

# The Demagogue deck build (Filth)

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If you survive the early game the Filth is in my opinion one of the strongest factions due to The Demagogue's ability. Which allows you to recycle magic. In this post I'll focus on creating a deck that makes the most out of that ability. This will not yet include mercenary units. They will probably be added in an update to this post once I have had experience with them. The game I'm talking about here is Summoner Wars which is made by Plaid Hat Games. It's available on android / iOS / Vassal.

## Basic idea

As I mentioned in the intro the basic idea here is to make the most of your Mutagist ability. This means you want to build a lot of mutations and then cycle them back. This will allow you a very strong magic economy. Your general play style will be more defensive as you only want to use two attacks per turn. And you'll generally not build commons as you can't get more units once those are gone. Your deck won't be to draw dependent as you can pull any mutation you really need from your draw pile. And finally you want to prevent losing commons at all cost.

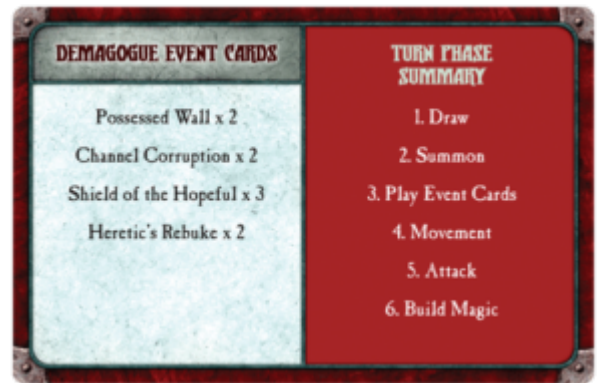


Aside from the Mutagist ability the Filth's main strength lies in its extreme flexibility. There are thirteen mutations to choose from, you can choose which to use depending on who you face use and you can combo some of them very effectively. Secondly, you can swap the mutations around. This means you can move your mutations around the map cheaply and you can use it very effectively to deny your opponent the chance to kill your mutation. This last is huge as you won't get much magic off a good Filth player and he can reuse the mutation on a newly summoned common. Finally, the event set The Demagogue has is pretty good and the individual mutations are as good as some decently priced champions so you have very good commons to work with. I'd call their weaknesses that they can buckle under heavy early pressure, that they don't have much ranged and that they are weaker to factions that can quickly eliminate commons as losing a mutated common means losing two magic (and a mutation you can no longer

recycle / use).

### **Deck build** (19 / 30 magic for the champions / mutations)

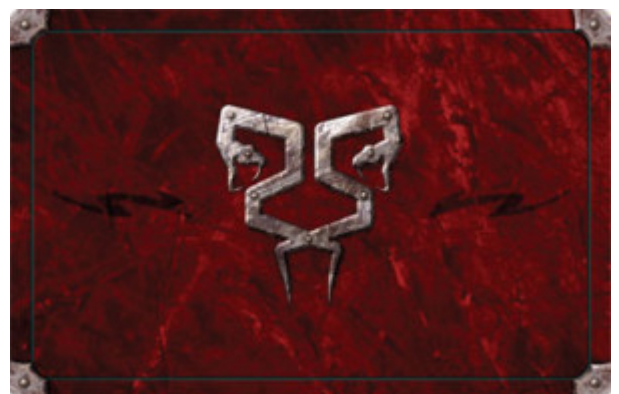
- 1 Her
- 1 The Abomination
- 1 Vomitus
- 4 Cultist (1 initial)
- 1 Zealot (1 initial)
- **4 cost:** Corpulent, Claw
- **3 cost:** Horror, Winged, Spew, Edible
- **2 cost:** Stoneflesh, Bestial, Absorption
- **1 cost:** Tentacle, Spellsucker, Incanter, Void



When I first played the Filth one of my first thoughts was that I wanted to put in as many mutations as possible to maximize my magic economy. This deck build does exactly that as it has all thirteen mutations and very few commons. Which means you'll get lots of mutations to build / use which will allow you to maximize your magic recycling. I was initially going to put in a few less mutations, but a similar build from the old plaidhat games forums convinced me this is sufficiently viable. Do note that commons are your lifeblood here; they need to be preserved carefully.

The commons that included are only the zero costs, so you can use all your magic on champions and mutations. I've included cultists over zealot's because they are ranged. I've included all three Filth champions because you want to be able to use all that magic you are building on something useful. I'd swap out Vomitus in an instant if there was a better champion, but since I'm not including mercenaries there isn't. Her is probably a keeper due to her unique ability, The Abomination I might swap out as well with a mercenary champion.

Mutation wise I've grouped them in terms of cost, so it's easy to see which can be swapped out easily. I find it pretty hard to say how I'd rank the better mutations between themselves. So I'll instead mention which I'd rank the worst: Incanter (as this deck build doesn't have too many commons), Void (same story basically),



Absorption (too situational) and Edible (least useful of the rest). If I'd remove mutations from the deck I'd start with these.

Some tactic and combo suggestions:

- Killing off your own damaged mutated commons is essential. You can do this very effectively by having a low health mutation in hand and swapping it for your highly damaged, high health mutation that's on the board. This will put the high health mutation back into your hand it will kill the common and low-cost mutation, sending them to \*your\* magic pile. After using that magic you can then put the mutation on another common.
- If you have one three cost mutation in hand and three of them on the board you can swap them all around during your summon phase without it costing any magic. This means any unit on the board can instantly become one of the others. Naturally you can also do it free towards the two costs, but it then costs magic to summon back the one that costs three.
- Consider the order in which you are building your magic. You don't want to get a key mutation to get stuck at the bottom of your magic pile as that's the only place you can't get it from. Also, if the enemy has magic draining abilities, you preferably don't want your mutations at the top if they might be able to use that magic drain as that limits the number of mutations you can cycle and might prevent you from using that key mutation.
- Planning ahead is essential as the Filth. What is your opponent roughly going to do and what mutation do I need against that. Reason this is essentially important with the Filth is that you can't immediately use the Mutation you call in. You can only use it the next turn.
- A wall on the second row can be useful defensively. For instance hiding Her (or The Demagogue) behind.

## Playing the faction

Your main worry is very aggressive factions as you start with no mutations and only two commons. This means you want to build the mutations you draw the first turn so you can get a (defensive) mutation in play next turn. Protect your commons if possible as you don't have that many of them. I try to build at least three magic first turn. Killing off your initial units isn't



that good of an idea, so also be wary of magic drain taking your mutations if you are facing in example Phoenix Elves or Benders. The best defensive mutations to get up early are Horror, Spew, Tentacle and Spellsucker. Against factions that are very good against commons, I'd recommend trying to get your champions out early, at least until they've used their anti-common events.





Once you have your first two mutations up and running you continue building mutations heavily and recycling them. Ideally you'll go through your deck as fast as possible, so don't hold onto too many cards. If you play your commons you can often use channel corruption instantly when you get it. Heretic's rebuke and champions are probably the only card's I'd hold for more then one turn (so ideally build or summon the mutation you called in). I'd also advice playing most of your walls as creating choke points is to your advantage due to you wanting only two attacks per turn. At this stage you'll often still want to be reacting to your opponent as every turn is building your advantage. If you have a decent (magic) advantage by this point you can start going more offensive using your champions or the more aggressive mutations. In example: Winged and Bestial for assassination or Claw, Horror and Abomination for dealing with any champions that come into play.


Key in the end game isn't necessarily how much magic you have left as that's pretty much unlimited. Much more important is whether or not you still have commons you can summon on or champions to play with. Also, you can hold more than five cards by adding a mutation to your hand each turn, increasing the options you have readily accessible. Corpulent can be useful in end game. Against factions that can last pretty long as well, it's advisable to go offensive before the end game as most mutations are as strong as cheap champions. You can pack a huge punch and thereby deal with most turtlers effectively.

### **Match up analysis**





I might do a faction by faction analysis eventually, but I'll start this off with a few general observations. Factions that are good at taking out commons are hard match-ups. Benders (mind control), Cloaks (assassinate) and Deep Dwarves (Lun) especially. Also be wary of factions that can deal out a great amount of damage in one turn. Like Phoenix Elves. Against these it's probably worth it to play champion heavy and use the the mutations mostly as support / defensive units.

### **First summoner specific cards**






Card	Deck	Notes
	Base	One of the strongest summoner abilities as you can gain magic back endlessly. You want to do this pretty much every turn, so try not to need more than two attacks. Ideally you want to be picking from your discard pile as that allows you to recycle magic. Still, even using it on your draw pile means you get potentially one extra card to build for magic that turn. Having to reveal the card you picked is a disadvantage, but you can play mind games by picking one you just want to build.
	Base (x3)	Main use of this event is to save a common so you deny your opponent the magic and you can mutate it next turn. However, I feel it's often better to just build these instantly and make sure your commons don't get attacked. So I would only keep it if I feel I can't prevent an attack on a common (in example if I'm being pressured heavily). Another use is to be very aggressive with a common and count on this event to keep them safe so you can summon a strong mutation in their territory. I would only do that though if I can be pretty sure they won't get two attacks on it.
	Base (x2)	I like this event. Forcing most other factions to choose between wasting two magic and limiting their options for that turn or having one less summoning spot is very useful. Especially early you can use it to slow down any push they may have. If you can't put it on a wall which will force them to discard two cards then consider building this card. An example would be if you are playing against the Tundra Orcs or Swamp Orcs.
	Base (x2)	Extremely powerful event. Not only are you denying the enemy a common (potentially a 2-4 magic one), you are also gaining a probably well positioned mutated unit which can immediately move and in example roll three dice on a summoner. And you don't need to use one of your precious commons for it. Take care not to expose your summoner too much to get the Rebuke off. Good opponents will move their commons out of range if you suddenly start moving forward with your summoner ;).






Card	Deck	Notes
	Base (x2)	Another excellent event card. You'll generally safe 2-4 magic using this card and you can use it on a freshly summoned unit. So even if you have no magic, you can summon a cultist / zealot, then play this event and subsequently move & attack with the new unit.

### Generic cards





Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base	4	His ability gives him an average of 3,5 dice every turn. Which makes him worth the cost in my opinion. He's a not reliable though, so you may end up hitting a one hit point common with six dice.
	Base	-2	Against melee heavy decks this is easily the best mutation to have. Also great to bring out early to stall the enemy. And he gets three dice. Be careful not to lose the mutation though; so swap him out if he's in danger of dying. Note that units moving adjacent to him can't attack ANY unit, so he's great to combo with other units.
	Base	-2	Another useful mutation. Two dice and four movement can let you land that last dice on a summoner. And with the ability to swap mutations around you can have any unit suddenly become the bestial mutant. He's not top priority to summon for me until I need him for assassination or for hitting a key common that's just out of range.
	Base	-3	I'm not that big a fan of this mutation. I can see how he can be useful to remove 4-5 wounds and then swap him out for a low health mutation so you can take wounds efficiently. That does take a bit of setup to pull off though and that's pretty much his only real use with his 1 dice. Being aggressive with him doesn't work well as anything you swap in for him will probably die.





Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base	-2	The main anti-champion mutation The Filth has. This is another mutation you want to make sure you don't lose early. Against high health champions you'll be rolling five dice. Couple him with a champion or Horror and you'll disintegrate their champions. Note that it doesn't work against summoners! You won't need really to summon him until they get out a champion.
	Base	-2	Interesting mutation as it can attack through walls and through your own units. He's not extremely strong with only two dice, but very effective in choke points as you can in example attack with two units in a straight line. Place him behind units like Horror, Corpulent or Abomination for a scary strong push.
	Base	-2	Another one of the essential units to include in your deck build. Not just because of the flight ability which allows him to move three squares and over other cards. But also because he has three dice, so he's ideal for assassination. Be careful with his three health though.
	Base	-2	As the only normal ranged mutation this one is an auto include for me. And his special ability allows him to do three damage ranged 44% of the time. So great mutation, which is especially useful in the early game as it's a great unit to keep aggressive factions out of your area.
	Base	0	This one is pretty interesting. Mostly because it has a 50% chance to ignore ALL wound markers that it would receive. This means it not only is effective against high dice champions but it also works against non-traditional forms of attack like Burn. So it's pretty robust. A fun use is to move it forward aggressively and then swap it out with in example Winged or Bestial. Or even Stoneflesh. Defensively it can also be pretty useful as it's very hard to kill reliable.

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Base (x6)	0	I generally don't use the commons of the Filth by themselves. So it's special of not being able to attack walls is pretty irrelevant. Most important actually is that it's free to summon, which means you don't need to spend the extra magic to summon it and you can use all of it on the mutation it will inevitably get. I also don't like using a Shield of the Hopeful on them, see that event cards notes for the why.
	Base (x6)	-1	The same applies to the cultist as it does to the Zealot. It's also zero cost, so useful to include as a common to mutate. The cultist is probably slightly better due to it being ranged although it's special is slightly worse then the Zealot.
	Base (x3)	W	
	Reinf	5	Against some factions with low health commons, Her is essential (Benders in example). She's best placed at a safe place as she can't attack if moved (in example behind a 2nd row wall). I'd say using her is best when you're being very defensive as you can't do much attacking if you use her combined with Demagogue's special. Still, her special ability alone makes her useful to include in any Filth deck. Do realize you are doing a 1 dice attack; so it's not that bad to not use her attack or not even summon her when you are playing against high health units.
	Reinf	1	The worst Filth champion. Not knowing what range his attack will be makes it hard to use him effectively. If you do get a four, five or six you can use him as a sniper for that turn, which isn't too bad. If you don't put him adjacent to a ranged unit and he doesn't even roll two or three though, he's very bad. He does have five health, so he won't die that fast which means you can risk using him as a sniper.



Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Reinf	-2	Very situational ability. You have to summon this guy, your opponent has to have a filth card in his discard pile and you have to actually destroy a unit with him. I wouldn't rate him too highly as you should have enough mutations to not be too reliant on getting back one single mutation. Still, getting back winged or horror can be useful and his summon cost / dice / health isn't too bad.
	Reinf	0	If used in combination with a Cultist you can get a three ranged unit adjacent to your incanter for not much cost. I feel this is still pretty situational though as the incanter mutant dies in one hit (which gives your opponent two magic) and you shouldn't have too many commons on the field to benefit from this.
	Reinf	0	Very useful to include to use situationally against specific factions. Especially against heavy combo factions or factions with very annoying events (magic drain, assassinate). It will allow you to nullify an event and gain two magic doing it (the common and mutant are destroyed). Note: To set this up, it will cost you two magic (1 for the common that is summoned, 1 for applying the mutation). He only has two health, so keep him safe.
	Reinf	0	Another situational mutation which is especially useful for aggressive play. It can be used to summon a corpulent mutant, move it into enemy territory and then replace it with a stoneflesh mutant and summon commons off of it. Which you can then instantly mutate into useful mutants. You can also extend your summoning range by using Stoneflesh as you can summon next to it. Don't use it by itself ;).

Card	Deck	SSCF*	Notes
	Reinf	-1	It's limitation is that only commons without mutations can pass through. This means you can only use this with commons attacking or by rescuing them with a shield of the hopeful. Which makes it situational at best. I'd rate it worse as stoneflesh although it's pretty cool to be able to move to pretty much anywhere on the board.
	Reinf (x5)	0	I really dislike this card. It's ability is pretty bad (as it only has two health) and it costs two magic to summon and still only has one dice. It's ranged yeah, but for zero magic you can also get the cultist which has the same amount of dice ranged. Avoid.

\* SSSCF = Secret Summoning cost formula = attack value + base health + 1 if ranged - (2 if common, -3 if champion and -4 if mutation) - magic cost. I haven't included the worth of the ability as that's generally controversial.

### References

- All Filth cards (especially strategy section and comments are useful)
- A Doug's Guide To Summoner Wars podcast (strategy discussion and community news)
- Mythacle Battleplan for Summoner Wars (deck builder and I got the images from there)