

ASCENDED HEROES

CHOOSE YOUR FIRST BOX

Opening, collecting and learning are three different jobs.

Original independent Puzzlewick companion. Not an official rulebook, stock report, investment forecast or guarantee of particular pulls. Check the exact edition and current listing before buying.

Pick one goal before buying

OPEN: a small sealed purchase with a fixed entertainment budget.

COLLECT: named cards, numbers and treatments, with a written finish line.

PLAY: complete teaching decks before random packs. Battle Academy 2024 provides three 60-card decks; an Elite Trainer Box does not.

The pack-count reference

Standard Elite Trainer Box: 9. N's Zekrom promo, sleeves, Energy, dice and storage.

Pokemon Center Elite Trainer Box: 11. Separate edition with two N's Zekrom promos, one stamped.

Booster Bundle: 6. Packs without the ETB equipment.

Premium Poster Collection: 10. Choose Mega Lucario or Mega Gardevoir.

First Partners Deluxe Pin Collection: 5. Three basic promos and a pin.

Mega ex Box: 4. Named playable promo and oversized lenticular display card.

Tech Sticker Collection: 3. Promo and stickers.

Erika or Larry Collection: 2. Exact character version matters.

Mini Tin: 2. Random-art listings do not promise one pictured design.

Three checks at checkout

☐ Is this the exact product, language and edition I meant?

☐ Is the listing one box, one pack or a retailer-assembled bundle?

☐ Will I use the extras, or do I already own them?

Ascended Heroes is a special expansion. Do not mistake a retailer's multi-bundle carton for an ordinary official 36-pack booster display. An oversized promo is not a playable deck card.

Opening limit

My fixed opening budget: _____

My stopping point: _____

My next purchase solves: _____

Publisher product showcase | Official expansion

COLLECT WITH A FINISH LINE

295 numbered cards is not every possible variant

217 + 33 + 14 + 7 + 22 + 2 = 295.

Main sequence; illustration rares; ultra rares; Mega attack rares; special illustration rares; Mega hyper rares.

Foil variants, promos and stamps can add separate collecting choices. Decide whether your goal is one character, selected numbered cards, the complete numbered checklist, or a treatment-heavy collection. Do not silently change that rule after every opening.

Four Dragonites, one game effect

152: double rare.

271: Mega attack rare.

290: special illustration rare.

295: Mega hyper rare.

All four are Mega Dragonite ex: 370 HP, Sky Transport and Ryuno Glide. The art changes; the game effect does not. Normal deck copy limits follow the name, not the artwork. These are references, not guaranteed contents of a sealed box.

Make a small wish list

Card name / number / treatment / obtained

Storage arithmetic

295 cards require 33 nine-pocket page faces. The last face has two spare pockets. A 360-pocket binder leaves 65 pockets beyond 295. A page face is not necessarily a whole physical leaf. Foil and promo variants can exceed this plan.

Do not turn a sample into a promise

TCGplayer's February 24, 2026 study opened more than 2,000 packs and estimated a 1.44% special illustration rare rate, roughly one in 70 packs. That is a sample estimate, not an official guarantee or the chance of one particular card. Seventy packs can still produce none.

When the remaining wish list has exact names and numbers, compare singles or sensible trades. An opening can be enjoyable without being a reliable buying method.

Official numbered checklist | Official card gallery | TCGplayer sample study

YOUR FIRST GAME, WITHOUT THE PANIC

The normal physical TCG

Exactly 60 cards per deck. Draw seven to begin, choose a Basic Active and set aside six face-down Prizes. The normal Bench holds up to five Pokemon. No Basic in your opening hand means following the mulligan procedure. Teaching products can walk you through setup.

A turn in plain language

Draw. Then take legal actions in a useful order: Bench Basics, attach one Energy from hand, play allowed Trainers, use Abilities, evolve eligible Pokemon, and retreat if needed.

Attack last. Attacking ends the turn. Do not automatically discard attached Energy after an attack; only do so when instructed.

Normally at most one Supporter and one Stadium from hand per turn, and one retreat. Going first: no Supporter or attack on that first turn. Neither player normally evolves on their first turn or a Pokemon's first turn in play. Card text can create exceptions.

Three rules worth slowing down for

Evolution: match the exact printed name, including a Trainer owner. Chikorita to Bayleef to Mega Meganium ex; Erika's Oddish to Erika's Gloom to Erika's Vileplume ex.

Mega risk: a Mega Evolution Pokemon ex normally gives up three Prizes when Knocked Out. Losing two can cost all six.

Costs and damage: Colorless attack costs can be paid with any Energy type. Specific damage bonuses can still require a named type.

Three practice sessions

1. Finish a guided game with unchanged teaching decks. Say actions aloud.
2. Repeat one deck. Explain its attacker, Energy plan and recovery after a Knock Out.
3. Ask for a beginner-friendly League session. At an event, ask judges for rulings and verify the current format before paying entry.

Pack only what has a job

- [] 60 matching opaque play sleeves plus spares.
- [] A box that fits the actual sleeved deck and dividers.
- [] Optional themed mat on a clean table.
- [] Counters required by the chosen deck and event.
- [] One notebook and one question to ask.

Keep food, drink, direct sun and moisture away from cards. Sleeve before rigid protection; never force a holder or use destructive authenticity tests. Pokemon TCG Pocket is a different game from the physical TCG.

Official July 2026 rulebook: pages 7-16, 21-27 | Official tutorials | Find local play