

GOTHNOG'S

EXTRAORDINARY EXTRAS



ARCANE ANCESTERY



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INTRODUCTION

“She made it sound a simple thing, and easy. They need never know how difficult it had been, or how much it had cost her. That was a lesson Melisandre had learned long before Asshai; the more effortless the sorcery appears, the more men fear the sorcerer. When the flames had licked at Rattleshirt, the ruby at her throat had grown so hot that she had feared her own flesh might start to smoke and blacken.”

— George R.R. Martin;
A Dance with Dragons



Her blood boiled with the green flame of her fey ancestry as she tapped into the latent magic within. Tiny eldritch lights began to dance around her head like a brilliant cyclone of sparks. Lillith loosed the power that she had gathered, shaping it with her will as it flew. The fiery emerald lance plunged inexorably toward the charging ogre with a shriek like a banshee.

There are those who are born with the blood of ancient power in their veins, and by exercising their will, can shape and control that power... usually.

The following charts and information are intended to add life and depth to a flat or lackluster arcane practitioner in your fantasy world. These features can be randomly generated or they can be used to provide some sparks of inspiration for players and DMs alike.

Players are encouraged to use this document to enhance their characters, while DMs may use these tables to generate a random arcane caster or develop an entire magical ecology.

Roll once on each table to fill in the details for a specific individual or use them to create an entire arcane tradition.

BEGINNINGS

Every adept and trickster has the story of their very first time. That moment when the world changed forever and they saw true magic. Roll randomly or pick below to find out when that moment began.

1. **Birth** - The stars have aligned, resulting in a peculiar birthmark, extraordinarily eyes, or some other distinct mark, indicating that this baby is destined for greatness.
2. **Puberty** - It's not enough that awkward growth and conflicting emotions have their brain in chaos, but now the confused adolescent has their first taste of arcane power at the most chaotic time in their life.

3. **Random Chance** - A bizarre coincidence has sparked the drive to learn more about the mystic arts.
4. **Submission** - For years they have heard voices in their head, and now stomach pains and panic attacks have finally taken their toll. The fledgling caster has released all will to this strange power within.
5. **Mentor** - A lone stranger has taken them a new student.
6. **Self Discovery** - No one knows what lays ahead. Only through meditation and investigation will true knowledge be revealed.
7. **College** - Awareness began with a bagged lunch and a backpack full of books.
8. **Military Academy** - War was imminent. Serving the crown as a warcaster was every teenager's dream. And every adult's nightmare.
9. **Entertainment** - Whether a street performer or part of a wandering troupe, gypsy elders only share knowledge with those who balance truth and lies.
10. **Cursed** - For some the "high arts" are a curse, forever separating them from home and family. This magus carries a heavy burden.
11. **Legacy** - As a 5th generation wizard. Failure is not an option.
12. **Duty** - It's a tough job, but someone has to do it. Otherwise, who will take the place of the elders who have passed on?
13. **Gifted** - There has never been a time that magic has not run through their veins. How then to know what it means to be "normal"?
14. **Trauma** - Scrambling around a burning house, drowning as the children laugh on the shore, or beaten by a drunken father; these are all catalyst for an explosion of raw power.
15. **Astral Walk** - Neither dream or imagining, the mind has journeyed to The Beyond to gather forbidden knowledge.
16. **Planar Travel** - Whether through a hole in an ancient tree or a wardrobe leading to a dark, alien world, traveling to an extraordinary realm has left the traveler changed forever.
17. **Transformation** - Something new has taken flesh. Whether the former familiar of a powerful wizard or a banished spirit of air, this new being must learn what it means to be human.
18. **Amnesia** - An infamous mage has disappeared about the same time that a young ward began studying the arcane arts. Coincidence?
19. **Scavenger** - There was never a plan, but picking up new talents is a given for a jack of all trades.
20. **Roll Twice** - Take both or combine.

ARCANE FOCUS

Here are a few options when choosing a object to become an arcane focus. Compiling a complete list would be prohibitive, so use your imagination to build off of these.

1. **Ring, Bracer, Glove or Gauntlet**
2. **Amulet, Medallion or Necklace**
3. **Tiara, Headband, Skullcap or Crown**
4. **Branch, Cane, Walking Stick or Natural Staff** (complete with a birds nest)
5. **Ceremonial Weapon** (dagger, sword or ornate rod)
6. **Seashell, Turtle Shell or Sharks Tooth**
7. **Skull, Severed Hand, Thigh Bone or Beating Heart**
8. **Geodesic, Gears, Carving or Statuette**
9. **Cape, Scarf, Banner or Carpet**
10. **Roll Twice** - Take both or combine.

BOOKS AND OBJECTS

Many arcane casters keep great tomes that are crammed with spells, notes, journal entries, collections of arcane lore, historical references and compendiums of magical structures. These books are often used during their daily meditation to imprint certain spells in their mind for later use.

There are, however, many practitioners of magic that come from backgrounds and cultures that do not use books as a method of passing information to the next generation.

Some may not even have a written language, but even if they learn to read, these casters are less likely to gain understanding from books, and are usually more comfortable with visual references or physical repetition.

Below are some alternative methods for caster who use some sort of item for daily meditation and reflection.

1. **Puzzle** - The puzzle object is about discovering something new with each contemplation. Often new experiences will reveal an even greater understanding of the arcane. A wooden cube twists and turns in the caster's hands, blending the carved surfaces to produce unique and complex patterns. A segmented iron rod reveals a new mystery with every turn and click. A mysterious book of quatrains that seems to change with each reading.
2. **Infinite Steps** - Some arts require physical exertion and muscle memory. In this case, meditative steps or dance are repeated by the caster; mastering the old and practicing the new. A long scroll with charcoal imprints of 79 footprints in odd positions. A guide detailing a complex dance without pictures. A mechanical hand that, when the key on the side is wound, forms finger positions that must be copied exactly.

3. **Tattoos** - By reading and studying certain scripts, further enlightenment can be achieved. The body is covered in arcane symbols and markings such as text, star charts or blueprints.
4. **Natural Materials** - These are the progenitors of modern spellbooks and foci. Natural arcane casters often use these base materials, as well as tattoos listed above, to get in touch the greater arcane mysteries all around them. It's about remaining as close to nature as possible in order to preserve the unaltered energies. It's about feelings, imagination and raw emotion rather than logic and structure. Bark slats, rune sticks, huge leaves, animal hides, cave drawings, or scrapbooks filled with preserved plants and insects provide the conduit to the arcane.
5. **Items of Chance** - Using objects that create random patterns can predict the future and can lead to some amazing revelations by the arcanist. These can include tarot cards, dice, rune sticks or animal bones.
6. **Roll Twice** - Take both or combine with a traditional sorcerous spellbook.

PATHS OF MAGIC

Whether born with a gift or years of study, a spellcaster may fall into a specialized path. There follows a list of paths that are far more numerous than the traditional 8 schools.

As knowledge is uncovered, a more granular path of study emerges for those who uncover mysteries. Pick or choose randomly from the Ephemeral or Material Schools.

History has shone that a magus with two or more paths will have at least one path they can never learn. Pick or choose a random path that is the caster's bane.

EPHEMERAL SCHOOLS

1. **Chronomancy** - Postcognition, precognition, and the manipulation of time.
2. **Necromancy** - The power over life, death and unlife.
3. **Coronamancy** - Light, life and living energies.
4. **Shadowmancy** - The shaping darkness and portals to the shadow plane.
5. **Aerialancy** - Clouds, winds and storms.
6. **Phantasmancy** - Illusions, images and altering perceptions.
7. **Metromancy** - The study and command of a new sphere; the urban landscape.
8. **Astralancy** - The ability to separate the mind and body as well as travel to other planes of existence.
9. **Antithancy** - Protecting the mind, body and spirit of self and others.

10. **Psychomancy** - Mastery of psionics and mental intrusion.
11. **Telemancy** - Spatial jaunt of objects from one location to another.
12. **Pentamancy** - Rituals and wards to summon and dominate extraplanar beings.

MATERIAL SCHOOLS

1. **Mechanomancy** - Devices, gears and golems imbued with arcane power.
2. **Creomancy** - The spontaneous creation of something out of nowhere.
3. **Cryomancy** - Frost, ice and the absence of heat.
4. **Pyromancy** - Heat, fire and the elimination of cold.
5. **Electromancy** - Lighting, thunder and magnetics.
6. **Voxancy** - Silence, voices, noise and deafening sounds.
7. **Biomancy** - Enhancing the cycle of life of both animals and sentient beings.
8. **Aquanancy** - The shaping of water and its destruction.
9. **Polyamancy** - Altering the shape of the body.
10. **Transmuancy** - Altering the shape and properties of objects.
11. **Terramancy** - Manipulation of stone, rock, dirt, sand and dust.
12. **Floramancy** - The command of plants.

STYLES OF CASTING

Below are options to add drama and narrative flavor beyond traditional spellcasting. Ignoring spell components is a common house rule at many tables of the world's most popular roleplaying game. Use the following as flavor or establish mechanical rules to enhance an individual, group or the entire setting.

1. **The Eyes** - Spells emit from the eyes, only targeting those the caster can see. Being blinded or hiding is a bane to this style.
2. **Voice** - From words of power to chants and song, those who can hear the voice are potential victims. Loud areas, such as storms, and being choked or muffled by a captor will limit this style.
3. **Touch** - The hands (and feet) are the gate to unbridled power. If targets are in contact, this style can arc through multiple individuals or objects. This stylist can also place a reaction upon themselves, activating a spell if touched.
4. **Movement** - Graceful body motions, drawing of symbols in the air and dancing are all hallmarks of this style. If the muscles are tied, so is the magic.
5. **Gemstones** - Enchanting elements of the earth allows this caster to place stones and activate them at a range. The gemstones can be used multiple times, but a separate stone is required for each type of casting. Of course confiscating the stones will halt all abilities of the stylist... unless the stone is within sight.
6. **Runes, Glyphs and Marks** - Using an arcane mark, this stylist can draw patterns on objects and locations to enact a spell. This can be on another subject or on themselves. Even doorways and walls are subject to the mark. Wiping away or disrupting the mark will remove the effects of any spell.
7. **Sympathetic Magic** - By having access to a victim's blood, flesh, hair or very personal item, the caster can have a much more dramatic effect. The same works for objects as well, like taking a piece of wood to harm a tree, or patch of fur to effect a creature. It's all about making a connection between two sources.
8. **Gears and Devices** - Each spell is a small forged object of mechanical design. These objects can be given to others and carried in a sack. They are also targets for thieves and vulnerable to damage.
9. **Concentration** - All spells cast using this style requires only the mind. This means that all spells require concentration to maintain, regardless of the duration. Suffering harm will cause a spell to become disrupted unless they are able to maintain concentration (DC 13).
10. **Smoke** - All spells are a form of mist or cloud. This fog can creep under doors and into armored opponents. It is also useless in high winds and vacuum conditions.
11. **Fire** - From a torch to a flaming pit or brazier, this caster draws power and focus through fire and heat. Dousing the flame renders the caster impotent.
12. **Liquids** - Water, draughts, elixirs, potions and salves are all styles this caster will use. Throwing a bottle or pouring an acid are tricks of the trade. So is altering a glass of wine or pool of water. Freezing a liquid or dumping it to become useless are ways to stop this stylist.
13. **The Earth** - By touching the ground, this caster can target those who stand upon it. Those above the ground and flying creatures are not subject to these effects. The caster must also be on the ground as well, bare feet and all.
14. **Open Sky** - This stylist summons power that rains down from above. Those inside may be protected. The caster must also be outside, no matter the weather.
15. **Daylight** - As the sun sets, so too does the power of this stylist.
16. **Darkness** - As the sun rises, so does the power fade for this stylist. The underworld would seem to be the dominant realm for this caster, but when the sun rises, it matters not if they are underground.

17. **Armoury** - Weapons, armor, shields and siege weapons are the foci of magic for this caster. This is a true warcaster and nothing else will do.

18. **Region** - Power only comes from a specific location. This individual has no power beyond the borders of their homeland.

19. **Recharge** - The spellcaster must rejuvenate from a pool, stone or other method. If the source is mobile, the caster must return to the source over a specified period to regain mystic energies.

20. **Roll Twice** - Combine or allow both styles of magic.

ORIGINS OF MAGIC

Where does magic come from? How does it operate independent of its use? Roll or choose below. This can cover an entire setting, or the laws of magic can change based on the location or even the individual. Each has its own advantages and limitations. Decide beforehand how much impact this will have on the setting and the mechanics of the game.

1. **Internal** - Magic is inside. It is the formation of a power within. Injury and exhaustion are vitally important. Willpower is at the heart of this source. Practitioners will glow like a lantern to other adepts. The greatest resource are others who have an internal power but cannot control its power.

2. **Avatars** - Spirits and unseen beings are the source of mana. By asking, commanding or enslaving these forms, shaping reality occurs. Sometimes motivations will be at odds to these elemental ghosts. Maintaining an amicable relationship is a priority.

3. **Natural Flow** - Only the touched can see how this energy drifts, runs and pools in the natural environment. As the flow pours down mountainsides and bends around rocks, lying in valleys and crags, the mystic must be aware of the direction and intensity of the prana. Spells will have a greater or lesser effect based on being up or down stream. Detections and deflections work best at the base of these rivers. Attacks are more forceful from on high. Investigation of the colors in the flow can lead to insight about an opponent.

4. **True Names** - Everything has a name. Uncovering these universal names grants power over the thing. No one speaks their own true name out loud. Hiding it is paramount for survival. The trading of names for favors is an undercurrent in this society of spellcasters.

5. **Belief** - The shaping of reality is only as great as one's belief. Any hesitation and the world that is known will impose its set of rules. As one gains a greater understanding of the illusion of reality, the more they fade from existence.

6. **Magestones** - From crystals the size of small houses, to small cut stones worn around the neck, these magestones or dragonstones are what fuel the spells of the arcanist. More valuable than gold, a magestone of any size is a prized possession. Protected by armies and hoarded by the paranoid, wizards vie for dominance over this valuable resource.

7. **Elderfire** - There are only a handful of The Chosen. They are the true magi. Beings of vast power in mortal form. Only by making an oath of devotion can one be granted a fragment of power. But this lofty position cannot last forever. Students and masters alike wait for the day when the Elders will pass on to another world, leaving only one as the next in the line of the Elderfire regime.

8. **Ley Lines** - Unseen by the common folk, these lines of power cross the countryside. Tapping into this source is how miracles happen. It is also a limitation when one encounters dead zones which are nearly empty of ley line activity. Masters of the arts build strongholds on top of ley line confluence regions. Travel along ley lines is common as well as dangerous creatures that hunt those who do so.

9. **Portals** - From the elemental planes, to the outer planes of existence, magic pours into reality from these locations. As a conduit, the caster is both a door and beacon from these other worlds. Otherworldly beings can be drawn to these fractures in reality. Opposed worlds can cause disruptions when casting spells and/or distress to the caster.

10. **Astrological Alignment** - The stars, planets and moons are in eternal motion (or not?). As a mystic, the caster draws power from their relationship with those celestial bodies and configurations, whether in ascended, descended and/or retrograde positions. Through random elements and predictable path, this mana can fuel or hinder the shaping of magic on the material plane.

11. **Elemental** - Primordial energy is the source, and is derived from earth, air, fire, water; a universal foundation. Add to those such secondary elements as metals, gravity and life, and one has a powerful force and must be handled with respect. A gentle breeze or a hurricane are both a reflection of the power of air.

12. **Roll Twice** - Combine or establish as both origins of magic.

ROLE IN SOCIETY

If individuals with arcane power exist, they will have a substantial effect on the world. Roll or pick how these influential beings affect the town, city or nation.

1. **Underworld** - Organized crime and the black market is under the hand of powerful mystics.
2. **Secret Societies** - No one finds them. They find you. Speaking their name is a promise of a public and painful death... if you're lucky.
3. **Mercenaries** - Living in perpetual neutrality, these casters only follow the money, favors or gifts of knowledge. Nations may crumble, the bodies of innocents may stack, but the shapers of prana always win.
4. **The Long Road** - No matter the draw of prestige and influence, most magi are in service to the commoner. Small interpersonal connections have a lasting effect greater than shaping nations.
5. **Town Elders** - Nearly every village or town has someone who is the source of knowledge. This person is an anchor in a chaotic world of magic and monsters.
6. **Guild Houses** - Organized by specialization, these unions recruit, train and protect their own. Loyalty is expected.
7. **Isolationists** - Never gathering in groups, these masters of the mystic arts scatter to the winds. Discovery is a personal journey. When they surface, the world changes.
8. **Chancellors** - Members of the elite, these are advisors to royalty, guides for the wealthy, and kingmakers.
9. **Overlords** - The only true path of the spellcaster is unrestrained power. There is but one choice; obey or die.
10. **Roll Twice** - Take both or combine.

THE PRICE OF POWER

Nothing is free. The price of having this great power can be a cost most will not pay. Below are some effects magic can have on the individual and the world.

1. **Oaths** - The spellcaster must establish a promise or decree that is backed by mystic power or suffer pain and death. The greater the oath, the greater the power.
2. **Death** - For every spell cast, someone dies. Every ten days, a person the caster does not know, dies. This sickness accelerates based on the power the magic.
3. **Imagine Nation** - All that a mage fears is true. A commoner may not believe in dragons. Therefore they do not exist. But for a mage, a dragon is all too real.

4. **Hunted** - No caster is without sin. In this world, they are hunted down and killed as an example of pride and hubris gone awry.
5. **Corruption** - The presence of those who command magic have minor but noticeable effects. Milk spoils, animals panic, mirrors crack and flames change colors. Children are born with deformities while greed and lust gather strength near the corrupter.
6. **Wounded Environment** - The frozen wastes are cold due to fire cast by magi. Storms are caused by drawing air to fly. The environment is in turmoil due solely to wizards and their like.
7. **Gates** - Every time magic is used, a gate is formed that allows other worldly creatures, energies and beings to step into the material plane. Every fire spell is a chance for the plane of fire to enter and engulf this world, one small ember at a time.
8. **Predators** - Dangerous creatures stalk the shadows. When a spell is cast, the caster shines like a beacon, calling predators to them from around the region. Nothing will stop these monsters except refraining from the use of magic. Rulers and governments use threats and intimidation to coerce the population into turning in the users of magic.
9. **Central Flame** - A three mile diameter sphere of flame burns in the sky miles above a solitary mountain, and is bright enough to be seen from every corner of the continent. It has been discovered to be growing larger each day, fed by arcane spell casting. Some have tried to measure how fast the fire is growing and when will it engulf the world, but no one knows for sure.
10. **Virus** - Magic is a virus that no one survives unscathed. It infects others as any terminal disease would, with only a rare few surviving by ingesting a daily draught which keeps the disease at bay. This allows the infected individual the time to master the abilities it grants. The population needs to rid itself of this reality-bending infection before it spreads too far, but those who enjoy its power will not give it up easily.
11. **Transmogrification** - No mage is left unaffected by the use of arcane magic. Those beings of nightmares, such as the naga, green hags and the oni are just magi who could not command this mutagenic power.
12. **Roll Twice** - Take both or combine.



THE AETHER MAGIC VARIANT

The purpose of this spell casting system is to offer a unique option to the typical vancian or slot-based magic, while keeping it compatible with most d20 fantasy role playing games.

In this system, there are no pre-defined spells. Instead, the player simply describes what she wants her character to accomplish with the magic. The DM then sets a difficulty and the player rolls a d20 to see if their spell casting succeeds.

There is a cost to this very free-form magic in the form of physical stress inflicted upon the character.

MAGICAL LORE

Magic is simply a natural part of the world, and can be accessed by those with the right training or natural ability. This magical field is like a vast invisible tapestry of raw magical energy called the "Aether." Each spellcaster has his own understanding on the nature of magic and the Aether, but all draw their spell casting abilities from it in some fashion.

All magic works in essentially the same way, allowing the caster to tap into the Aether and channel it through her body to create a desired magical effect. Although different traditions allow the caster to manifest specific effects by tapping into the power of the Aether in different ways, there is one thing that they all have in common: Stress.

Stress is known by different names from tradition to tradition, but it's the cost everyone must pay when casting a spell. The act of channeling the Aether through a mortal body is an ecstatic, and sometimes painful experience, walking the fine line between

pleasure and pain. The more powerful the spell, the greater the connection to the Aether, and the greater the potential Stress.

No caster is immune to Stress, but through constant training, preparation and knowledge, the caster can improve their efficiency, refine their magical proficiency, and even raise their tolerance to Stress. There are even magical items and potions that can help to offset the stress of channeling the Aether.

TRADITIONS

When creating a spellcaster, the player must chose a magical tradition to follow. This may derive from their class, cultural traditions, bloodline or other influences, but it is a style that defines them as a caster.

All casters access the Aether in different ways. Some tap into it directly like arcanists, while others access it's power indirectly like animists who bind themselves to totem animals and the spirit world. It is up to the player to use her character's magical abilities in imaginative ways while staying within the scope of her character's tradition.

Each magical tradition has distinct role playing aspects as well as different spell effects. Casters must adhere to the beliefs, methods and restrictions placed upon them by their tradition if they wish to use magic. This not only adds flavor to the game, but provides extra challenges and opportunities for characters.

Animism. The practice of animism involves the understanding that everything around them has a spirit or soul. The animist's powers reflect their particular environment. For example, an animist of the jungle would

have a very different style than an animist of the desert. Many primal animists are shamen or village healers, while more sophisticated animists form structured druid circles and cults. Animists can even be found in urban environments, adapting to the ebb and flow of that unique ecosystem.

Arcane. The arcanist taps into the Aether directly in one of two ways: intense discipline or extraordinary raw talent. The most common of these is the wizard who must spend years in deep study and mental training in order to channel the great power of the Aether.

Other arcanists are able to manipulate the Aether through an inherent natural ability that is usually due to inheriting a strong magical bloodline.

Divine. The divine caster is able to access the Aether through their relationship with a deity who provides them the structure needed to channel it energies.

The specific type of spells that the divine caster can produce depend heavily on the temperament and inclinations of their particular deity. These casters are often imparted with additional powers which function independently of the Aether.

Patronic. Those who use this particular branch of magic tap into the Aether through entering into a pact with a powerful patron, such as a demon, celestial, fey, or outsider. These casters are bound to their specific patron, and so are given access to the Aether at their whim. The patron may also impart other, more direct powers, depending on the nature of the patron and the bargain that has been struck.

Psionic. The psionic is unique among casters in that they tap into the Aether through the power of their own mental focus, manipulating it through sheer will. Those with psionic ability do not have it as a result of intense training, but rather an inherent, often racial trait.

Some have suggested that psionics operate independent of the Aether, but there is not enough information to say for sure one way or the other.

USING THE AETHER MAGIC SYSTEM

This type of magic system requires a bit more effort on the part of the players and DM, but can ultimately provide incredible opportunities for creativity and character development.

There are 4 basic steps to casting a spell using this system:

Description. The player describes exactly what she wants to do with the spell and what it will look like. This can be as simple as "I stretch out my hand towards the boulder and it immediately begins to tremble. I attempt to lift it slightly and move it in front of the cave entrance." At the other end of the spectrum, the player could describe in great detail. For example they could say "As I stretch out my hand towards the boulder, a ghostly apparition appears next to it. It seems vaguely humanoid in shape, but much larger. It grabs the boulder, lifts it slightly, and begins to move it in front of the cave opening

with a sound like wind blowing through a vast field of grass."

In both examples the result might be the same, but the flavor is up to the player and should be influenced by their particular magical tradition. For example, an animist might have a ghost-like apparition move the boulder as in the second description, while an arcane caster might have the stone appear to glow and crackle with blue light.

Difficulty. Once the player has described her intentions with the spell, the DM sets its difficulty. It starts with a base of 10, and is modified by factors such as the range, duration, area of effect, and the nature of the effect desired. Once a DM becomes comfortable with the system, this takes very little time.

BASE DIFFICULTY

| School of Magic | Base Difficulty |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Enchantment & Divination | 10 |
| Illusion & Abjuration | 11 |
| Evocation & Necromancy | 12 |
| Transmutation & Conjunction | 13 |

RANGE MODIFIERS

| Spell Range | Difficulty Modifier |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Touch | -1 |
| 1-10 feet | +0 |
| 11-60 feet | +1 |
| 61-120 feet | +2 |
| 121-300 feet | +3 |
| 301-1000 feet | +4 |
| 1001 feet - 1 mile | +5 |
| 1 - 10 miles | +6 |
| 11-150 miles | +7 |
| Unlimited | +8 |

DURATION MODIFIERS

| Spell Duration | Difficulty Modifier |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Instantaneous | 0 |
| 1-60 seconds | +1 |
| 2-60 minutes | +2 |
| 1-4 hours | +3 |
| 5-12 hours | +4 |
| 13-24 hours | +5 |
| 1-3 days | +6 |
| 4+ days | +7 |
| Permanent | +8 |

Note that if the spell requires concentration, the difficulty is reduced by 1.

AREA OF EFFECT MODIFIERS

| Area of Effect | Difficulty Modifier |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Caster | -1 |
| 1 creature | +0 |
| 5-30 feet | +1 |
| 31-60 feet | +2 |
| 61-120 feet | +3 |
| 121-300 feet | +4 |
| 301-600 feet | +5 |
| 601-1000 feet | +6 |
| 1001 feet - 1 mile | +7 |

Note that the maximum area of effect on any spell is 1 mile.

HEALING OR DAMAGE MODIFIERS

| One Target | Multiple Targets | Difficulty Modifier |
|------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1d10 | 1d6 | -1 |
| 2d10 | 2d6 | +0 |
| 3d10 | 4d6 | +1 |
| 5d10 | 6d6 | +2 |
| 6d10 | 7d6 | +3 |
| 8d10 | 8d6 | +4 |
| 10d10 | 11d6 | +5 |
| 11d10 | 12d6 | +6 |
| 12d10 | 13d6 | +7 |
| 15d10 | 14d6 | +8 |

Schools of Magic. The school of magic refers to the specific type of effect that one wishes to create and include: enchantment, divination, illusion, abjuration, evocation, necromancy, transmutation and conjuration. Different schools of magic require varying amounts of power from the Aether, and so are inherently more difficult to access.

Enchantment spells effect the minds of others, allowing the caster to convince a foe that they are a friend, alter their memories, or manipulate their emotions.

Divination spells access information, reveal secrets, uncover the unseen, and can even provide brief glimpses of the future.

Illusions deceive the senses, fooling the mind into seeing something that is not there, making real things invisible, or making the audible silent. Illusions can create phantom images, noises, smells, tastes and tactile sensations.

Abjurations are protective spells that create magical barriers, remove harmful effects, guard allies or locations, and banish creatures to other planes of existence.

Evocation spells manipulate raw magical and elemental energies which can be channeled to manifest fire, lightning, wind, and other destructive forces, or a caster can channel positive energies to heal.

Necromancy spells manipulate the basic forces of life, and can be used to resurrect the dead or reanimate a corpse into and undead mockery of life.

Transmutation spells manipulate the fabric of reality to alter the properties of creatures, objects and the environment. These spells can be used to make a creature larger, polymorph them into another shape, or turn their flesh to stone. It can turn a tea pot into a sword or cause the skies to cloud over and open up with a deluge of rain.

Conjuration spells access other dimensions to teleport creatures and objects from one place to another, open gates to other planes of existence, summon creatures to the caster, and even create objects out of thin air.

Dice. Once the difficulty is set, the player rolls a d20 for their caster, adding in their spell casting ability and any relevant modifiers. The base spell casting ability is their proficiency plus their ability modifier. For example, a 1st level wizard with an Intelligence of 16 would have a spell casting ability of 5.

Rolling the d20, let's say they get a 15. Adding 5, it becomes a 20. If this is higher than the difficulty set by the DM, then the spell succeeds.

Determination. The method by which the effects of a spell are resolved is unlike most other spell systems in that it is not an all or nothing result. If the roll fails by only a little, the spell could succeed a little. If the spell only just succeeds, it will be a close call. And if it succeeds by a significant amount, the spell will perform above and beyond what was expected. On the other hand, if the spell fails by a significant amount, things are likely to go badly for the caster.

Determining the effects of a particular spell using this system can be a bit tricky, but with practice, it can be as seamless as any other magical resolution. Ultimately the result is determined by the DM and the player, and due to the nature of this system, not every outcome can be taken into consideration. That being said, here are the basic guidelines for determining the resolution of a spell:

SPELL DETERMINATION

| Spell Roll | Spell Result |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Natural 1 | Fumble |
| 5 or more below target | Failure |
| 1-4 below target | Success with Cost |
| Target to 3 above | Success |
| 4 or more above target | Success with Benefits |
| Natural 20 | Epic Success |

Fumble - When the player rolls a natural 1, it is a fumble. This indicates a particularly catastrophic failure that can have even deadly results. This could mean that the spell backfires or that it has a completely unexpected and undesirable effect.

Failure - When a spell fails, in addition to suffering stress damage, there are physical consequences to the caster. It could be as minor as a headache, or they could be knocked unconscious for hours. It all depends on the power of the spell and the caster's state.

Success with Cost - When a spell succeeds with a cost, it means that the spell either partially succeeds or succeeds fully, but costs the caster in some way. Costs to the caster could include being stunned, taking additional stress, or something specific to the situation.

If the cost is to be additional stress, it is recommended that they increase the stress die by 1, for example a d6 would become a d8.

Success - This means that the spell roll was enough to succeed at the desired spell effect, with only the minimal stress. In most cases there will be no additional effects unless there are extraordinary circumstances.

Success with Benefits - When the spell roll is well above what is necessary for the desired effect, the caster has managed to coax a little extra power from the Aether. This means that they can utilize this extra power to extend the spell in some way or have it do a little something more.

Epic Success - When a natural 20 is rolled, the spell does so well that, not only does the caster suffer no stress, the spell is enhanced dramatically. The specific result is up to the player, but the result should be extraordinary, and with a great deal of style.

Stress Damage - Regardless of how successfully the spell is cast, the caster is likely going to suffer stress from it. The amount of stress is determined by how much the spell succeeds or fails.

Stress damage cannot kill a caster, though cumulative exhaustion can. Once a character reaches 0 hit points due to Stress damage, they collapse and fall unconscious for a minimum of 10 minutes.

After suffering 6 levels of exhaustion, the caster falls into a coma for 1d4 days and dies at the end of that time unless action is taken to aid them. Only revivify and greater restoration will bring them out of their coma. Doing so will leave them at 5 levels of exhaustion, and they will start recovering normally at this point.

The effects of exhaustion go away normally, but Stress caused from spell casting is a kind of deep psychic damage, and as such cannot be healed by magical means. Only time and rest can heal Stress.

STRESS

| Spell Roll | Stress Damage |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Natural 1 | 3d8 stress + 3 levels of exhaustion |
| 5 or more below target | 2d8 stress + 2 levels of exhaustion |
| 1-4 below target | 1d8 stress + 1 level of exhaustion |
| Target to 3 above | 1d6 stress |
| 4 or more above target | 1d4 stress |
| Natural 20 | No stress |



THE AETHER

The Aether is not a plane of existence in and of itself, but rather it is the force that permeates and binds all planes together. There are some who mistakenly refer to the Aether as plane because one can pass into and move through it, but there are fundamental differences between the Aether and true planes.

The Aether has no distinct location of its own, but exists within all planes. It has two distinct layers; one that interacts more with the physical world and one that interacts more with the spiritual world. These are often called the Ethereal and Astral planes respectively.

Calling them parallel is a bit misleading since each exists within the other, but this is just metaphysical nit picking. Each can be accessed from any other plane of existence depending on the method used.

The Aether congeals at nexus of time, space and dimensions to form a vast spire or tower. This tower is a kind of linchpin for all of existence. According to ancient texts, this nexus is ringed by a great city where gods, demons and mortals walk the streets and the entire multiverse can be found behind every door.

In his famous book *The Unity of Magic*, the great wizard Maru wrote that he believed that magic was generated by the tension between the Astral and Ethereal planes, and that there was likely a third plane that corresponded to time that he called the Kronol plane, named after Kronoh; the boatman on the river Fate.

These three planes weave together like a tapestry, forming the Aether, and it is this great weave that spell casters draw upon to manifest their spells.

Maru also notes that certain materials interact with the Aether in different ways and to varying degrees. He notes that precious metals such as mithril, platinum, gold, silver and copper all seem to be excellent conductors of Aether, and that at sometime in the distant past, the standard measurements for these coins was based on their ability to channel magic.

In his later book *Concerning Dragons*, Maru would conclude that the draconic propensity for hoarding treasure was not merely a form of inherent greed, but a deep physical need to be surrounded by magically conductive materials.

Maru eventually completed what is considered by many to be the ultimate treatise on magical lore called *The Aether and the Multiverse*. In this magnum opus, Maru united his understanding of Aether mechanics, the multiverse and the magical ecology of the prime material plane.

Disappearing shortly after completing this massive tome, Maru is rumored to be living on one of the outer planes, though some stories suggest that he is living in one of the southern continents.

To this day, *The Aether and the Multiverse* is widely regarded to be the basis for all modern magical theory, and its influences are still being felt by arcane and divine spell casters alike. Copies of this tome are rare, with only eight confirmed copies known to still exist. At least one is known to be in the High Wizard's Tower of Tal'Ansül where Maru did most of his research, and another is in the Great Library of Achoria. This latter copy was reportedly donated by a rude and foul-mouthed hermit who later wandered off into the wastelands, never to be seen again.

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THE STORY OF GOTHNOG

GOTHNOG WAS A MERCHANT FROM THE BORDERLANDS OF THE GREAT CURSED DESERT. HE WAS BORN TO THE UNLIKELY PAIRING OF AN ORC MOTHER AND A VENGOL FATHER, AND WAS SHUNNED BY BOTH RACES. THAT SUITED HIM WELL, SINCE HE HAD LITTLE IN COMMON WITH EITHER CULTURE.

HE APPRENTICED WITH A WIDELY RESPECTED MERCHANT NAMED SALIL WHO TAUGHT GOTHNOG THE WAYS OF THE TRAVELING MERCHANT. TOGETHER THEY DEVELOPED A REPUTATION FOR BEING WISE TRAVELERS, SELLERS OF FINE FABRICS, AND EXTENSIVE DABBLERS IN THE LESSER MAGICAL ARTS, OR AS THEY ARE MORE WIDELY KNOWN, CANTRIPS.

HE LATER MARRIED THE WERE-ELF SAMARA WITH WHOM HE ADVENTURED WIDELY ACROSS MANY LANDS, AND THEIR ADVENTURES ARE CHRONICLED IN THE TALES OF GOTHNOG AND SAMARA.

TODAY, HE CAPTAINS THE AZURE DRAKE – ONE OF THE FEW AIRBORNE MERCHANT SHIPS ALLOWED WITHIN THE BORDERS OF TAL'ANSÜL.