

MAGIC Old School

The Gathering®



**How many cards
have been printed?**

Printed Cards

Numbers taken from article from January 2022 published on <https://www.mtginformation.com/print-run-calculations>

Limited Edition Alpha (August 1993):

2.61 million cards

26,000 60-card starter decks each contain 2 rare, 13 uncommon and 45 commons
70,000 booster packs each contain 1 rare, 3 uncommon, 11 common

A total of 122,000 rares, 548,000 uncommons and 1,940,000 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of *each rarity* was printed.

Rare: 1,008 (*so essentially only 1,008 Alpha Black Lotus has been printed*)

Uncommon: 4,529

Common: 16,033

Limited Edition Beta (October 1993):

7.83 million cards

78,000 60-card starter decks each contain 2 rare, 13 uncommon and 45 commons
210,000 booster packs each contain 1 rare, 3 uncommon, 11 common

A total of 366,000 rares, 1,644,000 uncommons and 5,820,000 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of *each rarity* was printed.

Rare: 3,025

Uncommon: 13,587

Common: 48,099

Unlimited* (December 1993):

35 million cards

145,833 60-card starter decks each contain 2 rare, 13 uncommon and 45 commons

1,750,000 15-card booster packs each contain 1 rare, 3 uncommon, 11 common

This gives us a total of 2,041,666 rares, 7,145,829 uncommons and 25,812,485 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of each rarity was printed.

Rare: 16,874

Uncommon: 59,057

Common: 213,326

Arabian Nights (December 1993):

5 million cards

Arabian Nights only had booster packs, so all the cards would be in 8 card boosters.

There were only two print sheets:

625,000 8-card boosters each containing 2 uncommon, 6 common.

This gives us a total of 1,250,000 uncommons, and 3,750,000 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of each sheet was printed.

Uncommon Sheet: 10,331

Common Sheet: 30,992

Because there were multiples of each uncommon and common on each sheet, we then need to multiply this base number by their classification (U2, U3, C1, C4, etc.).

U2: 20,662

U3: 30,993

U4: 41,324

C1: 30,992

C4: 123,968

C5: 154,960

C11: 340,912

Antiquities (March 1994):

15 million cards

Antiquities only had booster packs, so all the cards would be in 8 card boosters. There were only two print sheets, photos of which can be found easily online.

1,875,000 8-card boosters each containing 2 uncommon, 6 common.

A total of 3750,000 uncommons, and 11,250,000 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of each rarity was printed.

Uncommon Sheet: 30,992

Common Sheet: 92,975

Because there were multiples of each uncommon and common on each sheet, we then need to multiply this base number by their classification (U1, U2, C1, C4, ect).

U1: 30,992

U2: 61,984

U3: 92,976

C1: 92,975

C4: 371,900

C5: 464,875

C6: 557,850

Legends (June 1994):

35 million cards

Legends only had booster packs, so all the cards would be in 15 card boosters.

A total of 2,333,333 rares, 7,000,000 uncommons and 25,666,630 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of each rarity was printed.

Rare Sheet: 19,284

Uncommon Sheet: 57,851

Common Sheet: 212,121

Because there were multiples of each uncommon and common on each sheet, we then need to multiply this base number by their classification (U1, U2, C1, C2).

Rare: 19,284

U1: 57,851

U2: 115,702

C1: 212,121

C2: 424,242

The Dark (August 1994):**

70 million cards.

The Dark only had booster packs, so all the cards would be in 8 card boosters. There were only two print sheets. That gives us the following:

8,750,000 8-card boosters each containing 2 uncommon, 6 common.

This gives us a total of 17,500,000 uncommons, and 52,500,000 commons

Cards are printed on sheets of 121 cards. So we need to take the total number of each rarity, and divide them by 121, to find out how many of each rarity was printed.

Uncommon Sheet: 144,628

Common Sheet: 444,884

Because there were multiples of each uncommon and common on each sheet, we then need to multiply this base number by their classification (U1, U2, C1, C3)

U1: 144,628

U2: 289,256

C1: 444,884

C3: 1,334,652

The Collectors' Edition of Magic: (December 1993).

5.08 million cards

(3.27 million C/E cards and 1.82 million I/E cards)

Approximately 9000 C/E sets and 5000 I/E sets with 363 cards in each

Each box contained 1 card of each card, from Limited Beta set. So the same number of cards has been printed of each card – regardless of the card's rarity.

9000 C/E printed cards of each card previously printed in Limited Beta set

5000 I/E printed cards of each card previously printed in Limited Beta set

(For example, 5,000 I/E black Lotus cards have been printed which is the same as e.g., 5000 I/E Giant Growth cards).

Revised (April 1994):

~ 600 million cards.

Rare: 289,000

Uncommon: 1,012,000

Common: 3,657,000

Lands (per picture): 12,969,500

TOP 10 “Cards printed less than 20.000 worldwide”

1	1,008 Alpha Rare
2	3,025 Beta Rare
3	4,529 Alpha Uncommon
4	5,000 International Collector's Set
5	9,000 Collector's Set
6	13,587 Beta Uncommon
7	16,033 Alpha Common
8	16,874 Unlimited Rare
9	19,284 Legends Rare
10	20,662 Arabian U2

***Note on Unlimited Set:**

The Duelist Complete Magic Card List (1995) and The Official Encyclopedia (1996) both list the print run of unlimited as 35 million, so that is the number used.

Regarding the split between Starter Decks and Booster Packs in Unlimited, there is less information available so an educated guess must be made. When Alpha and Beta were printed 27.1% of the cards were printed in Starter Decks and 72.9% of the cards were printed in booster packs, but it is generally recognized that WOTC decided to change the allocation between starters and boosters at some point due to the much higher demand for boosters. We do not have definitive information on how much this was adjusted. Some estimates assume as low as 16.7% allocated for starter decks, and some estimate as high as 33.3% allocated for starter decks. Given the information recently released by Peter Adkison, I think it is safe to assume 33.3% is too high as that would be even higher than the allocation in Alpha and Beta, and I believe 16.7% is too low, as this would leave us with much less than 1 starter deck for every 10 packs printed, and WOTC was still trying to actively grow the player base at this point (players which would have needed starter decks). The number we will use for our calculation is 25% allocation to starter decks. This figure is in-between both of the most popular estimates being used, and is here believed to be the best guess possible

****Note on The Dark set:**

Information from 1994 and 1995 placed estimates at 62 million cards.

Sources include The Duelist as well as official press releases made by WOTC representatives. However more recent research has been conducted and estimates the print run at 75 million, based on comments made by Tom Wylie (an early WOTC employee).

The figure used in this article is 70 million cards, for the following reasons:

Estimates place the print run somewhere between 63 and 75, so selecting 70 will allow us to have at least a 10% margin of error on both sides. Additionally, the print run of the preceding set (Legends) is estimated to be 35 million, and previous WOTC behavior showed a propensity to have sets preceding one another to be multiples of their predecessors. Beta is three times the size of Alpha, Antiquities is three times the size of Arabian Nights, so I think it follows logically that the Dark would be two times the size of Legends (given that three times the size was never an option). WOTC was still a small company at this stage and the final decision on print run size would ultimately have been made by one or two key individuals in the organization. This estimate is the largest unknown of all the numbers provided, so hopefully someday we will get additional information to help with this calculation.