

**TopDeck**<sup>TM</sup>

**Learn All About It!**

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**POKÉMON**<sup>TM\*</sup>  
**TRADING CARD GAME**  
**LEAGUE**



# Introduction

HI, THERE! READY TO  
HAVE SOME FUN?

*Do you like to  
play the **Pokémon**  
trading card game?*

If you do, there's a place near you where you can join the **Pokémon** Trading Card Game League. The League is a place where you can meet other **Pokémon** TCG players and play and trade with them. **You get cool stuff just for joining**, and you earn points by participating. The more points you earn, the more great stuff you can get.

This special section has everything you need to know to get started. You'll find out what you get just for joining, where you can find a **Pokémon** TCG League center, and how to earn points. You'll also find a glossary to help you understand what everyone's talking about at the League center. We'll show you how to keep track of your points, all the badges you can earn, and what else you get for earning points.

Before you run off to join the **Pokémon** TCG League, we've got some tips for you, too. You'll see all the ways you can earn points in the League. We'll give you advice on how to play the **Pokémon** trading card game. There's even a guide to building your own deck from scratch! Or, if you already know all that stuff, test your **Pokémon** TCG knowledge by taking the Certified Coach's test.

If you already belong to the **Pokémon** TCG League, we've got a special surprise for you. Even if you haven't joined yet, you can complete the League activity at the back of this special section to earn 10 points!

There's an exciting world for you to explore at your local **Pokémon** TCG League center. **What're you waiting for?**



# What's a Promo Card?



**By now you should know** the difference between a hologram card (your kids may call it a “shiny” card) and a non-hologram card. You should also know that there have been three sets of cards released so far (the Base Set, the *Jungle* set, and the *Fossil* set). But did you know there are some cards out there that were never released in one of these sets? These are called “promo cards” (or promotional cards) and are printed for special promotions. For example, Wizards of the Coast worked with Warner Brothers to provide promo cards for *Pokémon: The First Movie* last November.

Some of these cards, like the Warner Brothers movie cards are completely new cards with different art and different abilities on the card. These cards always have the promo star seen on Mew above. These promo cards also have collector numbers, that work a little differently from the collector numbers on regular cards. A card from an expansion like *Fossil* has a collector number like “23/62” that shows it’s card number 23 out of 62 cards in the set.

A card with the promo star has a single collector number: A “4” in the corner shows it is the fourth card so far with the promo star. We don’t even know how many promo star cards will be printed, so there’s no second number!

Other promo cards, like the gold-bordered Meowth you can find in *Fruit by the Foot* or the foil-stamped cards inserted in *TopDeck* from time to time, are simply reprints of existing cards with something special added to make them look cool. These cards never have the promo star on them and they have the same collector number they had when they were first printed.

Now, promo cards aren’t necessarily rarer than cards printed in the sets (it depends on the print run of the card and the success of the promotion). But both the completely new cards and the reprinted cards with special borders or foil stamps all share one thing in common: the only way to get these promo cards is through the promotion. If you miss the promotion, you miss the card.

Periodically, the **Pokémon** TCG League will give a promo card to every kid that joins the League. In fact, many of the cards featuring the promo star will be available exclusively through the **Pokémon** TCG League. Some of these cards will eventually make their way to eBay, but if you want to make sure your Pokémaniac catches ’em all without spending a fortune on auction sites, check out the League.

—WILL McDERMOTT

# Mew!

**YOU CAN EARN  
FREE POKÉMON CARDS  
AT THE TCG LEAGUE!**



# How To Join

Once you find a **Pokémon** TCG League center near you, **joining is simple**. You'll want to go to the League center when there's a League event going on. All **Pokémon** TCG League centers have a schedule of events. Events can be anywhere from two to four hours long, and are usually the same day every week. Some League centers could have more than one League event a week, or even more than one a day!

Registration Card

**Pokémon**

**DCI**

PLAYER NAME \_\_\_\_\_ first \_\_\_\_\_ last \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY AND STATE OR PROV. \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ STORE # \_\_\_\_\_  
(if Arena™ League)

PHONE NUMBER ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ month \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

When you get there, you'll want to **find the Gym Leader**. He or she will tell you what you need to do to become a member of the **Pokémon** TCG League. The most important step in signing up is filling out your **Pokémon DCI membership card**. You'll need to fill in all the information you see here. Make sure you fill it out clearly. You'll be able to use your DCI number to look up your own personal page at [www.wizards.com](http://www.wizards.com).

Once you've filled out your DCI membership card, you'll get a **Pokémon** TCG League **badge book** to keep track of your points. You're ready to start earning some points now. If you can't wait any longer, go ahead and play a couple of games. Just make sure you let the Gym Leader know you're playing a game. This way, you'll be sure to get your points.

If you want to learn more about the **Pokémon** TCG League first, turn the page. We'll tell you everything you need to know.



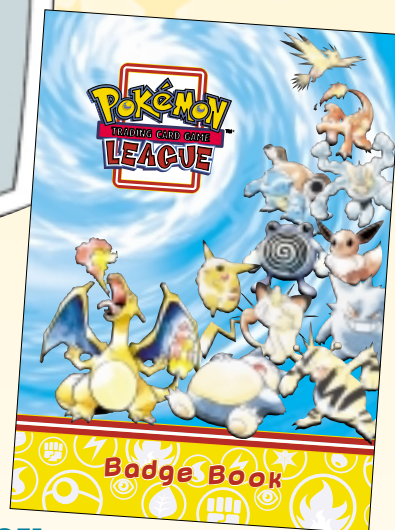


# League Glossary



## ACTIVITY

There are six different activities, one for each week of the season. Trainers can earn points for completing them. Activities are usually word searches, storytelling, or drawing activities.



## CERTIFIED COACH STICKER

Trainers earn this sticker when they pass the Coach's test. It goes on the back cover of the trainer's badge book. Certified Coaches earn points by teaching other League members how to play the **Pokémon** TCG.

## BADGE BOOK

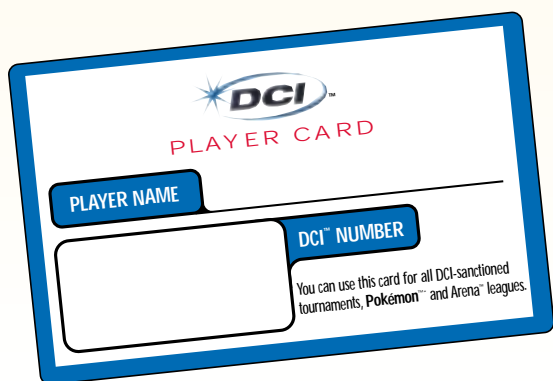
A badge book is used to keep track of all the points a trainer earns during the season.

## COACH TEST

To become a Certified Coach, trainers must take a 15-question Coach's test. A score of 13 or better is needed to earn a Certified Coach sticker.

## DCI MEMBERSHIP CARD

In order to become an official trainer, your Gym Leader needs to see your DCI membership card. If you don't have one, your Gym Leader will give you one. You can use your DCI number to check out your own personal page at [www.wizards.com](http://www.wizards.com).



## GYM LEADER

The Gym Leader helps trainers reach their goals by leading them through the session's activities. They pair up trainers to play against each other, hand out League activities, and stamp the trainers' badge books as they earn points. **You can identify them by their bright yellow shirts.**



## SEASON

Each **Pokémon** TCG League season consists of six weeks. The seasons, in order, are: Pewter City, Cerulean City, Vermilion City, Celadon City, Saffron City, Fuchsia City, Cinnabar Island, and Viridian City.

## SESSION

A two-hour block set aside by the League center for trainers to earn points for teaching and playing games, trading, and completing League activities.



## STAMP

Gym Leaders use stamps to mark trainers' badge books when they earn points in the League.



## TRAINER BADGE

There are eight badges to be earned, one in each season, when a trainer reaches 500 points. They are: Boulder, Cascade, Thunder, Rainbow, Marsh, Soul, Volcano, Earth.

## TRAINER

Participant in the **Pokémon** TCG League.

## Watch Your Stuff



**I hate to have to write this tip**, but the **Pokémon** TCG League events are generally held in stores, and thus are open to the public (the entire public). And even though the League staff is on hand to monitor the events, there's usually a lot going on (playing and trading and counting points to get badges). Amid this organized chaos, it's all too easy for someone to walk off with someone else's binder of cards. **Pokémon** trading card game cards are not only popular, they can be quite valuable (they even get counterfeited), so they make a nice target.

In today's modern world, kids have to grow up pretty fast (perhaps a little too fast, sometimes). Just as you need to teach your kids never to cross the road without looking both ways, you must teach them to watch their cards when they're out in public (be that at school, at a friend's house, or in a store). So make sure your kids: a) never lose sight of any card they take with them, b) keep their most valuable cards safely tucked away unless absolutely needed (for a game or a trade), and c) keep an eye on their binders even when they're concentrating on something else (like trading or playing a game).

—WILL McDERMOTT

# How to Use Your Badge Book

Award 10 points below for each circle stamped

Attendance

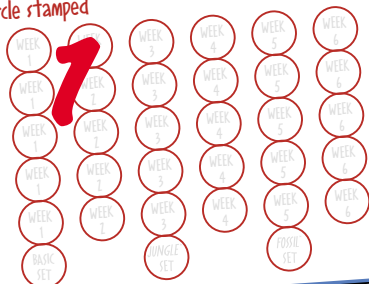
Bringing a new member

League activity

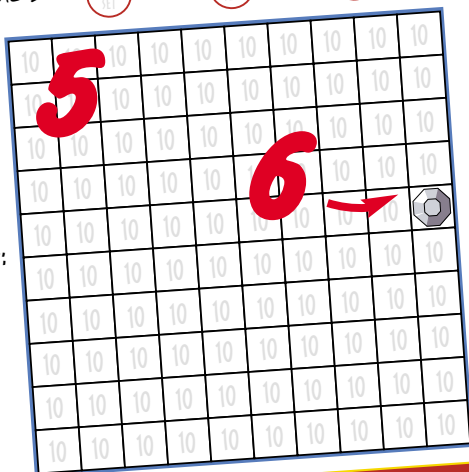
Trading a card

Helping the Gym Leader

Collecting a complete set



Boulder Badge Points



Award 10 points for:

Playing a game  
Winning a game

Award 20 points for:

Teaching a  
new player

Pewter City

**1** Each season is six weeks long. There are some activities you can earn points for once each week. The Gym Leader will mark these circles with a stamp to show that you earned points that week for that activity.

**2** These are the different things, other than playing **Pokémon** TCG games, for which you can earn points.

**3** Each time you play a **Pokémon** game, you earn 10 points. You get those 10 points whether you win or lose. If you win, you get another 10 points!

**4** If you're a Certified Coach, you earn 20 points each time you teach the game to a new player.

**5** For every 10 points you earn, the Gym Leader will fill in one of these squares with a stamp. Each row has 10 boxes, so each row that's filled is worth 100 points.

**6** When you earn 500 points, you earn the badge pictured here. You get a neat metal pin that you can actually put on your jacket to show you earned that badge!

**7** Each of these pages in your badge book represents one season. Each season is named after a city that Ash and his friends visit to earn their eight Trainer badges.





# Badges

THESE BADGES ARE  
REAL PINS YOU CAN  
ACTUALLY WEAR!



**Pewter City Season**  
Gym Leader: Brock  
Favorite Pokémon: Fighting (Rock)  
Badge: Boulder



**Cerulean City Season**  
Gym Leader: Misty  
Favorite Pokémon: Water  
Badge: Cascade



**Vermilion City Season**  
Gym Leader: Lt. Surge  
Favorite Pokémon: Lightning  
Badge: Thunder



**Celadon City Season**  
Gym Leader: Erika  
Favorite Pokémon: Grass  
Badge: Rainbow



**Saffron City Season**  
Gym Leader: Sabrina  
Favorite Pokémon: Psychic  
Badge: Marsh

**Cinnabar Island Season**  
Gym Leader: Blaine  
Favorite Pokémon: Fire  
Badge: Volcano



**Fuchsia City Season**  
Gym Leader: Koga  
Favorite Pokémon: Grass (Poison)  
Badge: Soul



**Viridian City Season**  
Gym Leader: Giovanni  
Favorite Pokémon: Fighting (Ground)  
Badge: Earth

## Is This a Good Trade?

When it comes to trading card games, there are a lot more factors involved in fair trading than just the value of the cards. For example, a Pokémon's popularity can impact the value of the card for some kids. If your child really likes Cubone, he or she may be willing to trade a more valuable card to get Cubone. This is just fine as long as everyone is happy afterwards (including you!).

Other things that impact the fairness of a trade include the rarity of the cards involved, whether the card is a

holofoil or not, and how powerful the card is when playing the game. Be aware—some kids are more savvy about all these nuances than others, and there are kids out there who may try to take advantage of other (younger or less experienced) kids. So make sure your children understand the value (both monetary and emotional) of the cards before you let them trade cards without supervision.

—WILL McDERMOTT





# Earn Points



*Earning points is the way you get badges and TMs. There are many ways for you to earn points. They're all fun, so you should have no problem working your way up to that Boulder Badge!*

10

**ATTENDANCE**—You get 10 points just for showing up each week.

10

**BRINGING A NEW MEMBER**—You get 10 points each week you bring a friend who signs up for the League.

10

**LEAGUE ACTIVITIES**—Every week, there'll be a totally fun League activity for you to complete to earn 10 points.

10

**TRADE A CARD**—Once per week, you get 10 points for trading a **Pokémon** TCG card. You can trade any cards you want, but you won't get extra points for trading more than one card. You also can't get points for trading basic Energy cards.

10

**HELP THE GYM LEADER**—Each Gym Leader is going to have different guidelines for what he or she needs help with. Don't be afraid to ask him or her if you can help out. If you do help the Gym Leader, you'll get 10 points.

10

**COLLECT A COMPLETE SET**—Once per season, you get 10 points for each different complete set of **Pokémon** TCG cards you collect.

10

**PLAYING A GAME**—For each game you play, you get 10 points. Even if you don't win the game, you still get those points. You could play 10 games, and even if you don't win a single one, you still get 100 points!

10

**WINNING A GAME**—For each game you win, you get another 10 points. Don't be disappointed if you don't win every game. Just think of these 10 points as a bonus for playing extra well!

20

**TEACHING A NEW PLAYER**—Before you can teach others how to play, you need to take the Coach's test. Then you can earn 20 points for teaching a new player how to play the game!

*Remember, there are plenty of ways to get points. You don't have to win a lot of games. If you show up every week with a new friend, trade a card, and complete an activity every week, you'll earn 240 points in that season! If you have a complete set of the Base Set, Jungle, and Fossil cards, that's another 30 points. You're halfway toward your badge without even playing a game!*

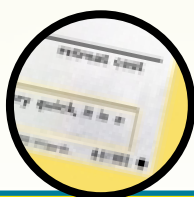
# Play Tips



## Choosing Your Active Pokémon

When you start a game, you get to pick one of the Pokémon in your starting hand to be your Active Pokémon. You may want to start with the one with the most Hit Points, so it survives longer. Or you may want to pick one that has a really cool attack. Another way to decide which Pokémon you want is its Retreat Cost. If a Pokémon can retreat for free, that's a good one to start with.

When your Active Pokémon gets Knocked Out, you get to choose which of your Benched Pokémon will become your new Active Pokémon. This usually happens at the end of your opponent's turn. Before you start your next turn, you have to choose your new Active Pokémon. If you pick one that has a Retreat Cost, you'll have to discard Energy cards to retreat it. If you pick one with no Retreat Cost, you can retreat it for free during your turn, before you attack. Then you could choose a new Active Pokémon after you've drawn your card. You never know what that one card could be.



## Drawing Cards Is Good

You should always take advantage of an opportunity to draw cards. The more cards you have in your hand, the more options you have. If your opponent draws a starting hand with no Basic Pokémon, don't forget to draw your two extra cards. Remember, if his or her new starting hand has no Basic Pokémon, you get *another* two cards.

There are lots of other ways to draw extra cards. Bill, a Trainer card, lets you draw two cards.

Kangaskhan lets you draw a card as an attack. Other cards, like Pokémon Trader, Computer Search, and Energy Search, let you look through your deck and choose a card to put in your hand. These are good when you want to get a particular card. Professor Oak and Gambler let you get a new hand of cards. The best time to play them is when you have no other cards in your hand!

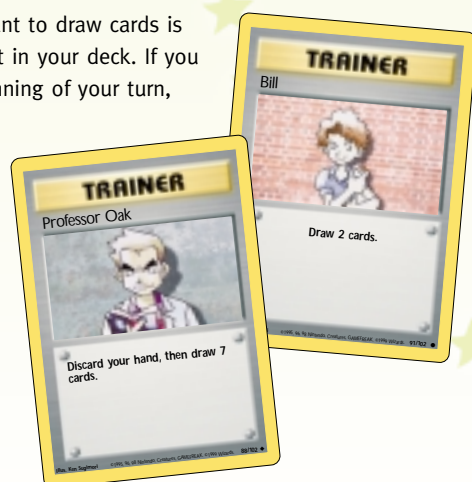
The only time you don't want to draw cards is when you have hardly any left in your deck. If you can't draw a card at the beginning of your turn, you lose the game! Don't get carried away drawing lots of cards unless you can win the game by

Knocking Out all of your opponent's Pokémon.

## Draw, Draw, Draw!

Five Great Ways to Draw Cards:

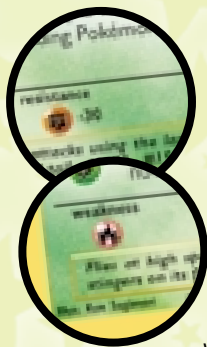
Professor Oak  
Bill  
Kangaskhan  
Gambler  
Maintenance



## Choose Your Weapon

Your Active Pokémon that you start the game with should have:

High Hit Points • An Attack requiring only one Energy  
Low (or no) Retreat Cost • No Weakness (if possible)



## Weakness and Resistance

Pay careful attention to the Weakness, Resistance, and Energy type of all Pokémon—yours and your opponent's. There are seven different kinds of Pokémon, so a lot of times it won't matter.

When it does matter, it can make a big difference.

If you're playing more than one kind of Energy—like Grass and Fighting—some of your Pokémon will have a Weakness to Fire and others will have a Weakness to Psychic or Grass.

If your opponent is playing a Fire/Water deck, you'll want to avoid leaving your Grass Pokémon as your Active Pokémon, because it will probably have a Weakness to Fire. If you're lucky enough to play someone whose Pokémon have a Weakness to your Pokémon, paying attention can help you win the game.

Resistance is not as common as Weakness, but it can be even more powerful. If your opponent only has one type of Pokémon in his or her entire deck, and one of your Pokémon has Resistance to that Energy type, most of his or her Pokémon will be unable to damage your Pokémon.

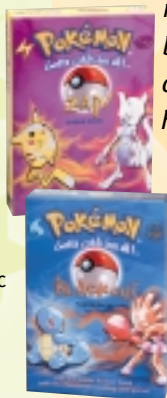
*Now you're ready to play some games. All you need is a deck.*

**Now That's Tough!**  
These Pokémon are some of the toughest—not only do they have no Weakness, they have Resistance too!

Articuno  
Dratini  
Dragonair  
Dragonite  
Ghastly  
Haunter  
Gengar  
Moltres  
Zapdos

## Theme Decks

Theme decks are a perfect way for you to jump right into the **Pokémon** trading card game and into League play. Each one is pre-made for you, ready to play out of the box. They even come with counters you can use to mark damage and a special holofoil coin.



Each theme deck also comes with a rulebook that contains:

- Complete card checklists, including rarity
- **Pokémon** TCG glossary
- Complete list of all theme decks for that card set

Even if you already have **Pokémon** TCG cards, theme decks can be a great springboard to building your own **Pokémon** TCG decks.

## The theme decks are:

- ☞ ⚡ **"Blackout"** (Base Set)
- ⚡ ⚡ **"Zap!"** (Base Set)
- 🔥 🌿 **"Brushfire"** (Base Set)
- 🌿 🌿 **"Overgrowth"** (Base Set)
- ☞ ⚡ **"Water Blast"** (Jungle)
- 🌿 ⚡ **"Power Reserve"** (Jungle)
- ☞ 🌿 **"Bodyguard"** (Fossil)
- 🔥 ⚡ **"Lock Down"** (Fossil)



## Winning Isn't Everything

**Okay. It's generally more fun** to win a game than to lose. As a father, I submerge my natural competitive tendencies when I play against my children. I want them to win more often than they lose so they'll stay interested in playing the game. But learning how to lose a game is just as important in a child's development as learning how to win games (and how to behave when you do win). Nobody wants to play against someone who gets obnoxious when winning or whines and screams when losing.

How you teach those social skills to your children is your business. I try to emphasize the joy of competing and the

fun we have playing together to make sure they understand that there's more to playing a game than just winning. That's why I like the fact that in the **Pokémon** TCG League, kids get just as many points for playing a game (10 points) as for winning a game (10 points again). So if your children want more points, they just need to play again. As a side benefit, if your child plays more often, he or she will naturally get better at the game (practice makes perfect). Also, to play more games, your child needs to learn to be a good sport. Otherwise, he or she may quickly run out of friends to play with.

—WILL McDERMOTT



# Build Your Own Deck

step

1



You've got a collection of **Pokémon** TCG cards, but you've never built your own deck. Here's a quick and easy guide to building one from scratch!

## Choose two types of Pokémon

When choosing your Pokémon types, don't pick ones that have Weakness to the same type of Pokémon. For example, Grass and Water Pokémon pair up well because many Grass Pokémon have Weakness to Fire while many Water Pokémon have Weakness to Lightning.

step

3



## Choose five Evolution Pokémon

Pick two of your Basic Pokémon you'd like to evolve and add two copies of their Stage 1 Evolution cards. Then choose one of those Stage 1 Evolution cards you'd like to evolve and add one copy of its Stage 2 Evolution card. Ivysaur, Venusaur, and Seaking are good choices for a Grass and Water deck.

step

5



## Choose 28 Energy Cards

You're almost done. All you need is Energy. Add 14 Energy cards in each type your Pokémon use.

step

2



## Choose four different Basic Pokémon

Next, choose two Pokémon of each Energy type. You'll want to be able to evolve some of these Pokémon, so make sure two of them can evolve. Add four copies of each Basic Pokémon to your deck. You can use Colorless Pokémon instead, because they can use any Energy cards to power their attacks. If you're making a Grass and Water deck, you might choose Bulbasaur, Nidoran ♀, Goldeen, and Seel.

step

4



## Choose 11 Trainer Cards

There are a lot of Trainer cards that can be helpful. Many players typically use two Professor Oak, four Bill, three Energy Removal, and two Pokémon Trader.

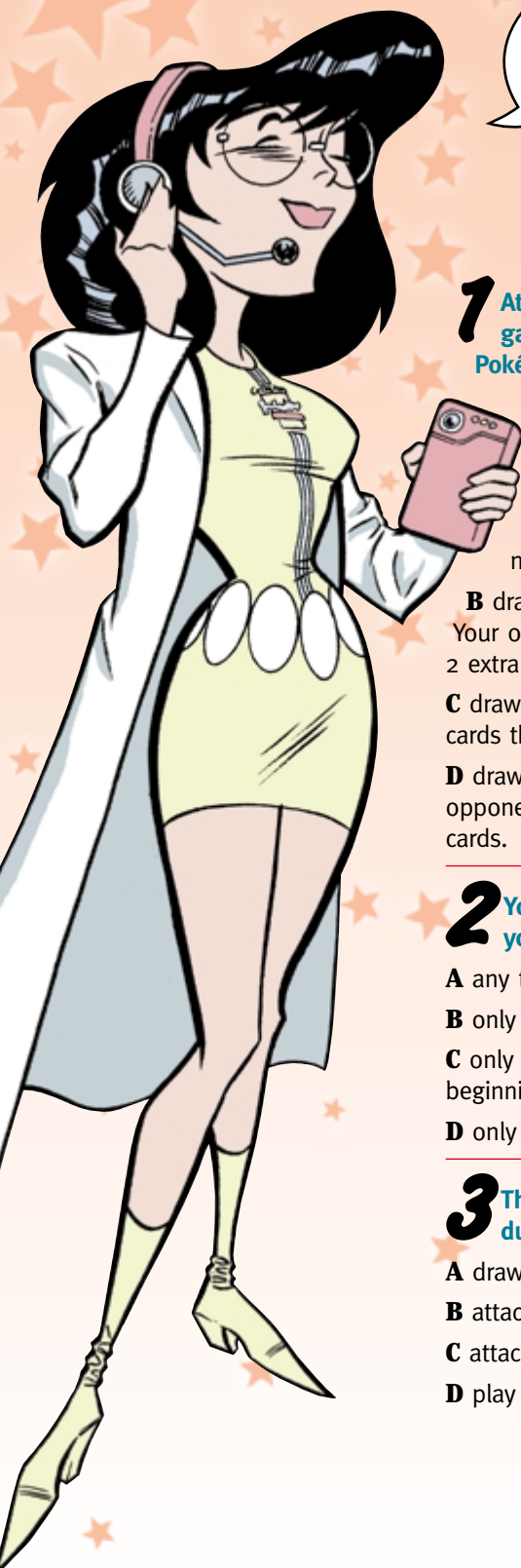
# done!



You're all set! You should have 60 cards in your deck. If you don't, go over the list again. Make sure you didn't add too many of one kind of card or not enough of another. Now, go play some **Pokémon**!

# Coach's Test

IF YOU CAN ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS CORRECTLY, YOU COULD BECOME A CERTIFIED COACH. ASK YOUR LOCAL GYM LEADER FOR MORE INFO.



**1** At the beginning of a Pokémon game, if you don't have a Basic Pokémon in your hand, you may show your hand to your opponent, shuffle it back into your deck, and:

**A** draw a new hand of 7 cards. Your opponent does nothing.

**B** draw a new hand of 7 cards. Your opponent may then draw up to 2 extra cards.

**C** draw a new hand with 2 fewer cards than your last hand.

**D** draw a new hand of 7 cards. Your opponent must then draw 2 extra cards.

**2** You can look at one of your Prizes:

**A** any time you want

**B** only if your opponent sees it also

**C** only when you put it down at the beginning of the game

**D** only when you take that Prize

**3** The last thing you may do during your turn is:

**A** draw a card

**B** attack with your Active Pokémon

**C** attach Energy cards

**D** play a Trainer card

**4** What can you do only once a turn?

**A** attach an Energy card to a Pokémon

**B** play a Trainer card

**C** retreat your Active Pokémon

**D** put a Basic Pokémon on the Bench

**5** What conditions do you flip a coin for?

**A** Confused and Paralyzed

**B** Poisoned only

**C** Poisoned and Paralyzed

**D** Asleep and Confused

**6** Melissa has a Paralyzed Pikachu (with a Retreat Cost of 1 Colorless Energy). How can she retreat it this turn?

**A** she can't retreat it while it's Paralyzed

**B** discard 1 Energy attached to it

**C** just say that she is retreating it

**D** flip a coin to see if it can retreat



# "Create Your Own Pokémon" Activity

Here's a **Pokémon** TCG League activity for you. Using the card borders below, you can create your own **Pokémon** cards. We've given you one of each type of card. You can draw right on the page or have an adult photocopy it for you so you can make all kinds of cards!

**Gym Leader:** Stamp this activity here to show this **Pokémon** trainer has completed this activity.

