
THE MAGIC SYSTEM

The spells listed in this book are written for use in any Fantasy Hero game and are useful for source material and ideas in any game that has magic, in any game system. However, since Fantasy Hero is so generic and basic a game system, it is useful to have a prepared, game tested, and coherent magic system that a GM can pick up and use without needing to build their own. The Fantasy Hero sourcebook has several suggested possible systems, and presented here is another possibility for GMs to consider - the one used by the writer in his campaigns. This system is designed primarily with Fantasy Hero in mind and might not work well in other campaign settings such as Champions.

In order to create a magic system for a campaign, there are two guidelines that must be followed: first, the spells and spell casting must be true to the genre and to the literature it simulates; and second, it must be a system that won't compromise the integrity of the game. With these basic principles in mind, here are the rules of the Codex Magic System:

1. Spells are neither totally reliable nor predictable.
2. Spells are not effortless powers at easy command.
3. Magic is not a one-use deal, and spells may be repeated without extended 'rememorization.'
4. The spellcaster cannot be more powerful than any other character with the same amount of ability and skill, i.e., points well spent.
5. Other spellcasters nearby will usually be able to tell that a spell has been cast.
6. Most spells are invisible to ordinary sight when running, but can be seen clearly to those with magical ability.
7. Spells come in several different categories, each category distinct from the other.

How does this work out in practical terms in the game? For those of you who want to run a game or play a mage using the Codex Magic System, read on.

THE BASIC SYSTEM

All magic draws on mana, an extradimensional material that can be tapped into by those able to use magic and used as "fuel" for shaping reality by the force of their will. All characters have a personal mana stat as well, representing their ability to manipulate mana easily.

Spells come in two different basic types: Sorcery and Evocation.

Sorcery is slow and meticulous, but safer to cast and can accomplish much more powerful and subtle effects. Very little sorcery is directly oriented at combat.

An Evocation spell is fast, easy, and flashy, but is physically exhausting to cast and has a price that all mages must pay. Almost all Evocation magic is combat oriented.

There are five different groups of magic, combinations of magical concepts and types that can be learned together. Each of these groups has sub groups within it that are more specific and may be learned separately.

Learning the groups of magic is done by buying expertise levels. There are five levels of expertise, each more expensive than the last and giving access to more powerful magic.

Spells are learned not with points, but with time, money, and study. Characters can teach spells to each other or learn them from a master, study them from ancient texts and runes, see them being cast and try to learn them, or create the spells from whole cloth on their own.

Items can be crafted by the mage at their expense which can store a single spell. Some may be made with multiple "charges" based on the expertise level of the mage and the spell in question. Scrolls can be created as well, enabling characters to cast difficult or slow spells more rapidly and readily.

Cold iron and other items do not directly affect magic but their weight and encumbrance will.

So how does this all work out in practice? In practice a mage spends a lot of points being able to use spells, then spends money to get the actual spells that they can use. Only some are available the mage at any given time, and the rules for Evocation are different than for Sorcery. There is a third category of magic, Necromancy, which uses different rules as well, but that is for the second volume of the Fantasy Codex.

MANA

Mana in fantasy stories and games is the fuel of magic, the stuff that lets people use magic. The ability to tap into this energy is what makes someone a spellcaster as opposed to a mundane fighter.

All characters have mana, even if they do not use it, representing their personal ability to manipulate mana safely and easily. If a character runs out of mana, they are still able to cast spells but at great personal cost.

Each spell that the mage casts costs mana, using up some of the personally stored magical energy that a given caster has to call upon. This mana is not endurance, that's for physical activity. It is another source of energy entirely.

To represent this, all spellcasters in the Mana Spell System have two extra characteristics. The first is mana (MAN), the pool of energy used to cast spells with. Mana is similar to ordinary END, but is based on EGO+INT instead of CON. Buying more mana costs 1 point for every 2 MAN, and has a characteristic maximum of 50 for normal humans (other races might be higher or lower, based on your campaign).

The second new characteristic is Mana Recovery (MREC). Mana Recovery is based on INT and EGO like ordinary recovery is based on CON and STR: $(INT/5)+(EGO/5) = MREC$. Buying more points of MREC costs 2 points for each one point of mana recovery, and the maximum for this characteristic for most races will be 8 (again, some races might be higher or lower, based on your campaign).

EXAMPLE: Merlin has an INT of 23 and an EGO of 14. This gives him a Mana score of 37, and a Mana Recovery score of 8. His Mana Recovery is maxed, but he could buy 13 more Mana at a cost of 7 points.

MANA RECOVERY

Mana recovers in the same manner as normal Endurance, using Mana recovery instead of ordinary Recovery: either at the post 12 recovery phase or if the character takes a phase at 0 DCV to recover. Mana may be healed with magical effects, such as a Healing spell bought to affect mana (working like one bought to affect Endurance), or some magical items.

The GM may rule that some areas are mana rich or mana poor, and thus the recovery is affected by that status.

EXAMPLE: Merlin is in an area of incredible magic power, the mana here flows like water. The GM rules that Merlin's mana recovers at +2 MRec while he is in this area. Later, he visits an area that is blighted, almost totally lacking in magic. The GM rules that he can only recover mana in the post 12 phase.

EXTERNAL MANA

Potions, even locations may have mana that can be used as well, and existing constructs that restore END or store up END for the use of spell casting would in this system instead have Mana for that purpose.

MANA COST

Each spell that has a listed END cost under this system instead costs mana. All spells in the Codex are listed with an "Endurance Cost" to make it easier to use them with other spell systems; treat this as Mana cost in the Codex Magic System.

EXAMPLE: Merlin casts Static Field, which has an END cost of 4, which means he must pay 4 mana to cast the spell in the Mana Spell System. To maintain Static Field, he must spend 4 Mana each phase.

If a spell has reduced END Cost or some other END modifying effect, then that is applied to the Mana cost of a spell.

EXAMPLE: Immolate has a half Endurance Cost advantage, reducing its normal END Cost from 4 to 2. Thus, the Mana cost would be halved, to be 2 each phase rather than 4.

ZERO MANA

When a mage reaches zero mana, they can still cast spells using Stun. Every two points of mana used costs 1D6 Stun just like using END you don't have... except this 1D6 does full damage, stun *and* body. It hurts to use up all your mana. The resulting damage of mana cost using up stun may in fact exceed the character's Constitution (particularly a wimpy mage) which would stun the caster and prevent the spell from being cast... and triggering any appropriate side effects.

Thus, any mage who runs out of mana will truly need to be careful and should only attempt to cast spells if greatly needed.

LONG TERM MANA

Casting some spells will cost the mage long term mana, representing a great strain on the character. Others will not. The GM may wish to assess LTM costs like Long Term Endurance costs if some campaigns to limit and weaken magic use.

Recovering long term mana (LTM) is like recovering long term endurance: every eight hours of rest will give back a certain amount, usually the full character's sum of mana (although any lost body will have to be recovered normally). There may be some very rare and dangerous herbs or items that heal long term mana loss, at the GM's discretion.

MAGICAL GROUPS

There are five different magical groups. Each group must be learned separately at a given level of expertise to use any of the magic that falls under each. Because some spells and ideas are duplicated, the restriction is not as heavy as it might initially seem. Yet each group has restrictions on what it can do and what spells can be in it.

Each group has sub groups which are listed. These sub groups may be learned separately, but it is typically cheaper to learn the whole group. Several of these groups are found in the second volume of *The Fantasy Codex*.

DARK: Subgroups Dark Secrets and Demonology.

This is the magic of evil and monsters, but some will learn a few of the spells to better combat evil. Dark magic cannot cure or heal normally (although it can take from others to help one's self). Dark magic cannot create, only destroy or move.

ELEMENTAL: Subgroups Aether, Air, Earth, Fire, and Water. These elements make up the world around us, including the realm of thoughts and dreams. This is the magic of the old elven kingdom. Elemental magic cannot create illusions, it cannot teach or reveal information and does not civilize

NATURE: Subgroups Faerie, Nature, and Shaman.

The magic of the uncivilized, the barbarian, and the crude. Goblins, orcs, and beastmen learn this, although so do wood elves, druids, and rangers. Nature Magic cannot create orderly structures, nor can it civilize or work with writing or information.

SCHOLASTIC: Subgroups Commerce, Illusion, and Mysticism. Almost all mages learn some Mysticism, although it is the magic of the humans and why they were able to defeat the elven empire. Scholastic magic cannot heal, it does not deal with the natural world or animals other than simple servants (summoned horses, for instance)

WAR: Subgroups Castle and War. War magic is the realm of the soldier and working mage. It is the magic used in battle, in defending and capturing. War Magic cannot heal, and focuses on the acts of politics, combat, and the fortress.

Each of these groups contains its own type and flavor of magic. If a player wishes to make a new spell, the GM has the final say on whether or not it is appropriate to the given group of magic, and the rules of magic are arbitrary and subjective.

EXPERTISE

Magical Expertise is the amount of learning and power a given mage has in each kind of spell group. A Grandmaster is a frighteningly powerful mage, while a Novice barely can use any magic at all.

Learning magic starts at the Novice level, where the fundamentals of spellcasting, harnessing and using mana, and constructing spells to cast them are learned. A Novice has little power, but can do a few tricks of the given group of magic. Some groups have no novice spells, such as Dark and Demonology. The magic of these dread groups is so deadly and powerful, there is no entry level. Novice spells have an active cost of 1-9 points.

As the mage studies, they swiftly move into the realm of the Apprentice. In this level of expertise, the mage has significantly more flexibility and access to spells that are capable of dealing significant harm. Apprentice spells have an active cost of 10-24 points.

The Journeyman is the third level of expertise. This is a powerful mage, one able to function on their own in the world, earn a living, and gather not just respect, but earn their keep with their magic. Most mages go no further in their training. Journeyman spells have an active cost of 25-49 points

Masters are the fourth level of expertise. In this realm of magic, the mage is able to do astounding things and has become truly dangerous. Where the Journeyman can fight battles, the Master can wage wars. This is a feared and rare mage. Master spells have an active cost of 50-74 points.

Grandmaster is the final level of expertise. Few ever achieve this level of power in any magic. A Grandmaster is capable of unbelievable feats of awesome power, manipulating their reality with terrifying power and catastrophic effect. Grandmaster spells are at least 75 active points, with no maximum power level.

In general, the spells follow a progression where applicable. For example, fire has a light spell for novice, a single target blast for apprentice, a small burst of fire for journeyman, a large blast of fire for a master, and a gigantic, continuous storm of fire for a grandmaster.

Each level of expertise costs more to learn, and each must be learned for every group or subgroup the mage wishes to have access to. This is where the cost of learning and using magic lies: buying expertise levels for given magical groups.

Buying Novice level in a group costs 2 points. To buy a novice level of expertise with one sub group costs 1 point each.

Apprentice expertise costs 5 points per group, or 3 points per sub group.

Journeyman expertise costs 10 points per group, or 5 points per sub group.

Master expertise costs 20 points per group, or 10 points per sub group.

Grandmaster expertise costs 50 points per group, or 25 points per sub group.

Thus, gaining access to the most powerful spells is very expensive for a character. To be grandmaster in all magic groups listed here is a whopping 250 points, a daunting cost for even a superhero. Add to that the cost of the intelligence, magic skill roll, and mana to even attempt these spells, and you are looking at serious expense in character points.

In the Appendices of the Fantasy Codex is a list of each group of magic detailing the level of expertise of each spell. In the spell listings there are many spells that have a summary of different expertise levels that they may be purchased at as well.

Expertise breaks down like this in terms of spell power for GMs to rank new spells:

Novice: 1-9 active cost

Apprentice: 10-24 active cost

Journeyman: 25-39 active points

Master: 40-74 active points

Grandmaster: 75+ active points

MAGIC CLASSES

EVOCATION

Evocation is the first of the two types. An Evocation spell is a gut level force of will, ramming the mana into a desired effect with brute mental force. As a result the spells are fast, usually potent in combat, and physically draining.

All Evocation spells cost *both* Mana and Endurance. It is physically exhausting to cast these spells. Maintaining an Evocation spell does not require continued expenditure of Endurance, only the initial spell casting.

Each Evocation spell cast drains the caster 1 long term mana - there is an absolute maximum to the number of these spells that a mage can cast before they absolutely must rest.

When casting an Evocation spell, the mage adds their EGO/10 to their spell roll: force of will makes casting these spells easier, if more strenuous.

No Evocation spell can take longer than a single phase to cast. They cannot have invisible power effects, and any Evocation spell is possible to perceive by nearby mages. Each time an Evocation spell is cast, any mage may attempt a magic skill roll to notice the magic being used, modified by normal range modifiers. This perception roll is modified by +1 per 10 active cost of the spell. Evocation is very noticeable.

While a given character may know any number of spells they have bought and managed to gather, they may only have *ready* a number of Evocation spells equal to their raw Intelligence score (before magical items and spells enhance it). If you did not go over and ready an Evocation spell by spending 1 minute per real point of the spell in study, you are not able to cast that spell, it simply is not ready even though you know it. Evocation requires too much effort and will to be cast without some preparation.

Evocation spells may not be cast from source material (such as a book you learn a spell from) but may be cast from scrolls. Items may be enchanted to store evocation spells, using a Sorcery spell; that is detailed later.

Few Evocation spells have lingering effects, most are immediate and instant, then must be cast again. What makes a spell an Evocation spell is largely subjective but the limitations help determine (fast, relatively easy).

Because Evocation spells have both advantages and drawbacks, they are given no particular limitation beyond the base Bonus limitation.

EXAMPLE: Merlin casts a 4D6 *Firebolt*, an Evocation spell. *Firebolt* costs 2 Mana at this level, and thus 2 Endurance as well. Casting *Firebolt* costs Merlin 1 long term Mana, so his mana pool is reduced by 1 point until he can rest properly. Merlin has 18 Ego, so he adds +2 to his magic skill roll to cast *Firebolt*.

Any nearby mage has a very good chance of sensing the spell being cast through a magic skill roll (with +2 to their roll due to *Firebolt's* active cost), modified by range.

SORCERY

Sorcery is a subtler, more complex magic. It only costs Mana and does not cost long term mana to use. Sorcery spells require concentration and either gestures or incantation on every spell. All require either a focus or material components (like a focus, but without the same restrictions and worth less limitation). Sorcery spells must take at least an extra phase to cast.

When a sorcery spell is cast, it is noticeable by nearby mages, but they must be close. Each time a sorcery spell is cast, mages nearby may attempt a magic skill roll to notice it, but this roll is modified by -1 per 1 hex distance and +1 per 10 active cost of the spell being cast.

Each Sorcery spell that is in place at the same time makes casting other Sorcery spells more difficult. Each Sorcery spell already in place makes casting an additional sorcery spell take a -1 penalty to the magic skill roll. Thus if you have 2 Sorcery spells running, the next Sorcery is at a -2 skill roll to cast.

A character may only have one Sorcery spell active and being maintained per 5 Intelligence; some spells can increase this number of "spell slots" as can some items. A character can enchant an item to hold a Sorcery spell in it, any spell in an item does not count against these spell slots.

A character can have "ready" any number of Sorcery spells, primarily because they are the work of study, time, and contemplation rather than brute force. Because Sorcery spells rely on a number of foci, they are easier to cast and ready, but longer and more complex to attempt.

Sorcery spells have advantages and limitations unique to them and thus have no special modifier to indicate their status.

MAGIC SKILL

The spell roll is the measure of training and discipline that the caster has for spells. How well this skill roll is made by defines the power level that is achieved, and represents the caster's concentration. The spell roll is based on INT, with a base of $(INT/5)+9$. Without this skill, no casting of spells is possible.

Some Magic systems, such as the Turakian Age system used in the Fantasy Hero and Fantasy Hero Grimoire, have different magic skill rolls for each college or group of magic that is detailed (such as an Alchemy roll for Alchemy magic, a Witchcraft roll for Witch Spells, etc). This controls the kind of magic and power that a character can achieve by limiting what spells are available to the player, but also increases the cost for a spell caster significantly in what is an already expensive type of character. The spells in the Codex assume a generic Magic Skill Roll, but different skills for each spell group could be assigned if the GM desires. For the Codex Magic System, there is only one basic magic skill roll for all spells.

The Magic Skill by its nature will need on average to be more than normal skill limits for a campaign. Usual skills do not regularly have significant subtractions to them as spells apply to the Magic Skill, which means it needs to be higher. The mage will almost never use their skill with the straight roll, while most characters will have many times their skills are used without modifiers.

At the same time, the Magic Skill Roll is the primary limitation on power for the mage. He may buy whatever spells he can afford with points and money, but he can only *cast* what he can realistically roll with his Magic Skill Roll. Thus, the skill is the limiter, and GMs should keep an eye on how this progresses.

MODIFIERS

The Magic Skill roll is modified by other circumstances besides the difficulty for a given spell. For example, if the spell caster is hit, the Magic Skill roll must be re-rolled at a modifier equal to the location's stun modifier. The lowest this modifier can be is -1, although targets that take no stun are unaffected by this modifier. In addition, there is a -1 per Body damage the attack did, after defenses, before any modifiers for location. If the Mage suffers any knockback or knockdown after defenses while casting a spell, or is stunned, the spell fails, and any side effects for the spell are applied. Certain areas may be mana-poor or mana-rich, and might modify this roll as well.

Casters may take extra time to try to ensure success with their Magic Skill roll. Each step up the time chart from the initial casting time of the spell adds +2 to the chance of casting the spell successfully. GMs may rule that a spell can be “rushed” as well, making the spell roll -2 harder each step down the time chart.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

All of magic is assumed to have a single special effect, "Magic." This is applicable for such effects as Dispel and Suppress, which can target a special effect for a +1/4 advantage. Within this special effect are “sub effects,” such as a flame attack or flying upon gusts of wind. These “sub-effects” function the same as standard special effects as defined in the Hero rules.

Special Effects can be grouped differently, for example a power that dispels any fire-based attack could be built with “any attack power” as an advantage then “only fire attacks” as a limitation. However, an alternative to this is to treat this as a small special effect advantage instead. Some spells in the Codex are built under this assumption.

ENCUMBRANCE

Cold Iron does not normally affect magic by its mere presence. It is true that certain spells might be affected by cold iron, but in general magic is not specially affected. However, the weight of iron, and everything else the Mage carries does have an effect. Spellcasters don't wear plate armor and carry lots of weapons for the simple reason that magic often requires delicate control and complete freedom of movement. Any DEX roll or DCV modifier of encumbrance is also the subtraction to the Magic Skill. Any Perception roll subtraction due to a helm is also applied as a Magic Skill modifier.

ENDURANCE

Sorcery do not cost ordinary Endurance, they use Mana instead. However, a sorcery spell may be *bought* to cost Endurance as well as mana as an additional -1/2 limitation so it would function somewhat like an evocation spell..

A GM may rule that in their campaign, spells cost Long Term Endurance as well as mana, which would limit the amount of magic that a mage could attempt in a given time period and notably weaken their overall power.

OPTIONAL MAGIC SYSTEM RULES

These rules make the Codex Magic System more complex, more difficult to use. They also make the magic seem more difficult and magical, more unpredictable and potent. It is suggested only advanced players use these rules: players and GMs very familiar with the Hero rules system and this magic system. GMs can pick and choose through these or apply the whole to their campaign.

SPELL ROLLS

Spell Rolls take an additional -1 per each spell run at the same time for an added degree of difficulty and to represent the focus required to keep magic going all at once. This modifier is in addition to all other rolls, and makes spell casting somewhat more difficult and dangerous if the caster wishes to maintain multiple spells at the same time. It has a drawback of discouraging casters from using their spells to assist other characters much and makes them less versatile as well. It can be a useful balance against the potential power magic can have in a game, however, and some GMs might find it helpful in their campaign.

GMs should strongly consider a system by which the Maximum number of spells a caster can keep running at the same time may also be limited to one per 5 INT, to lower the amount of magic a caster has going at any given time. This can make casters much more limited and lower their flexibility and power from being able to keep multiple spells active.

MOD	EVENT
-1	Per 10 active cost of the spell
-1	Moved at least 1” this phase
-1	Other half phase action taken this phase
-1	Each perception roll modifier due to equipment
-1	Each DCV modifier due to encumbrance
-1	Each unmodified body suffered after defenses
-1	Per stun multiplier by location
-1	Per Sorcery spell currently active (unless in an item)
-1	Per OCV modifier due to environment
+2	Per step up the time chart beyond casting time
+x	Varies, based on location, time, ritual, etc

SPELLCASTING SUCCESS

Casters do not always succeed with maximum effect on every spell. The total effect of a given spell when successfully cast is 10 active points, plus 10 for each point the roll is successful by.

EXAMPLE: Merlin casts Fireball, and makes his skill roll by 3. This means he gets 10 active points base, plus 30 more active points worth of Fireball, for a total of 40.

Simply casting a spell does not ensure it will work at peak power. In fact, the more difficult and powerful a spell is the less likely you will get it at full power. This especially applies to new, more potent spells that a caster learns for the first time.

MULTIPLE SPELLCASTERS

Each additional spellcaster adds one to the magic roll of the most powerful Mage as well. Only one must make their skill roll, but all pay the price of any side effect if the roll is failed. The Mana cost is shared equally among each of the multiple spellcasters, although the most powerful among them pays anything left over from the equal division. Only Sorcery spells may be attempted with multiple spellcasters.

EXAMPLE: Merlin and his four buddies want to cast Dream Magic together for Merlin. Dream Magic has an active cost of 75 and a Real Cost of 16 which is a total of -7 to the Magic Skill Roll. This is beyond any single one of their skill rolls to cast reliably. Each buddy adds 1 to Merlin's Magic Roll of 16-, making it a total of 20-. Dream Magic has a Magic Roll subtraction of -7, which means Merlin must roll a 13 or less to succeed. Unfortunately, Merlin rolls an 15 and fails. All of the mages must pay mana: 3 each, with Merlin paying the remaining 1 for a total of 4.

The Fantasy Hero book has a new Limitation called Ritual that can be purchased, it requires several casters to complete a spell. If Ritual is taken for a spell, then the rules given above apply to adding *additional* casters to the spell, not for the minimum required to cast it.

STARTING SPELLS

When a character is first made, they may have some basic spells to begin with, reflecting their training and study in magic up to this point. In each group of magic purchased, the mage gets:

Novice: no free starting spells

Apprentice: 5 novice spells

Journeyman: 5 apprentice and 5 novice spells

Master: 5 Journeyman, 5 apprentice, and 5 novice spells

Grandmaster: 5 of each previous level

These free spells are cumulative (so a grandmaster gets 20 novice, 15 apprentice, 10 journeyman, and 5 master spells). All other spells must be purchased.

Buying spells can be expensive. Each Novice spell is cheap: 1 copper. Apprentice spells cost 5 copper each and Journeyman spells cost 2 silver each.

Spells beyond this point are difficult to obtain, they will be restricted, carefully protected and hoarded by the ones who know them. It will take increasing research, travel, and difficulty to even find Master and especially Grandmaster spells.

Each Master spell costs 10 silver each, and each Grandmaster spell costs a whopping gold.

LEARNING NEW SPELLS

Characters learn spells by paying for them with money, based on their expertise level. However characters must find a way to actually learn these spell, whether from a teacher or source or discovering them on their own.

There are three ways that a mage can learn their spells: find some source that teaches spells, study their own, or study under a teacher. Learning spells on your own takes longer than a teacher, but the teacher will be more costly, and can limit the kinds of spells that you can learn.

LEARNING SPELLS FROM A SOURCE

Of all the ways to learn new spells, this is the easiest and quickest. Tomes and ancient scrolls, tatters of books, scribed runes on lost altars and the walls of a demented mage's tower are all potential sources of new spells.

Some sources will teach the spell automatically, such as a magic book that teaches the spells in its pages, a spirit that grants a spell as a reward, or something of that sort. Learning a spell from this kind of source is simply a matter of meeting the requirements (finish a quest, pay the price, sacrifice an object, set an entity free, and so forth).

Other sources require some study, such as ancient runes on an altar, moldy books in a long-lost mystic library, or something similar. This kind requires not only a knowledge of the language, but time to study what is written there.

Some campaigns may allow the Spell Research roll to decipher runes and ancient texts, others may require the specific, often ancient language be known, or both. The time involved in this sort of study varies by the location, interruptions, and the difficulty in studying the magic. In general it should take a matter of hours (if not days, should translation be required).

STUDYING NEW SPELLS

Learning spells is a question of long study, practicing the proper movements, inflection of words, and especially the thought patterns and mental states required for a spell. The spell must be so comfortable that it is nearly reflexive, like learning an instrument or martial arts.

This section gives a suggested system of learning and modifying existing spells, with costs in "coins" which would be the base monetary unit of the campaign world (gold, for example, although it could be platinum, gems, goblin hearts, etc).

Learning any spell requires a Magic Research Skill roll in the Codex Magic System. This is an INT based skill costing 3 points to buy and 2 points to enhance. The GM may simply choose to use an Intelligence roll or the Magic Skill roll instead. This Magic Research skill roll is modified by -1 per 10 active points of the spell being learned.

The base time to learn a new spell is based on the expertise level of the spell:

Novice spells take 1 minute per Active Point, and cost 2 coins each

Apprentice spells take 3 minutes per Active Point and cost 10 coins each

Journeyman spells take 5 minutes per Active Point and cost 25 coins each

Spells beyond this point are difficult to obtain, they will be restricted, carefully protected and hoarded by the ones who know them. It will take increasing research, travel, and difficulty to even find Master and especially Grandmaster spells.

Master spells take 810 minutes per Active Point and cost 50 coins each

Grandmaster spells take 20 minutes to learn per Active Point and cost 100 coins each.

Each spell has a cost as well, as noted above. These costs are in addition to food, lodging, housing, study materials, and presume the spell is purchased from an outside source. If the character was able to obtain the spell without paying for it, then the expense of learning the spell is cut in half.

Modifiers

Each point the Magic Research skill roll is made by after all modifiers reduces the amount of time required by 1 interval (thus, one minute for a Novice spell, 5 minutes for a Journeyman spell, etc).

Studying in a useful location such as a good library and a quiet setting in which to study uninterrupted in will give a bonus of +2 for good equipment and tools, and make the time involved less by the GM's decision, but should take no less time than half an hour. Extra time can be taken as well to gain +2 to their skill roll each step. This time can be cut back as well by a successful skill roll, for each 2 the roll is made by, the time required is lowered by 1 step on the time chart .

The time to study a spell can be shortened as well, with a penalty of -3 to the skill roll per step faster down the time chart.

If the student has a copy of the spell to study and learn from, then the time required is reduced one level (so an Apprentice spell is treated as a Novice spell) for the spell to be learned, and the skill roll is given a +3 bonus.

Adapting a spell already known takes the same amount of time, but is considerably easier: the Magic Research Skill roll is modified only by any additional active cost of the spell, not its total active cost, and the cost is reduced to incidental expenses.

Being taught new spells

Learning a spell from a master or kindly fellow is the most common and reliable way to acquire new magic. This increases the coin cost by 10%, but also makes the Magic Research Roll take no active point cost modifier and the time to learn is cut in half.

Failure

If an attempt is made to learn a spell and the roll is failed, the mage may not attempt to learn the spell again until a full day has passed. This second attempt is tried with a +1 bonus to their Magic Research Roll, because the mage learned a little bit in their previous effort. Once a spell is learned, it need not be re-studied in any way unless some or magical effect causes the mage to forget the magic somehow.

EXAMPLE: Merlin wants to learn *Calefaction*, a Journeyman Expertise spell new to him with 30 active points. He sits down under a tree to learn the spell. The base time to learn *Calefaction* is 150 minutes, and it costs 25 coins to buy and learn. The spell requires a Magic Skill Roll at -3 to learn. Merlin blows the roll and fails to learn the spell.

Two days later, Merlin goes to the nearby Academy and hires a tutor to help him, consulting the Academy's library and using the tutor's lab. Because Merlin has a teacher, this time is cut in half to 75 minutes, but the expense is increased to 27.5 coins. The academy's library is worth a +2 bonus and the tutor's lab adds +1. Because he has a teacher, the Magic Research skill roll is unmodified by the spell's active cost.

Merlin makes the skill roll this time, and learns *Calefaction*.

There are other sources of learning that a character might encounter, such as supernatural beings who teach spells in an instant, runes that can be studied to learn new spells, and so on. These must be handled by the GM individually, but typically would not require either a skill roll or expense.

There may also be items and possibly herbs or locations that might make learning spells easier, such as tomes of knowledge, special magic libraries, and candles that enhance study.

STARTING SPELLS

When a character is first made, they may have some basic spells to begin with, reflecting their training and study in magic up to this point. In each group of magic purchased, the mage gets:

Novice: no free starting spells

Apprentice: 5 novice spells

Journeyman: 5 apprentice and 5 novice spells

Master: 5 Journeyman, 5 apprentice, and 5 novice spells

Grandmaster: 5 of each previous level

These free spells are cumulative (so a grandmaster gets 20 novice, 15 apprentice, 10 journeyman, and 5 master spells). All other spells must be purchased.

Any spells the character learns beyond this initial stock of free spells (if any) they must purchase with money. When a character is built initially, it is presumed they learned all the spells without needing study time or rolls. GMs may wish to cut the expense of spells in half to represent "grandfathering" in spells for a starting character, since the mage will have learned them over years of their life previous to adventuring.

The GM may wish to give characters at least some of their starting spells to represent the kind of training their background and teaching would have taught. Most mages will learn at least a novice level defense spell such as *Blur*.

A GM who wishes there to be more power and flexibility in magic should offer these beginning spells in addition to any spells purchased by the character to represent their extra training.