the section which defines card types, those varieties are included as types which can be named in game effects:

"The different card types are: attack, negotiate, morph, reinforcement, flare, and artifact."

Concerning the art design issue which confuses the FFG card type concept, following is a definition of the issue to help us in our design of the new fan designed expansion set:

#### Definitions

1. "main card title" "card type area" is defined as the top and bottom title text area which is contained within the card frame art

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2. "card text area" is defined as the area of the card inside of the card frame art; this area includes card ~~sub~~-titles, art, and text.

#### Card Art Card Type Name Issues

1. attack, negotiate and morph cards which have been defined as FFG card types have "Encounter" in the ~~main-card-title~~ card type area and the actual card type/variety name, Attack, Negotiate, or Morph, at the top of the card text area ... but Artifact and Reinforcement cards which have been defined as FFG card types have their type names, "Reinforcement" or "Artifact" in the ~~main-card-title~~ card type area.
2. "Kicker" and "Rift" cards are named as a new FFG card types for the reward deck in the Cosmic Incursion expansion and both also have their type name in the ~~main-card-title~~ card type area.
3. Tech and Hazard cards, which are not defined as FFG card types, because they each have their own separate decks and rules of play in a Cosmic Encounter game variant, also have their names "Tech" or "Hazard" in the ~~main-card-title~~ card type area.
4. Flare cards have their own art design with all text and art inside of the border art and do not have their FFG card type name "Flare" on the card; however they are distinct and easily recognized.

Summary: "Encounter" and "Tech" and "Hazard" are specifically not defined as a FFG card type, but the art suggests that "Encounter" and "Tech" and "Hazard" might be a FFG card type. That confusion is potentially greatest for "Encounter" cards which are found in the normal Cosmic Encounter deck among the other cards which are defined as FFG card types.

(Ed – edits shown above to correctly define the "card type area" where the card type name should appear. In the anomaly, the Encounter card, I suppose you could think of that name "Encounter" as a special "card super type" – Peter tells me, he insisted that FFG put "Encounter" on those cards so that players would know to play these cards face down in an encounter. For the game effects like the Plague Artifact, one of each card with a FFG defined type must be discarded.)

Friday at 3:12pm · Like · 1



#### **Bill Eberle** JOKER v06 BETA ADDS WILD CARDS TO GAME

You have the power to add wildness.

Game Setup: Take two joker wild cards. Add the remaining 8 wild cards into the deck at the same time that flares are added to the deck and the deck is shuffled. You will be dealt 6 additional cards as your hand.

Play: In an encounter, you may play a wild card face down instead of an encounter card. When cards are revealed, your power allows you to declare the wild card as any valid encounter card. The wild card you played is removed from the game after the encounter. Any other player may also play a wild card face down in an encounter and, when revealed, if your power is active, declare the wild card as any valid encounter card. At the end of the encounter, any wild cards played in the encounter are given to you. Whenever a wild card is revealed, if you are zapped, any player who played a wild card loses and you do not collect the wild card.

( All Players | Mandatory | Reveal/Resolution )

WILD When you are a main player, before cards are played, you may declare one attack card value to be "wild" for any player who plays such a card during that encounter.

( Main Player Only | Reveal/Resolution )

SUPER When you play a wild card, it is not removed from the game; it is discarded.

( JOKER | Resolution )

#### History

The Fun-loving Jokers enjoy humiliating the conceited, mocking the powers that be, and causing general chaos. They seek not to rule, but to satirize the universe.

#### Text on Wild Card

Top and Bottom: (W) Joker

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Wild Card

After reveal: declare as any valid encounter card.  
Use when: Joker is in the game.  
Card Type: this is a Joker card which may sometimes be used as a wild card.

Notes

This is a Resource type power.  
The image for the center of the card is a Joker image.  
We are also planning to create rules for a game variant that uses these Joker wild cards.

Art Comp by Christopher Aurel Oliveira

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Fan Designed Cosmic Expansion Set - JOKER

Friday at 3:57pm · Like ·



Peter Olotka BETA V2?

Friday at 4:00pm · Like



Bill Eberle @Peter Olotka - v06 ... Bill Martinson and Jefferson Krogh pointed me in the right directions. I've looked carefully at the "card type" issue and think I understand now what is required. Hopefully now all that will be needed is, perhaps, a few tweaks to the language.

For the card design, I think the card type can be "Joker" in what I define as the "main card title area" above ... and that will match the card graphic showing a Joker; the card text in the card text area can say "Wild."

Friday at 4:08pm · Like



Bill Martinson @Bill: What you are calling the "card title area" does not include any card titles. This area (the white striped part of the template at top and bottom) is actually the card \*type\* area. With the exception of encounter cards (which I believe we all agree are anomalous in this design), the remaining cards all have their \*type\* in that area: Reinforcement, Kicker, Rift, Tech, Hazard ... these are all card types, even though not all of them have been specifically called out in the rules as such.

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Probably things like Tech and Hazards have not been drawn attention to (yet) as having their own card type, because as you suggest it hasn't mattered. But someday (probably in this set being designed now) it will be possible to get one or more of those cards into a player's hand, and at that moment it will then be important to understand that those are separate card types.

Card *\*titles\** appear in what you are calling the "card text area". Mobius Tubes, Negotiate, Negotiate (Crooked Deal), Attack 05 .. these are all card titles, and they all appear in that "card text area".

"Reinforcement" is a card *\*type\**, and appears in the card type area.

"Reinforcement +2" is a card *\*title\**, and appears in the card text area (although, in another anomalous design decision, they omitted the word "Reinforcement" from the title ... this probably leads to the confusion about the *\*type\** bar containing titles, when in fact it contains types).

This is consistent across the cards, with the exception of flares (which are different, but not a problem, as you pointed out), and encounter cards (which we have already established are misleading).

Referring to the stripe that contains card types but not card titles as the "card title area" is confusing and not recommended.

Friday at 4:08pm · Unlike · 2



**Bill Eberle** @Bill Martinson - I agree.

Friday at 4:12pm · Like



**Peter Olotka** Tempest in a Cosmic Teapot, I think. My only point is that they should be referred to in play as Wild Cards, not Jokers. So let's do what we need to do to cement that.

Friday at 4:28pm · Like



**Jefferson Krogh** Hm. "Tempest" is a neat name for an alien. Also for my favorite arcade video game. Time to make some notes...

Friday at 4:43pm · Like · 1

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**Sam Connolly** Is it just me, or does the Wild Joker (which still has the wrong timing indicator BTW) look suspiciously like a reskinned reusable Wild Human? Instead of getting a single Attack 42, you get as many Attack 40's as you want - provided your opponent doesn't have an identical card, but even then, things have still turned out all right for you and you still hold on to the Wild Joker to use again later.

Also, the current wording of Joker seems to prohibit declaring wildcards to be Negotiate (Crooked Deal) cards or Morphs. Is this a deliberate design decision or merely a wording quirk?

Friday at 5:44pm · Like



**Sam Connolly** Ah, revised wording fixes the Crooked Deal/Morph declaring question, but that reminds me of something else that could use clarification: what happens if X encounter Y, X reveals a Wildcard, and Y reveals a Morph? Does X declare a value for the Wildcard, and then Y's Morph copies that value? Or does Y's Morph copy the blank Wildcard, and then both X and Y declare values?

Friday at 5:53pm · Like



**Jefferson Krogh** Sam: Since the Wild card isn't an encounter card until it's declared, I would imagine that the Morph will match whatever the declaration is.

Friday at 5:57pm · Like



**Gerald Katz** I'm still not liking the wild card being removed from the game, and I still see the power as a weaker Pacifist. It's worded better and not a terrible power, but I am underwhelmed with it. I prefer Jack's idea of whenever someone plays a Wild Card Joker reveals an encounter card from his hand to have the card be that value. The Wild Card would not be removed from the game.

Friday at 6:08pm · Like



**Bill Eberle** Re: Wild Joker, I've corrected to "Planning and Reveal" (card is invoked at the beginning of the planning phase and the wild card's value is declared during the reveal phase.



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Re: Wild vs Morph - good question. One might have to invoke the timing conflict resolution: if offense plays the morph, it matches the wild and both cards are wild cards, if defense plays the morph, the wild is declared and the morph matches to whatever was declared.

Another situation could be that both players play a wild card and both declare as a morph (current JOKER rules allow both players to play a wild card in an encounter) ... I think I would say that causes some kind of "tear in the fabric of time" and both players lose ... or everyone could just be stuck there for all of eternity.

Friday at 6:09pm · Like



**Stephen Sloboda** Joker is actually strictly better than Pacifist, other than the fact that there are fewer "J-Cards" than "N-Cards."

And actually I think the wording is terrible. First, by not defining Wild Cards as Encounter Cards, you have to add the phrase, "as though it were an Encounter Card." Unnecessary verbiage to accommodate a lack of taxonomy. Second, it basically says that OTHER players can USE the Joker's power, which is an interesting idea, but how is that defined in the rules?

Thirdly, it explains the power twice. First it explains how you use it, then it explains how other players use it, when really you can combine the clauses as, "Any player may play a Wild Card 'as though it were an encounter card' and use this power to declare it as any valid encounter card."

Last but not least, but not defining Wild Cards as separate game elements, you have to throw in that little rationalization about what happens if you get zapped, since no rules are defined for Wild Cards when the Joker isn't active. This is why I tried defining Wild Cards as "worthless" Encounter Cards that automatically lose to Attack or Negotiate Cards.

Friday at 6:25pm · Like



**Bill Eberle** I think [Bill Martinson](#) has provided good reasoning for why "encounter" is not and should not be what FFG defines as a "card type" in the rules. E.g. all current and future cards defined as being of a certain type, are subject to the Plague artifact. Attack, Negotiate and Morph are explicitly named as FFG "card types" leaving "Encounter" as what I would call a "super type."

Also, re: saying things twice in the JOKER v06 rules

([http://www.ideabout.com/fan\\_design/completed/aliens/Joker\\_v06.html](http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/Joker_v06.html)), I think it is easier for players, both the JOKER and the other players who are not the JOKER to understand, as it is written now. Strictly speaking, other players are taking advantage of the fact that when the JOKER's power is active, wild cards can be declared as any valid encounter card.

We're extending our concept of "how many ways can we break the rules" with this alien and defining new kinds of rules for how an alien power might work. I think that's a good thing.



**Fan Designed Cosmic Expansion Set - JOKER**

Friday at 6:40pm · Like · 1 ·

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**Jefferson Krogh** This is a very good point -- because Cosmic has been republished several times over the last 30 years, the game has rather been treading familiar territory over and over again. With the FFG edition, we have the first chance in a very long time to truly expand the game into totally new areas. (New, that is, if you're not [Jack Reda](#), the human houserule machine.)

Friday at 6:43pm · Like · 1



**Stephen Sloboda** I'm not saying anything the Joker is doing to change the rules is bad, but I want to acknowledge that he is. For the first time, an alien power can be zapped when SOMEONE ELSE uses that power. It's an interesting idea.

Friday at 9:44pm · Like



**Bill Martinson** I never said wild cards should not be grouped with the encounter cards; I said "encounter card" is not sufficient as a valid card type. (I actually think Bill E's phrase "super-type" is a pretty good way to look at that, by the way.) Let's try one more time here ...

Wild cards should have a clear card type: probably either ATTACK or SOMETHING NEW. If it's SOMETHING NEW, then that SOMETHING NEW should be classified under the "super-type" of encounter card.

That would solve just about all the problems. The ATTACK or SOMETHING NEW tells us exactly what happens with stuff like Hate, Plague, and Wild Disease, while the fact that whichever one you like best is placed under the super-type of "encounter card" both streamlines and simplifies the text, while also preventing breakdowns that would arise from allowing a card that is NOT an encounter card in a context that's required by the game engine to BE an encounter card.

Heck, it could even be a MORPH. Just as Negotiate (Crooked Deal) created a new kind of negotiate card with special text, this thing could create a new kind of Morph with special text. Solves a crapload of problems, and makes perfect sense conceptually since wild cards always MORPH into something else.

Friday at 10:08pm · Like



**Bill Martinson** Card type: MORPH  
 Super-type: ENCOUNTER CARD  
 Title: MORPH (WILD CARD)

Fixes problems. Cleans up the text. Breaks new ground. Tastes great, less filling.

Friday at 10:11pm · Unlike · 1

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**Mark Hawkinson** I'd have just made the Joker card count as an attack...

Friday at 10:12pm · Like · 1



**Jefferson Krogh** [Bill Martinson](#), GMTA. I suggested that the wilds could be a Morph variety the other day (but I think it got lost in the hubbub). Since it's an encounter card that changes its value, it's very Morph-like, even if we don't call it that.

Friday at 10:30pm · Unlike · 1



**Bill Martinson** Sorry, Jefferson ... I do remember now that you mentioned that earlier, which is probably why I had it in the back of my head. I'm sorry I didn't fully register that at the time, and more sorry that I failed to credit you here. I think you had the right idea way ahead of all of us.

This morning I realized how smoothly your idea could work with, and give more purpose to, the "multi-morph" variant posted on BGG. That concept is that there could be 8 to 20 different Morph cards, each with a different title (crooked-deal style) that has a different way of morphing. Tons of possibilities: copy the topmost encounter card in the discard pile; copy an encounter card you show from your hand; become an attack with a value equal to the total number of ships in the entire defensive system; become an attack if the opponent negotiates or a negotiate if the opponent attacks.... The possibilities are endless, both for designers' creativity and players' tactical creativity.

It just dawned on me that Joker could be the master of all morph cards. He makes sure they are in the deck through his Game Setup text, and then pulls their strings throughout the game. Perhaps he even becomes "the Mesmer of Morph Street", being allowed to play any Morph card as if it were any other Morph card. That's pretty wild, it's a clear player benefit, and it allows for more creativity than searching for the biggest attack card in the discard pile.

And/or, when Joker is a main player, he might make Morph cards work /against/ the opponent if that opponent reveals one against Joker. So everybody else still gets to use and have fun with all the wacky Morphs, but they'd better use them /against each other/ and not Joker.

I think there's a pretty big design space there.

Saturday at 10:26am · Like · 2



**Jefferson Krogh** Oh yeah, the multi-morph idea! I hadn't thought about that in ages. Good idea to tie that into Joker!

Saturday at 11:21am · Like

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**Bill Martinson** So to summarize this idea relative to the latest Joker version:

- \* Joker still adds 10 cards to the deck
- \* Those 10 are all morph cards
- \* They don't have to all be the SAME morph card. Some, or all, can morph in their own weird ways.
- \* Joker's game text could include some or all of the following:
  - pick up morphs used by other players
  - use a morph as any other morph
  - cause another player who reveals a morph vs. Joker to lose
  - give a morph from his hand to a player he is allied with
  - as a main player or ally, use a morph from his hand to replace the opponent's encounter card

That last one seems very jokester-like to me, since the variety of morphs would ensure that some of them could be used to screw up the opposing main player's plans. (Part of what I think "Joker" has been missing is the ability to actually play tricks on people. Most of the recent iterations have had him /helping/ everyone.)

Saturday at 11:32am · Like · 4



**Gerald Katz** Ding! Yes, a good idea to tie in Morphs to Joker! Add some more Morphs to the deck instead of new Wild Cards. Their effects can be altered slightly for different Morph cards akin to Crooked Negotiate. For example, one Morph can say "If your opponent played an attack card, this Morph becomes that attack card's value + 2". Players use the Morph cards normally. Joker uses the Morph card as per his power. I still prefer they aren't removed from the game.

Saturday at 12:51pm · Like · 1



**Jack Reda** I agree. If Joker can pick up Morphs discarded by other players, there's no need for them to be removed from the game- he just discards them normally.

Saturday at 1:06pm · Like · 2



**Bill Martinson** For reference, here's the original thread:  
<http://www.boardgamegeek.com/thread/631907/multi-morph-variant>

I was amused to re-read Gerald Katz's comment in that thread: "I like this idea. Of course, me being me, I now foresee a power based off it."

Saturday at 9:09pm · Like · 3

[http://www.ideabout.com/fan\\_design/completed/aliens/joker\\_v06.html](http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v06.html)  
[http://www.ideabout.com/fan\\_design/in\\_progress/discussions/20111125\\_fb\\_talk\\_menu.html](http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/in_progress/discussions/20111125_fb_talk_menu.html)



**Bill Eberle** Thanks, Bill. I was going to ask if someone could post that link.

The ideas about making the joker/wild card a Morph solves some of the "another new type of card" issues we have been discussing and also seems natural - as the Joker card is defined now, it actually is a powerful kind morph card.

At this point, we can

- 1) play test as is, after adjust the Joker card to be 10 cards of super type Encounter, type Morph which are "wild" and are played as currently defined
- 2) begin to devise 8 or 9 additional Joker card rules using some of the ideas from multi-morph ideas from BBG and, when they have been defined play test the Joker you've defined above which controls all of these new Morph cards and gets to "play tricks" on other players.

Personally, I think option 1 will play test well, but the argument about giving the Joker the power to play tricks is persuasive. However, I also like the simple idea of allowing everyone to play the Jokers as wild cards in our current Beta ...

Saturday at 11:41pm · Like · 1



**Phil Fleischmann** I notice also that this version isn't worded with the FFG \*use\* phrasing. It should be. Also, it isn't specified what happens when the Joker loses his power through too few home colonies. What happens to the wild cards in other player's hands? In the Joker's hand? Can they still be played as encounter cards? If so, what value do they have?

Sunday at 2:27am · Like



**Bill Martinson** @Phil: The morph thing fixes all of that. Morph cards take care of themselves, and Joker's power is to do extra things with them.

Sunday at 8:56am · Like



**James Albright** The idea of using Morphs as from the Multi-Morph topic sounds amazing. Granted it becomes more difficult to proxy 10 unique Morph type cards, but it's such a good idea that it's worth it.

19 hours ago · Like

[http://www.ideabout.com/fan\\_design/completed/aliens/joker\\_v06.html](http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/completed/aliens/joker_v06.html)

[http://www.ideabout.com/fan\\_design/in\\_progress/discussions/20111125\\_fb\\_talk\\_menu.html](http://www.ideabout.com/fan_design/in_progress/discussions/20111125_fb_talk_menu.html)



**Bill Martinson** @James: Here's my suggestion for people who don't sleeve their cards. Playtest using only aliens whose names do NOT begin with "M" (this leaves 78 aliens to playtest with). There are 12 M-aliens. Use 10 of their flares as proxies ... then whenever anybody has an M-flare they know immediately it's a special Morph card, and can glance at their reference list to see which one it is (Machine = Morph (Copy), Macron = Morph (Draw), Magician = Morph (Flip), and so on.

If it turns out there are some M-aliens that especially need playtesting with this concept, then play another game drawing aliens from among the 80 whose names do not begin with "C," and use the 10 C-flares as proxies.

Or, just sleeve your cards. Once you do, you will find so many interesting possibilities that open up.

15 hours ago · Like