

Trading Guide

1. Why writing a trading guide?
2. “The art of trading” and email correspondence!
3. Chosing the right kind of shipment and correct wrapping!
4. Trade is completed! What now?
5. Difficulties and problems!

1. This guide should be a guideline for traders who are trading over the web, and send cards across the world. Naturally, I cannot command you to act in the manner described herein, but trying to be a good trading partner should be everyone’s goal. ;-)
Well, I have been trading for several years now with many trading partners all over the world. I am a member of a trader’s alliance called G.A.B. (Good traders Against Bad traders). I run a trading site for Spellfire CCG cards and I believe that many of you traders out there could benefit from this guideline.

2. When you have found a trader who has just the cards you need send him an email containing at least the following:
) Your real name! There is nothing more annoying if you trade with a guy who calls himself e.g. “SuperBlaster” or “HellKnight”!
) The cards you have and the cards you want! Be precise and don’t add or remove cards during your correspondence without explanation!
) Your request that you want to trade! Use your best speech and grammar and most of all, be polite and friendly. Remember YOU are the one who wants to get cards.

Good 1st mail example:

Hello <Trader’s name>
I would like to trade the following cards with you.

I want:
Card – Booster/Edition – Rarity
.....

I offer/have:
Card – Booster/Edition – Rarity
.....

If you are interested in trading, let me know.

Thank you.
Bye
<Your name>

Bad 1st mail example:

Mate,

Me:
Card

....

You:
Card

....

SuperBlaster

You can add other things you like to your mail, but the things I suggested above should belong into your mail.

When you trade the first time with someone you don't know it's best to ask him if he can supply trading references (refs).

IMPORTANT!

Check them! Only because he sends you several refs, they haven't to be correct.

If the trader is a member of a trader's alliance, such as G.A.B. or the like, check his member reference page.

Answer all mails in a timely manner, keep all the correspondence until the trade is through and both parties are satisfied. Keep the envelope after the trade is finished (for future trades, ref checks, or similar)

If you have to change your address, mail address or other important personal data needed to complete the trade for some reason, inform your trading partner immediately!

3. Choosing the proper kind of wrapping and the right way of shipment can be crucial.

Always use hard-sleeves for single cards. **Never** send them wrapped in paper only, or "naked"! For more cards use either carton or special card plastic boxes. Always send the card(s) well protected! Make use of bubble envelopes for greater shipments.

If you want to be known as a good and reliable trader, than you will protect the cards you ship as best as you can.

Remember! Unfortunately, you can never command your trade partner to protect his cards the way you would protect them yourself. But he should know himself how to protect the cards properly. A reliable trader would know for sure.

IMPORTANT!

Send expensive cards or "real good" cards by registered mail!

Send them registered too, if you have a bad feeling about a trade!

Always keep the confirmation of shipment you get for the letter until the trade is through! At least keep the receipt if you sent by airmail! This can be important if a trade fails!

Send the cards when promised and in the condition you offered to trade (mint/near mint)!

4. You got the cards? First thing you do is inform you trade partner about the fact that you got them. Do this at once! Don't put the cards away without noticing the former owner! Don't forget it. Ask in the same mail if he received the cards too. If he replies no, then tell him to so immediately upon receipt. Mail him again after some days and ask him. If you need no reference then continue at point 5.

Always ask your fellow trader if you intend to name him as your trade reference. Tell him why and where you need his reference. If you allow someone to name you as a reference, keep in mind that someday in the near future someone might check this.

G.A.B.: you'll get a mail from a person telling you he is the team leader of your trading partner and he will ask you to answer his questions.

Example:

Greetings,

<Trader's name> has listed you as a card trading reference.
Can you verify he/she is a good trader? In other words, did you receive your cards in a timely manner, properly packaged, and in the condition you expected?
1. If the person has only bought cards from you, please let me know.
2. If the cards were exchanged in person, please let me know.
3. If you have not yet received your cards, please let me know.

Regards,
<Team leader>

You should answer such an email in a timely manner and most of all... BE HONEST!

5. You haven't got the cards? You check the mail everyday, but no letter? Don't panic. Some letters take longer than others. Allow at least 4 to 6 weeks shipping duration. If it was sent by economy mail it might take that long or even longer (I had got a parcel after exactly 21 weeks and 1 day!!!!).
If this time period is over mail your trade partner about this. If he acknowledged the receipt of your cards, but you haven't got his cards, then it is up to him to inquire at his local post office about his letter. Never assume automatically that the other trader is ripping you off your cards. There are more bugs in the worldwide postal service than you even can think of.
Your letter could have fallen off a truck, eaten by a dog or other events might have happened you have no chance of knowing.
You send it not registered! Bad luck! You'll probably have to send spare cards.
You had your letter registered. Good! Put a tracer on the letter!
If the other trader doesn't respond to your emails, then it could be likely that he just wanted your cards, but never intended to honor your trade agreement. Unfortunately you cannot go straight to court and have him put in jail. Such a thing cannot be done. In most cases people don't have their letters registered, so there is no evidence. Contact an organisation like G.A.B. (www.gabtraders.com) to investigate. They can put him on a Bad Trader's List. If you live in the U.S.A., than you have the opportunity to adress your postal office claiming this case as mail fraud. Mail fraud is a federal crime and will be investigated by the authorities.