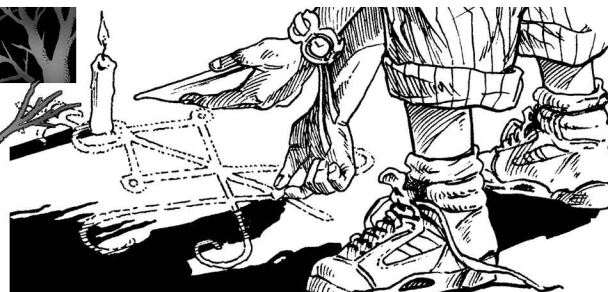


GURPS[®]

Fourth Edition

THAUMATOLOGY[™]

RITUAL PATH MAGIC[™]



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An e23 Sourcebook for **GURPS**[®]

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

Stock #37-1653

Version 1.0 – October 2013



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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all **GURPS** releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

INTRODUCTION

Cole Jenkins squatted, his cheap flashlight barely revealing the remaining flecks of dried blood. This must have been where Nate's head struck when he hit the ground, tearing his scalp. The cops and doctors agreed that it was a heart attack. Blood tests showed no foul play. But Cole knew of several ways to give a man a "heart attack" that no mundane test would see through. This was worth pursuing. It had to be.

Thoughts of the past ran through his head. Cole pushed them aside. Sitting cross-legged, he pulled a few items out of his coat pocket: a piece of tortoiseshell he'd carved into a small cube, a dried mandrake root, a bundle of sage, and a golden chalice. Placing the root and sage in the chalice, he set them aflame, then picked the chalice up with his left hand. Holding the tortoiseshell in his right, he began the gestures and incantations that would reveal the truth. This place was not tainted – good. The mystical energy began to build within the pattern he traced.

About a minute later, Cole felt the universe begin to give way – it was almost ready to accede to his demands. Drawing upon his inner strength, Cole focused his gathered energy and **pushed**. Sometimes reality pushed back . . . but not this time. The air around him sang him a story of spells and rituals. He saw the malign, olive-colored energy of the death spell – the invocation that had killed his childhood friend. It stretched far across the city; someone had taken the trouble to do this from a distance. What had that idiot gotten himself mixed up with? Who had done this?

Cole didn't have the answers, but he would. He quietly gathered his accouterments, stood up, and walked out into the chill night air. "I **will** avenge you, Nate," he whispered to himself. "That's a promise."

In some settings, magic can accomplish almost *anything*, with no fixed spell lists and no hard limits. **GURPS Thaumatology: Ritual Path Magic** introduces a new magic system in this vein, allowing spellcasters to accomplish nearly any feat they can think of . . . assuming they have enough time, enough effort, and enough *energy*.

In Ritual Path magic, every spell is an agreement between the spellcaster and the GM. Casters can combine various spell effects and modifiers for an *infinite* number of results. Powerful spells often require self-sacrifice or other forms of outside aid. Even a dabbler can work a ritual, though it may take hours where a trained adept could achieve the same effect in *seconds*!

This system is designed to feel like "real" magic, mixing real-world traditions and beliefs with concepts used in popular books, movies, and television shows. With a solid grounding in flavor, balance, and flexibility, **Ritual Path Magic** is ready to add some arcane options to your game, whether

you're running sword-and-sorcery fantasy, modern action, or futuristic space exploration. So step inside the pentagram, crack open your copy, and find out just what your Thaumatology skill is really good for . . .

PUBLICATION HISTORY

The Ritual Path magic system first appeared (in a more basic, condensed form) in **GURPS Monster Hunters 1: Champions**. Some of the additional detail in this work first appeared in **GURPS Monster Hunters 2: The Mission**, **GURPS Monster Hunters 3: The Enemy**, and **GURPS Monster Hunters 4: Sidekicks**. The rules for alchemical elixirs first appeared as "Bottled Magic" (by Christopher R. Rice) in *Pyramid* #3:43: *Thaumatology III*, though they have been slightly altered and expanded here.

Going back further, however, Ritual Path magic was inspired by several magical systems found in **GURPS Thaumatology**. The concept of adepts and gathering ambient energy was drawn from Energy-Accumulating Path/Book magic (*Thaumatology*, pp. 121-137), the combination of effect and Path is similar to verb-noun magic (*Thaumatology*, pp. 184-187), the division of Paths and the way effects are tiered by power level resembles Realm magic (*Thaumatology*, pp. 188-192), and so on. Ritual Path magic is its own unique system, but it owes much to that which came before it.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

This is a standalone magic system; only the **GURPS Basic Set** is required to use it. However, some of the advanced options, particularly *The Sephiroth and Decans* (pp. 35-37), also require **GURPS Thaumatology**. As this work was derived from the concepts in *Thaumatology*, readers looking to expand this system will find that book useful in other ways as well.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason "PK" Levine is no stranger to the mystical world. As a Reverend in the Church of the Subgenius, he has healed appliances, cast demons out of a possessed van, and cursed a desktop computer (that totally deserved it). As the Assistant **GURPS** Line Editor, he has learned unique spell effects such as Strengthen Text Clarity and Create Crunch. Someday he may try casting a ritual on a living subject. He practices his arcane craft in northwestern Georgia, assisted by his beautiful wife and a handful of (mostly furry) acolytes.

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CHAPTER ONE

LEARNING MAGIC

By the time the unbrowed librarian recovered his senses and realized he had dropped his gun, it was too late. Cole had already picked it up and now had him covered. “Get against the wall, **now**.”

The ugly, middle-aged man glanced about, as if looking for a way out of his situation, before sighing and moving to the wall next to Young Adult Fiction. “Okay, take it easy, pal. No one needs to get hurt.”

“No one? Is that what you said when you murdered Nathan Joy?”

The librarian scowled. “So what, you’re gonna kill me now? How the hell did you even get my gun, anyway? I had the drop on you! You can’t cast that fast.”

“Maybe **you** can’t. I can. And I happen to specialize in spells involving the human mind. That one was quick and nasty, but this one . . . this one, I took my time with.” With his other hand, Cole pulled a ceramic charm out of his pocket. He pointed at his prisoner as he snapped it in half.

The man’s face twitched as the delayed spell took effect. “Huh . . . ?”

“It’s a little something I call Truthteller, with an extra bit to take the edge off any hostility you might be feeling. I hope you like it. Now tell me how you killed Nate.”

“I used the ritual in the grimoire. Heart attack, undetectable, at a distance. I wouldn’t normally know how to do that. I’ve only just started studying body-altering rituals.”

“Grimoire? What grimoire?”

“Some guys hired me for the spell. We spoke on the phone, and then they were wearing masks when they showed up for the ritual. Thirteen of them. They brought in the grimoire and all of the trappings. I just cast it by tapping into their mana.”

Cole furrowed his brow. This wasn’t making any sense. “They were mages? Why would competent casters hire some piece of . . . oh.” His spirit sunk as he realized the truth. He was talking to a patsy. “They” were smart enough to plan for someone who might come looking, so they made sure the spell led back to this overweight wannabe wizard. Maybe they thought that would stop the trail cold. Maybe some men would give up. But not Cole.

First things first, though. Cole tossed him some rope. “Tie your ankles

together, then your hands. Use your teeth to pull the knot tight.” His spell wasn’t created to compel action, but gesturing with the pistol produced acceptable results.

The man complied, protesting. “Look, buddy, I didn’t even know the guy. They told me he was a corrupt cop – that he killed some people and had this coming!”

“And you believed them?”

He couldn’t fight Truthteller: “No, but I really didn’t care.”

“That’s what I thought.” Cole sat down, pulled out his jade necklace for focus, and started gathering energy.

“W-what are you doing?”

“Improvising. I need to know everything you know – see faces, hear voices – so I’m going to read your memories directly. Just be patient; this won’t take long.”

“Okay, but you’re not going to lobotomize me or anything while you’re in there, right?” the murderer asked with a nervous chuckle.

“Of course not. You’re just the fall guy here.” Cole’s stony face hid his rage. Fortunately for him, he was **not** under the influence of Truthteller. One almost down, 13 (maybe more) to go . . .

Magic is both an art and a science. With the right combinations of words, motions, and mindset, a person can bend the universe to his will. A dedicated caster will put in years (if not decades, or even centuries!) of training, to hone his skill and power until he can safely work potent spells. Unfortunately, those too impatient for such schooling have plenty of shortcuts available, often with dangerous consequences . . .

Words of Magic

adept: Someone with the Ritual Adept (p. 6) advantage. All adepts are also *mag*es.

caster: Someone using a *Path skill* to perform a *ritual*. Short for “spellcaster.” Anyone with at least one point in Thaumatology skill may be a caster – *mag*es and *adepts* are just better at it.

core skill: A skill that represents fundamental magical knowledge and limits the caster’s *Path skills*. Usually Thaumatology (p. 6), but that can be changed.

mage: Someone with *Magery*. May or may not be an *adept*.

Magery: When used in this work, *always* refers to the Magery (Ritual Path) (p. 5) advantage, except when explicitly contrasted with “*standard Magery*.”

Path skill: One of the nine skills listed on pp. 7-12. Limited by both the caster’s *core skill* and his *Magery* level.

ritual: A specific magical effect (e.g., “Put that security guard to sleep.”).

spell: See *ritual*.

ADVANTAGES

While skills (pp. 6-12) are the most important component of Ritual Path magic, the following advantages govern how those skills are *used*, which is almost as important. See also *Talent* (p. 12).

Higher Purpose (Tradition)

see p. B59

You follow a particular magical tradition or style, which gives you +1 on rolls to cast spells that match the definition of that tradition. This definition is always a very narrow one; in general, it should encompass about a third to half the versatility of a Path (pp. 6-12), taking into account that a Path includes *all* relevant spell effects. Example traditions include:

Demonology: Spells that involve demons.

Druidic: Spells that heal or protect natural animals (not humans!) or plants.

Divination: Divination (p. 24) spells of all sorts.

Pyromancy: Spells that involve fire.

Warding: Ward (pp. 24-25) spells of all sorts.

Higher Purpose provides a task bonus, not a skill increase; it is thus not limited by Magery or Thaumatology (see *Path Skills*, pp. 6-7, for more specifics). Casters can buy multiple types of Higher Purpose. They may also may treat it as a leveled advantage; e.g., Higher Purpose 3 (Pyromancy) provides a +3 bonus for fire spells. However, no caster can have more than three levels, *total*, of Higher Purpose, whether concentrated in one tradition or spread across two or three. (The GM may adjust this limit to suit the campaign.)

Magery (Ritual Path)

see p. B66

Note: This is a variant of standard Magery. For simplicity, this work will always refer to it as just “Magery,” as most settings will feature only one or the other. If this is not true in yours, see *Mixing Magic Systems* (p. 45). Regardless, standard Magery and Magery (Ritual Path) do not interact in *any* way.

While anyone can work Ritual Path magic, you are particularly good at it. This advantage comes in levels; there is no limit to the number of levels you may have, unless the GM sets one.

You must purchase Magery 0 before buying higher levels of Magery. Magery 0 allows you to cast spells at full skill; without it, you are at -5 to work rituals. See *Non-Adepts and Magic* (pp. 19-20) for more. Magery 0 grants no other benefits – it cannot detect magic, etc.

Higher levels of Magery (Ritual Path) *do not* add to any skills, magical or otherwise. (This is a significant change from standard Magery!) Instead, Magery 1+ gives three benefits:

Higher Maximum Skills: A non-mage’s Path skills (pp. 6-12) cannot exceed 12. Each level of Magery improves this cap by 1; e.g., with Magery 4, you can learn Path skills up to 16.

Mana Reserve: Every mage has a mana reserve (p. 21) equal to 3×Magery. This allows him to cast minor spells without having to harm himself or slowly accumulate energy.

Additional Conditional Spells: A caster may have (Thaumatology skill + Magery level) conditional spells (pp. 25-26) active at once. Thus, improving Magery raises this cap.

Magery can be learned after character creation. It reflects training and skill as much as it does any inborn mystical potential. (Impressive inherent magical power is better represented by *Ritual Adept*, p. 6.)

Energy Reserve

A mage can buy Energy Reserve (Mana Reserve); see *GURPS Thaumatology*, p. 50. His mana reserve then becomes (3×Magery)+(Energy Reserve). However, he’s generally better off raising Magery. Both Magery 1 [10] and Energy Reserve 3 (Mana Reserve) [9] improve mana reserve by 3 energy, but the former also raises the caps for all Path skills *and* conditional rituals, for only 1 point more!

Magic Resistance

see p. B67

Note: This is *not* a variant. Magic Resistance protects against all magical spells, whether cast via standard Magery, Ritual Path Magery, Power Investiture, and so on.

Magic Resistance provides one of two possible effects when a Ritual Path spell is cast *on you*, depending on whether you wish to resist.

- If you attempt to resist the spell (whether intentionally or because you are unaware of it), your Magic Resistance adds to your HT or Will. For example, with HT 12, Will 13, and Magic Resistance 3, you resist all spells with an effective Will of 16.

- If you are aware of the spell and choose not to resist, the caster’s margin of success must be *equal to or greater than* your Magic Resistance level for the spell to affect you. For example, if you have Magic Resistance 3 and a caster succeeds at his final casting roll by 2, the spell is still considered to be cast successfully . . . but it has no effect on you, personally.

It doesn’t matter whether the ritual is targeting *just* you; you can resist an area-effect spell as easily as a personal one (though the spell still affects the *rest* of the target area). If the spell does not allow a resistance roll (e.g., a “missile spell”; see *Damage*, p. 17), Magic Resistance does not interact with it. Magic Resistance does not reduce the caster’s skill in any way – it only aids your resistance.

You cannot have both Magery and Magic Resistance. Magic Resistance does not technically prevent you from working rituals, but *all* rolls to gather energy or cast the spell are at a penalty equal to *twice* your Magic Resistance level. Thus, this advantage is not recommended for casters. (*Exception*: If you add the Improved enhancement, you can have Magery and cast spells just fine – making it a *great* trait for casters!)

Ritual Adept

40 points

Prerequisite: Magery 0+.

You are a potent spellcaster, able to pull off impressive rituals in less time than it takes other casters to do a cantrip. You can work anywhere (consecrated or not) and require no special connection to your subject. The GM must decide if this advantage is inborn or if it can be learned; if he doesn't say, assume it's inherent and cannot be acquired after character creation.

New Perk: Ritual Mastery

You have +2 to all Path skill rolls when casting a specific ritual (*Specific Definition*, p. 19). You must specialize by ritual. You may only take this perk once per given ritual, but you may buy it for as many *different* ones as you'd like.

Because most dedicated magicians will take this advantage, Chapter 2 assumes that the caster *is* an adept. See *Non-Adepts and Magic* (pp. 19-20) for rules when this *isn't* the case.

At the GM's option, this advantage may be broken down into separate components, as for Path/Book Adept (*GURPS Thaumatology*, p. 123). If so, use these three new advantages to remove the penalties under *Non-Adepts and Magic*.

Ritual Adept (Connection): You may ignore the -5 for lacking a connection with the subject of your spell. *10 points.*

Ritual Adept (Space): You may ignore the -5 for performing a ritual in a non-consecrated space. *10 points.*

Ritual Adept (Time): You may cast spells faster. Level 1 allows you to tap into energy sources in just one second without the -5 and allows you to make your initial energy accumulation roll (only) in just five seconds without the -5. All subsequent accumulation rolls *are* at -5 unless they take the full five minutes! Level 2 (the maximum) lets you tap into energy sources (in one second) without even rolling and speeds up *all* of your accumulation rolls. *10 points/level.*

SKILLS

More than anything, Ritual Path magic is based on *training*. As a caster's Path skills rise, his ability to tap into ambient energy increases exponentially; even a difference of a few levels can be huge. While Magery (p. 5) and Ritual Adept (p. 6) both offer significant benefits, the surest path to raw power is in high skill levels.

CORE SKILL

The *only* true prerequisite for casting Ritual Path magic is at least one point in its core skill, Thaumatology. Because all Paths can be used at default (below) from this core skill, *anyone* (even a non-mage) with Thaumatology training can attempt a ritual . . . in theory.

Trained casters, however, want to raise their core skill as high as possible because it limits their Path skills. No Path skill can ever exceed the lower of the core skill or (12 + Magery level). For example, a caster with Thaumatology-15 could not learn any Path higher than 15, even if he had Magery 10.

Thaumatology

see p. B225

In any setting featuring Ritual Path magic, Magery does *not* add to Thaumatology skill. Instead, Magery *and* Thaumatology act as a dual cap on Path skills (pp. 6-12). Otherwise, this skill works exactly as described in the *Basic Set*.

Thaumatology is a logical core skill if magic is supposed to work as fantasy wizards or Hermetic mages believe: The caster exerts his will over that of the universe, with somewhat predictable results. See *Alternative Core Skills* (p. 13) for different options.

PATH SKILLS

Where the core skill of Thaumatology represents theoretical knowledge, all *practical* spellcasting is done with the following

nine Path skills. Each Path governs one aspect of reality; between all nine, nearly *any* non-permanent effect is possible. Each Path has a common name and a lesser-used, sephirotic one which follows in parentheses; see *The Sephiroth and Decans* (pp. 35-37) for more details.

As a caster's Path skills rise, his magical power increases exponentially. Not only is he able to soak larger penalties and overcome the resistance of others, but he can accumulate *far* more ambient energy (pp. 20-21), allowing him to cast much larger spells.

A caster's Path skill can never exceed the lower of his Thaumatology skill or (12 + Magery level); training is just as important as raw power. Magery does not add to Path skills. Bonuses from Higher Purpose (p. 5), Ritual Mastery (p. 6), grimoires (pp. 30-32), etc., can raise *effective* skill above this cap, however.

Example: As a young man, Cole had Thaumatology-15 and Magery 2. He could thus have Path skills as high as 14 (12 + his Magery of 2). After he raised his Magery to 3, he could improve his Paths to 15. When he later wanted to raise them to 16, he first had to improve *both* his Thaumatology (to 16) and Magery (to 4).

Cole's friend Nate knew Thaumatology-15 as well, but he lacked Magery. Thus, no matter how much he improved his Thaumatology, he couldn't learn any Path skills higher than 12 (because 12+0=12). He invested in several Ritual Mastery perks to partially compensate for this.

Default Use

Any serious caster should start with Thaumatology and then buy up his Path skills. However, it is possible to use Paths at default; in fact, *many* amateur casters work rituals this way (often with disastrous results).

Every Path defaults to Thaumatology-6. Thus, someone who has at least one point in Thaumatology can cast spells! However, a defaulted Path skill *cannot* exceed 12, regardless of how high the caster's Thaumatology skill or Magery level is.

This means that an untrained caster with Thaumatology-18 casts spells *exactly* the same as one with Thaumatology-25, because all ritual rolls are made against the Path skill (in this case, 12), not against Thaumatology.

Example: Little Timmy has Magery 0 but knows barely enough about magic to be dangerous (Thaumatology-10 and no Path skills). He attempts to work a spell to turn his math teacher into a frog. His default Path of Body is 4. His energy accumulation rolls (p. 20) fail several times, and then eventually *critically* fail. Later, the math teacher wonders why Timmy stopped showing up for class . . .

Effects

There are seven *spell effects* for each Path: **Sense, Strengthen, Restore, Control, Destroy, Create, and Transform.** (See pp. 15-16 for details.) Spell effects are not learned separately; anyone who knows a Path knows how to work *all* of its associated effects.

Each spell effect can be broken into *Lesser* and *Greater* effects. The difference between Lesser and Greater varies by Path, but it often depends on how believable, natural, simple, or subtle the effect is; in *all* cases, the GM makes this decision. For example, a lightning bolt striking someone under a stormy sky is perfectly natural – but a lightning bolt shooting out of a mage’s fingertips, or striking someone under a *clear* sky, is not! If there is *any* doubt, treat it as a Greater effect.

The Paths below include the list of possible effects, with samples of what each can do. These are only examples – there is an *infinite* number of things which can be accomplished with each effect! Many of the examples cannot be accomplished with *just* the spell effect, however, and also require spell modifiers (pp. 16-18).

Path of Body (Yesod)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

Governs any effects which target the flesh and blood (or chlorophyll, etc.) of living things. It can target seeds and trees (which are still growing), but not fallen branches or harvested fruits. This is the Path of *physical* effects and changes; use the Path of Mind (pp. 11-12) to target someone’s thoughts or emotions, even if you’re justifying it as “affecting hormone levels” or something similar. Lesser Body effects allow localized, believable, and subtle changes – or provide basic information. Greater Body effects can be blatant, complete, and/or superhuman in nature.

Sense Body: Lesser Sense Body can identify what species or race someone is, detect all living things nearby, detect all

members of one particular species nearby, locate the physical presence of one particular person you know, or diagnose any medical problem that a doctor could potentially identify. Greater Sense Body can reveal a person’s full genealogy, determine the exact moment someone was poisoned, diagnose an issue that medical science could not, or determine when someone will die of natural causes.

Strengthen Body: Lesser Strengthen Body can improve someone’s physical attributes or secondary characteristics by up to about 30% (rounded up), add any exotic physical traits that the GM would permit the subject to have with an Unusual Background (e.g., DR 1-2 (Tough Skin, -40%), in most games), add any mundane physical traits, provide up to +5 to rolls for physical actions, or provide *any* degree of bonus to resist metabolic hazards (e.g., disease or poison). Greater Strengthen Body can surpass the limits of Lesser Strengthen Body (e.g., improving ST by 100%) or add any physical trait that doesn’t change the subject’s morphology (that is, DR 20 or Hyperspectral Vision are fine, but Extra Heads and Flight (Winged) are not).

Restore Body: Lesser Restore Body can provide healing up to twice as good as what First Aid could provide (e.g., up to 2d in a TL8 game; see p. B424), cure diseases with a finite duration, restore any amount of FP, revive a stunned or unconscious subject, or counteract any degree of temporary penalties or imposed traits (e.g., from a spell, Affliction, or drug). Greater Restore Body can heal any amount of HP, cure diseases that normally last indefinitely, end a person’s coma or heart attack, or remove permanent disadvantages (though only as long as the spell lasts).

Control Body: Lesser Control Body can cause a single irritating or incapacitating affliction (p. B428), stun a target, force someone to perform a simple reflexive action (e.g., sneezing or dropping a weapon), obstruct the use of a limb (treat it as being grappled), or prevent the subject from actively using a particular trait. Greater Control Body can force a person to perform *any* physical action (no matter how complex) or physically move an entire living being (as if by telekinesis).

Destroy Body: Lesser Destroy Body can cause internal damage (up to about what a handheld weapon in the setting could inflict with a single blow or shot). Greater Destroy Body can do unlimited damage, cause a coma or heart attack, or do partial destructions (e.g., eliminating a body’s ability to feel pain). Both versions can also reduce attributes and secondary characteristics, and inflict disadvantages (or negated advantages); use the guidelines for Strengthen Body (above), but reversed.

Create Body: Lesser Create Body can “stabilize” the physical form of a spirit *that has already manifested*, so it doesn’t have to expend its own energy to remain on this plane. Greater Create Body can generate a vessel for any spirit (even one that can’t materialize) or be used in conjunction with Create Mind (p. 12) to summon living things out of thin air.

Obviously our body chemistry controls a great deal of how we conduct our lives, but you must come to an understanding that is fundamental to our humanity: If we are to have magical bodies, we must have magical minds.

– Wayne Dyer, ***Real Magic: Creating Miracles in Everyday Life***

Transform Body: Lesser Transform Body can change someone's blood type, alter his DNA or chromosomes to fool a test, improve or reduce his Appearance by up to two levels (while obviously maintaining his identity), or make him look like someone similar (that is, someone he could have already impersonated using a disguise kit). Greater Transform Body can alter someone's species, make the subject look like *anyone*, or add any exotic physical traits (even those that change the subject's morphology).

Visualizing the World

Several limits in this work reference aspects of the setting. For example, a Lesser Destroy Body (p. 7) effect can inflict damage comparable to "what a handheld weapon in the setting could inflict." This is because a large part of magic is visualizing the effect, and the kinds of effects which can be visualized *realistically* mature along with the rest of the setting. But what does that mean if a TL8 wizard underwent military training in a TL10 future but is currently stuck in a TL3 world?

For the purpose of adjudicating limits based on "the setting," understand that a caster's ability to manipulate reality in a given setting is limited by both his *own* knowledge and of the setting's *general* knowledge. When in doubt, ask the following three questions:

1. Does the caster have the personal TL and background to understand this?
2. Does the setting have the TL to understand (and, if applicable, produce) this?
3. Could the caster (with some training) be able to personally make use of this?

If *all three* answers are "Yes," then the GM should allow it. For example, say that time-traveling wizard wanted to use a Lesser Destroy Body to inflict damage comparable to a laser rifle. The answers would be "Yes," "No," and "Yes"; he could thus not accomplish it without going to a Greater effect. His Lesser effects are limited to that of TL3 weaponry.

more nebulous and metaphorical. For example, with an area modifier (p. 17), Lesser Chance could affect the fates of everyone who lived within a certain hamlet, but Greater Chance could alter the fate of the village *itself* (e.g., giving -5 to all economic or commercial rolls involving the town, regardless of who makes them). If the conceptual subject is embodied by a spirit or collective consciousness, *it* resists the spell (if desired) and controls any granted traits. If not, it is unre-sisted, and the caster sets the conditions under which any granted traits will be used; e.g., "The Serendipity activates during any fire or similar disaster, to minimize property damage."

Sense Chance: Lesser Sense Chance can provide the accurate odds of any one event happening as of this moment (but cannot actually see the future), allow a lucky guess (treat as Intuition, p. B63), or tell if something is interfering with probability nearby. Greater Sense Chance is most often used for divinations (p. 24).

Strengthen Chance: Either version of Strengthen Chance can make a likely event (target number of 11 or higher on 3d) more likely, or an unlikely event (9 or lower) less likely. Regardless of whether a bonus or penalty was chosen, the modifier will "flip" as necessary to make this happen. This makes it a poor choice for combat charms (pp. 26-28), as the odds can change drastically from second to second! It can also add Daredevil as a trait.

Restore Chance: Restore Chance is most commonly used to counter the effects of Destroy Chance (below), but it can also be used in rituals that grant some form of Luck, Serendipity, or Unluckiness – all of which allow randomness to creep back into that which was thought to have been set in stone.

Control Chance: This is a popular effect, as it allows *precise* manipulation of fate. It can be used as for Strengthen Chance (above), but to adjust the die roll in either direction, regardless of the odds; e.g., a flat +3 to hit in combat, regardless of effective skill. Or it can add Super Luck (which requires

this level of precision).

Destroy Chance: Can be used as Strengthen Chance, but reversed – that is, making likely events less possible or unlikely events more possible. Alternatively, it can be used to remove or counter the effects of Luck-based traits, such as those discussed for other Chance effects. If karma or fate exists in the setting in some form, Greater Destroy Chance can also sever a person's ties to it.

Create Chance: Can add a Destiny (good or bad) to the subject, but is more often reserved for causing *weird* things to happen. Unless the GM is dead set against an event being possible, he should give it fair "impossible odds," such as "roll 0 or less on 3d." A Create Chance ritual that adds enough of a bonus can make this (theoretically) happen, though it *has* to get the odds to "3 or less" to allow a roll at all.

Transform Chance: Allows rituals that warp luck and fate. This can change any of the previously discussed luck-related traits, rewrite a Destiny, or add Cursed or Weirdness Magnet. It can also do *interesting* things like tying two subjects' fates together or swapping the odds of each finding true love.

Path of Chance (Hod)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

Covers luck, odds, and entropy. This is often used for "meta-effects," such as influencing die rolls; *Bestows a (Bonus or Penalty)* (p. 17) is a common modifier! When used to alter events which would not normally involve a die roll, the GM may always estimate the odds of it happening, convert this to a target number using *Probability of Success* (p. B171), and apply any bonus or penalty to that roll. The degree of the bonus or penalty does not affect whether the ritual is Lesser or Greater; a +5 boon to a skill roll is no more obvious than +1. Blatant effects rarely suit the Path of Chance; if the GM allows them, they are always Greater effects. For *predicting* events (e.g., winning the lottery or accurately betting on horses), use a divination (p. 24).

In addition, Lesser Chance effects must target discrete subjects (such as a person). Greater Chance effects can be

Path of Crossroads (*Tiphareth*)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

Crossroads are the connections between locations, times, and planes of existence. The specifics vary by campaign, but most settings have some form of gates (or similar weak points), creatures, or people with the ability to move between places, between times, and/or between dimensions. Lesser Crossroads effects can only target *existing* gates or weak points in reality; Greater Crossroads effects can actively create them, or target creatures or people. Unless the GM rules otherwise, neither allows true teleportation – at most, a ritual can link two places with a temporary spatial gate, which anyone may then pass through.

Gates take a full second to form and are very noticeable. Conjuring a gate beneath a foe is an option, but unless he's prevented from moving or the gate is *huge*, he's likely just to step away from it.

By default, a gate can be used by anyone, in either direction; use Control Crossroads to restrict this. If the caster creates a portal in mid-air, he can decide if it's "one-sided" (you have to approach it from a single direction to use it) or not. Any other aspects of gates (e.g., what happens if you try to create a spatial gate into the middle of a mountain) are a GM call; the answers may vary from campaign to campaign. Casters can make a Thaumatology roll to know the answer before invoking a ritual.

Note that Crossroads includes *mundane* connections between locations as well – that is, normal (or secret!) doors, windows, and so on.

Sense Crossroads: Lesser Sense Crossroads can reveal a nearby gate, identify where it goes, or use it to find or communicate with someone on the other side. Greater Sense Crossroads can locate someone (or something) with an innate ability to cross over, identify details about that ability, or find or communicate with someone through time or across dimensions.

Strengthen Crossroads: Lesser Strengthen Crossroads can stabilize a fluctuating gate, cause a temporal weak point to reach further back (or forward) in time, or make it easier for travelers to use the crossroads. Greater Strengthen Crossroads can enhance someone's innate ability to cross over (e.g., giving him a bonus or allowing him to take additional people), help a being remain in our time/plane if its ability to do so is weak, or *force* such a being to remain here instead of returning home.

Restore Crossroads: Lesser Restore Crossroads can reopen a closed gate. In many settings, a time- or dimension-crossing being leaves behind a residual weak point after returning home, which allows a Lesser effect to summon the being back; if not, a Greater effect is needed. The GM may also rule that Greater Restore Crossroads is required to reopen a gate or weak point which has been closed for so long that it's effectively inert. It can also restore someone's innate ability to cross over if something else took it away.

Control Crossroads: Lesser Control Crossroads can alter the use of a gate – restricting it so it's only useful during certain times, to certain people, etc. – or physically move a weak point to a new location. Greater Control Crossroads can overrule a

person's (or creature's) innate ability, allowing the caster to determine how it works and where/when it takes him, or target an area as a whole to make it easier or harder for others to form gates that link there.

Destroy Crossroads: Lesser Destroy Crossroads can close a gate, oppose a spell which allows something to cross over, or banish a being relying on such a spell (or an open gate) to temporarily remain here. Greater Destroy Crossroads can banish *any* being here from another place, time, or dimension, even if it's using its own innate abilities to cross over indefinitely; it can also cause a partial destruction (e.g., turning a spatial-and-temporal gate into a spatial-only one or removing someone's ability to travel to one particular plane).

Create Crossroads: Lesser Create Crossroads is very limited; at most, it can make an existing weak point visible and easily controlled. Greater Create Crossroads allows the caster to form a spatial, temporal, or dimensional gate; if he wants a gate that can combine two or three options, he'll need multiple Greater Create Crossroads effects.

Transform Crossroads: Lesser Transform Crossroads can change the endpoint(s) of an existing gate without changing the type of gate it is; e.g., it can shift a gate to Hell to point to the astral plane, but could not turn it into a temporal gate. Greater Transform Crossroads *can* alter the fundamental nature of a gate, as well as rearrange a person or being's crossroads-related traits.

Weather-Working

Weather-altering spells will usually bestow a broad-ranging bonus or penalty (p. 17); e.g., a rain spell that gives -2 on any roll which would logically be affected by the downpour. Because weather is a nebulous, chaotic system, use Greater Chance effects for this. Casters weak in Path of Chance can instead take a more direct approach, using Path of Energy (to affect things like wind speed or electrical activity) and Path of Matter (to summon rain, hail, etc.). Such rituals require area of effect (p. 17) but not subject weight (p. 18); don't worry about how much a square mile of hail weighs!

Path of Energy (*Geburah*)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

Energy includes fire, electricity, kinetic energy, light, sound, and more. It is a versatile Path, offering many potential effects, but its domain ends where others begin; e.g., disrupting electrical impulses to a subject's legs requires Path of Body, not Path of Energy. Lesser Energy effects can affect normal forms of the energy in simple, natural, likely ways; it allows the caster to do things with the energy that it would already be "inclined" to do. Greater Energy effects can affect weird forms of the energy or cause it to do complex, unnatural things.

Sense Energy: Lesser Sense Energy can detect electrical current, analyze the spectrum of a fire (e.g., to identify its fuel), locate the nearest source of light, or clarify a garbled sound. Greater Sense Energy can use energy *as* a sense (e.g., "seeing" via reflections of your own voice, like sonar), separate an audio recording into every one of its component sounds, or track a particular electron as it passes through an appliance.

Strengthen Energy: Either version of Strengthen Energy can increase a fire's damage or rate of growth, brighten a light source, impart additional speed to a moving object, or cause a shout to carry further. Lesser effects can impart enough energy to double the effect (e.g., doubling the Vision penalty inflicted by a light source, or making a fire inflict twice the damage); Greater ones can go beyond that.

Restore Energy: Lesser Restore Energy can keep an electrical current moving through resistance, rekindle a dying fire, or counter the effects of deceleration on a vehicle. Greater Restore Energy is similar, but can even affect "killed" energy; e.g., keeping electricity flowing after being switched off or relighting a fire that died for lack of fuel.

Control Energy: Lesser Control Energy can reverse electrical polarity, "shove" an object in motion so it heads in (roughly) a new direction, dictate the direction and rate at which a fire spreads, or alter the tone of someone's speech (though not with enough control to imitate another person). Greater Control Energy can exert perfect control over a moving object, make a person's voice sound like someone else's, or make a fire stretch out and attack someone.

Destroy Energy: Lesser Destroy Energy can reduce the strength of energy; it can also stop energy completely *if* there is a natural means by which that could happen. For example, it can weaken a fire *or* put it out completely (because fires die naturally), but it could only lessen the strength of sunlight on a bright day (because there's no realistic way to make the sun stop shining). Greater Destroy Energy can kill the flow of any sort of energy, no matter how unrealistic, *or* do partial destructions, such as destroying a fire's ability to burn people while still leaving its ambient heat and light.

Create Energy: Lesser Create Energy can bring energy into being in a believable and natural manner. It can create fire if there's fuel, create electricity within a circuit, or create noise from something that could potentially make that sound. Greater Create Energy can ignore this restriction, creating a fireball in the caster's hand, flooding a cave with light, or launching an object into the air (with kinetic energy). Many Create Energy spells *also* include a Control Energy effect; if not, once created, the energy acts as the laws of physics dictate!

Transform Energy: Lesser Transform Energy can change alternating current into direct current, shift visible light into infrared light, or completely alter the words someone is saying. Greater Transform Energy can turn one type of energy into another – fire can become sound, kinetic energy can become light, and so on.

Path of Magic (Chesed)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

This Path governs spells, magical energy, and the act of casting. It is most commonly relied on for "meta-magical" spells (see *Meta-Magic*, p. 18, and *Magic vs. Magic*, p. 24). It is *also* the Path used to refill a mage's mana reserve (p. 21). No Path of Magic ritual can be used to improve someone's ability to cast spells; see *Stacking Spells* (p. 15) for details. Lesser Magic effects can target the caster or ambient magic – including active spells, conditional spells (pp. 25-26), and charms (pp. 26-28). Greater Magic effects can involve another person's casting ability or magic resistance, or magic permanently tied

to a place or object. See *Places of Power* (pp. 32-33) and *Enchanted Items* (pp. 33-35) for examples of the latter.

Magic never weakened.

Magic never hid. Magic always ruled.

– Leonard Cohen,
Beautiful Losers

Sense Magic: Lesser Sense Magic can detect spell use, analyze a ritual, locate the nearest charm, or tell the caster if he's been unknowingly affected by a spell. Greater Sense Magic can identify a mage, seek the nearest adept, determine why a location is a place of power, or determine what an enchanted item does.

Strengthen Magic: Lesser Strengthen Magic can oppose an attempt to cancel a spell, or enhance a spell's ability to punch through a ward (pp. 24-25) or similar "anti-magic shield." Greater Strengthen Magic can temporarily expand the area covered by a place of power (though not its bonus) or increase the DR or HP of an enchanted item (though not the strength of its enchantment).

Restore Magic: Lesser Restore Magic can heal any of the caster's magical advantages lost to a spell (or curse, etc.), fix an ongoing spell that has been "damaged" in some way by an outside source, or instantly sanctify an area or restore a desecrated one (p. 21). Greater Restore Magic can repair damage done to a place of power, remove a curse preventing someone else from casting spells, or heal metaphysical "damage" done to an enchanted item.

Control Magic: Lesser Control Magic can redirect or repurpose a ritual, ward off incoming spells, trigger a conditional spell or charm ahead of time, or shift the subject of a spell. Greater Control Magic can prevent a caster from working a particular type of ritual, prevent him from targeting a particular subject, or take control of an enchanted item.

Destroy Magic: Lesser Destroy Magic can counter an existing spell – whether just-cast (see "*Blocking*" Spells, p. 24), an ongoing effect, or waiting as a conditional spell or charm – or give the caster levels of Magic Resistance (Improved). Greater Destroy Magic can wipe out a caster's mana reserve, remove his Magery or Ritual Adept advantages, give someone else Magic Resistance, or temporarily suppress the abilities of a place of power or enchanted item.

Create Magic: Lesser Create Magic can fill an area with "magical chaff" to penalize spells that pass through it. It is also used to create elixirs (pp. 28-30). Greater Create Magic can make an item or person register as "magical" to spells or senses. Technically, Lesser Create Magic is also used to refill a mana reserve, and Greater Create Magic is also used for Slow and Sure enchanting (pp. 34-35), but neither of those actions relies on the standard spellcasting rules.

Transform Magic: Lesser Transform Magic can alter an existing spell – though if it needs additional energy, a Lesser Strengthen Magic effect (plus the energy itself) is required as well. Greater Transform Magic can grant an "aspect" to a place of power, making its bonus only usable for one type of ritual, or temporarily shift the owner of an exclusive enchanted item so someone else can use it.

Path of Matter (Netzach)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

This Path governs tangible, unliving, inanimate objects – from rocks to dead bodies to cellular phones. It can't affect an apple tree, but it can affect a plucked apple (which is no longer growing). In many ways, it's the material counterpart to the Path of Energy (pp. 9-10). Lesser Matter effects are simple and "rough" – not very precise – and are limited to interacting with the matter in a way that the laws of nature and physics would agree with. Greater Matter effects can be very precise and/or blatantly impossible. (Create and Transform effects are an exception, as they are blatantly impossible by definition.)

Sense Matter: Lesser Sense Matter can locate the nearest object made of a specific material, locate the nearest knife, identify something's *general* composition (e.g., "stainless steel with an oak handle"), or tell how old something is. Greater Sense Matter can locate a specific item that the caster has previously analyzed (or is *very* familiar with), provide a complete chemical or metallurgical breakdown of an object, or identify and separate fingerprints on a surface.

Strengthen Matter: Lesser Strengthen Matter can improve an object's ST or HT by up to 30%, or its HP or DR by up to 100% (round up). It can make food take twice as long to rot or make it twice as nourishing. It can keep a ship seaworthy after it's down to 0 HP (but no worse). Greater Strengthen Matter can surpass those limits (e.g., improving HT by 50%).

Restore Matter: Lesser Restore Matter can fix an object (up to the equivalent of a minor repair), remove a curse from an item, or make spoiled food edible again. Greater Restore Matter can perform the equivalent of a major repair (or more!), undo the ravages of time upon an object, or regrow a half-eaten apple into a whole one.

Control Matter: Lesser Control Matter can make an object move in any natural way (e.g., rolling a bowling ball across a hallway or knocking something over), slow the speed of a river, prevent hail from hitting a particular object, or force a toaster to hold its bread long enough to catch fire. Greater Control Matter can move an object in impossible ways (e.g., making a bowling ball fly), cause water to flow uphill, or shape *soft* matter into any form desired.

Destroy Matter: Lesser Destroy Matter can inflict internal damage (up to about what a handheld weapon in the setting could inflict with a single blow or shot), reduce an object's statistics (e.g., ST, HT, HP, or DR) to half normal value (rounded up), or cause any irritating or incapacitating

affliction appropriate for the object in question. Greater Destroy Matter can surpass the limits of Lesser Destroy Matter, or can work a partial destruction (e.g., destroying a fire extinguisher's ability to quench flames, with no other changes).

Create Matter: Lesser Create Matter can conjure raw materials, simple tools, food, solid melee weapons, fuel, or wood furniture. Greater Create Matter can summon more complex things, such as firearms, electronic devices, crossbows, or vehicles. For food, fuel, and similar consumables, the matter need only last long enough for it to be fully processed; once the body or system has fully converted it to energy, there's nothing left to disappear when the spell ends. (For food, this usually requires a duration of three days.)

Transform Matter: Lesser Transform Matter can reshape hard materials or make a minor change to an object's substance; e.g., a steel crowbar could be made into iron or aluminum, but not peanut butter. A spell can use two Lesser Transform Matter effects to (e.g.) turn a steel crowbar into an aluminum cooking pot. Greater Transform Matter can completely alter matter, turning stone into air, a dead body into a computer, or a wooden table into an ice sculpture of the caster.

Path of Mind (Chokmah)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

The realm of Mind is the thought processes of sentient, living beings – typically humans or animals, but this may include other, harder-to-classify creatures (like lycanthropes) in some settings. Lesser Mind effects must be either noninvasive (e.g., voluntary communication) or limited to a single, specific aspect of the mind (such as a single memory or Hearing rolls). Greater Mind effects can ignore these restrictions and affect the mind fully. *Exception:* This dichotomy, and the examples below, assume sapient (IQ 6+) beings. When dealing with nonsapient (IQ 1-5) beings, Lesser Mind effects are enough for *any* effect; e.g., Lesser Control Mind is enough to achieve *total* domination over a typical wolf.

This Path is often used to add mental advantages or disadvantages to a subject. While the

Basic Set labels certain traits with

a "mental" icon, the GM is allowed to interpret this in a more restrictive manner. For example, Luck is in the domain of Path of Chance, and thus should not be added with a Path of Mind ritual, even though it does technically have the "mental" icon. Altered Time Rate is as much physical as it is mental, and thus doesn't *necessarily* fit unless limited to mental actions only, and so on.



Sense Mind: Lesser Sense Mind can locate the nearest person, track down a specific person known to the caster, enter into telepathic communication with someone, or sense whether the subject is hostile. Greater Sense Mind can read someone's mind against his will, search through someone's memories, or locate someone based on someone *else's* description of him (through tapping into his impression of the person).

Strengthen Mind: Lesser Strengthen Mind can improve someone's IQ, Will, or Per by up to about 30% (rounded up), add any exotic or supernatural mental advantages that the GM would permit the subject to have with an Unusual Background (e.g., Extra Tracking 1, in most games), add any mundane mental advantages, provide up to a +5 a bonus for mental actions (or resisting mental disadvantages), or provide *any* degree of bonus to resist mental effects (e.g., Influence rolls). Greater Strengthen Mind can surpass the limits of Lesser Strengthen Mind (e.g., improving Per by 100%) or add *any* mental advantage unless the GM has explicitly disallowed it for PCs *and* all NPCs (of any race or species).

Restore Mind: Lesser Restore Mind can recover a lost or suppressed memory, heal IQ damaged by a spell, snap the subject out of being mentally stunned, overcome temporarily mental penalties (e.g., from Affliction or a spell), or let a nonsapient animal recover from *any* mental condition. Greater Restore Mind can temporarily remove permanent mental disadvantages, counter an effect that's completely taken over the subject's mind (e.g., Mind Control or Possession), or provide the equivalent of a year's worth of psychoanalysis with a single spell.

Talent

The GM does not have to allow Paths in Talents (p. B89). Paths have as much in common with **GURPS Magic** spells as with "normal" skills, after all. However, if he doesn't, he may see generalist casters raising IQ to ridiculous levels. Thus, Natural Caster (below) is an *optional* Talent; the GM decides if it's available. It includes enough additional skills to make it more than just a blatant power-up, yet remains *much* cheaper than raising all nine Paths separately. In a game that uses *Alternative Core Skills* (p. 13), add any new core skill to its list as well.

Natural Caster: Alchemy, Esoteric Medicine, Exorcism, Hidden Lore (any magical or supernatural), Innate Attack, Mental Strength, Occultism, Symbol Drawing, Thaumatology, Theology (Hermetic Qabala)*, and all Path skills. *Reaction bonus:* other casters. *15 points/level.*

* Knowledge of the *spiritual* aspects of the sephiroth, decans, and zodiac (pp. 35-37); Thaumatology covers the practical side.

Control Mind: Lesser Control Mind can force the target to take one brief, simple, mental action (e.g., speaking a few words or losing his train of thought), change his emotional state (perhaps causing a Fright Check), or make it impossible for him to voluntarily take one specific action. Greater Control Mind is classic "mind control" – it can be used to give the subject direct orders, cause an incapacitating mental affliction, or inflict any "self-imposed" (p. B121) mental disadvantage or one with a self-control roll.

Destroy Mind: Lesser Destroy Mind can remove a memory; impose any mental irritating affliction (p. B428); mentally stun

someone; reduce IQ, Will, or Per by up to 30%; or give the subject up to -5 to specific IQ-, Will-, or Per-based rolls. Greater Destroy Mind can trigger incapacitating afflictions, larger penalties, or any mental disadvantage not covered by Control Mind (above).

Create Mind: Lesser Create Mind can imbue a nonsentient creation with an animal mind (IQ 1-5); this is typically bundled with rituals to animate statues, conjured beasts, and so on. This spell effect includes "free" IQ appropriate for the creation; e.g., IQ 3 for a summoned horse (*Animal Training*, p. B458). For more intelligence, use *Altered Traits* (pp. 16-17) to add IQ. It can also implant a memory. Greater Create Mind covers making sentient minds, granting up to IQ 8 "for free" in most circumstances.

Transform Mind: Lesser Transform Mind can force a simple but fundamental shift in how a mind sees itself (e.g., making a human believe that he's a hawk) or make a minor adjustment to a memory, moral code, or similar disadvantage. Greater Transform Mind can affect the fundamental nature of a mind; e.g., causing a human mind to act as a digital intelligence. It can also be cast on two subjects to switch minds.

Path of Spirit (Binah)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

"Spirit" refers to any being whose spirit and body are one, and who was never "alive" in the sense that we know it. The specifics will depend on the setting, but common examples include fae, elementals, astral denizens, nature spirits, minor gods, demons, angels, and loa. It can also apply to the soul within a living being, though the GM must adjudicate this; most such effects are better represented with Path of Mind (pp. 11-12). By defaults, ghosts are considered part of the Path of Undead (below), not this Path, as they were formerly alive. If it suits the setting better to treat ghosts as spirit beings, the GM may do so, but he must inform the players before they build their characters.

Path of Spirit effects are identical to those of Path of Body (pp. 7-8) or Path of Mind (pp. 11-12), but limited to affect only spirit subjects. Use Lesser Create Spirit to summon up weak and *very* limited servants, Greater Create Spirit otherwise.

Path of Undead (Malkuth)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

This Path governs any being who lived, then died, but is still hanging around for some reason. It includes spectral undead (e.g., ghosts) as well as physical examples (e.g., zombies, vampires, and liches). Path of Undead effects are identical to those of Path of Body (pp. 7-8) or Path of Mind (pp. 11-12), but limited to affect only undead subjects. Use Lesser Create Undead to raise weak, mindless skeletons and zombies, Greater Create Undead to make anything more potent. See *Path of Spirit* (above) for an important note on ghosts.

VARIATIONS

With a system as inherently flexible as **GURPS**, it should be no surprise that there are *many* ways to customize Ritual Path magic.

ALTERNATIVE CORE SKILLS

The default core skill (p. 6) for Ritual Path magic is Thaumatology, the skill of understanding how magic works. This choice should make sense in most settings, particularly those in which casters study the laws of magic and see spellcasting as imposing one's will upon the universe.

However, it's trivial to change the core skill to something else. This can be a setting-wide change (reflecting a completely different take on how magic works in the game world) or even something that varies between magical schools. The GM must approve any suggested change; to maintain balance, the new core skill should be Very Hard, or at least Hard with prerequisites. If the skill offers a default, it's important to note that spellcasting *requires* at least 1 point in the core skill. Some possibilities:

Alchemy: Invoking rituals requires manipulating elements and essences from around the caster.

Body Control: "Inner alchemists" can cast spells by manipulating their own mana organs.

Computer Hacking: Technomages recite incantations in the form of programs. Optionally, each Path may have its own software; the right program is *required* to cast spells, but as compensation, high-Complexity programs add the usual skill bonuses.

Herb Lore: Druids combine the scents of flowers with the pollen in the air for effects.

Musical Influence: Magical bards can sing spells into existence.

Physics: Magicologists go beyond mere Thaumatology, into a deeper understanding of the universe.

Ritual Magic: Invokers call upon spirits, great and small, to work their powerful rituals.

ALTERNATIVE PATHS

What if there are no undead in your game? Or if the cosmology of the setting is such that the "plant vs. animal" distinction is *far* more important than the "body vs. mind" one? This should not be an issue: If the nine Paths on pp. 6-12 offend thee, change them!

The Paths available in a setting should follow the guidelines under *Dividing Up the Universe* (**GURPS Thaumatology**, pp. 179-180). It's important that the Paths be of roughly equal utility and that between *all* of the Paths, almost any effect is

possible. Alternatively, the GM may simply leave a "hole" in the system; e.g., removing the Path of Mind and declaring that magic *cannot* affect the senses. If so, he should point this out to the players, so no one has to come to this realization in the middle of the game.

The nine existing Paths plus Thaumatology conveniently map to the sephiroth (p. 35). If the GM chooses more or fewer Paths, this will no longer be the case. (Though with 10 Paths, he may choose to map one to Kether – or to Daath, p. 37.) This correspondence is optional and may thus be dropped – or a *different* one may be available. For example, 12 Paths may correlate to houses of the Zodiac, seven Paths can be the classical planets, and so on. See Appendix A of **Thaumatology** for possibilities.

Example: Lexi's setting doesn't have any spirits or undead in it. Also, the distinction between plants, animals, and people is important to her. She declares that the Paths of Body and Mind can only affect humans. Then, to maintain the sephirotic aspect, she replaces the Paths of Spirit and Undead with Animals (Binah) and Plants (Malkuth).

ALTERNATIVE GREATER EFFECTS

The existing divide between *Lesser* and *Greater* effects is one of natural simplicity vs. unnatural complexity. Effects which go against the natural order of things are harder than those which "make sense" to the universe. Detailed, involved, tricky effects are harder than simple, straightforward ones. In essence, magic consists of the caster trying to bend reality to his will, which means it's *far* easier for him to work subtle, realistic effects than blatant or high-impossible ones.

As with anything else, the GM may alter this assumption to better fit his setting. One interesting take is to *reverse* it: Assume that blatant, unnatural, and weird effects are always Lesser, and that a Greater effect is required for any subtlety! This leads to a world in which throwing a fireball is easier than stoking a campfire, and utterly dominating a person's mind is less work than making him forget what he was about to say.

Or the definition could even vary based on the situation. For example, in a "secret magic" game, all effects might be Greater if any "mundanes" are observing it, Lesser otherwise. If so, a caster could use Lesser Move Body to fly through the air without witnesses, but would need Greater Move Body if those unfamiliar with magic might catch a glimpse of him – otherwise, he'd immediately tumble to the ground if they did! In such a game, the rules for *Specific Definition* (p. 19) must change slightly: Don't bother noting whether the effect is Lesser or Greater, because that will vary on the fly.

It doesn't take any special quality to do magic, just knowledge, preparation, the right components, some skill, and a lot of willpower.

– Rosemary Clement-Moore, **Highway to Hell**

CHAPTER TWO

PERFORMING MAGIC

If the city air was chilly, the harbor wind could cut a man to the bone. Cole pulled his trenchcoat tight and tried to keep his heels from clomping on the wooden docks. The **Emerald Queen** was the only lead on this mysterious coven he'd been able to track down; if it wasn't here, he wasn't sure where else to look.

After a few minutes, old instincts told him he wasn't alone. He risked a quick, subtle glance over his shoulder, but didn't see anyone. Still, better safe than sorry. Cole slowed his walking and began gathering energy. A simple spell to sense minds. Enough range to cover the dockyard. It just needed to last for a few minutes. He murmured the words and put his hands in his pockets to make the signs. Several seconds later, he felt the connection form between his will and the universe, and he released the mana. Yes. Someone was there, a few dozen feet behind him. Was he cloaked, or were Cole's senses just deteriorating in his old age?

Either way, Cole had to assume his stalker sensed the spell. Without hesitation, he crushed the charm in his pocket. He felt last night's ritual take effect, surrounding him with a jacket of force. He would feel really stupid wasting this on some dockworker, but he'd already had one gun pointed at him tonight – the next one might be in the hands of someone who wouldn't hesitate as long.

Cole turned the corner near a stack of crates, but then quickly stepped back and to the side, using the crates as cover. He heard no footsteps – yeah, had to be a cloaking spell – but his mind-sensing ritual told him his pursuer was calmly turning the corner after him. Cole lashed out with a low kick, guessing at where the leg should be. He felt his foot connect with a shin, weakly, but enough to unbalance his foe. He followed up with a shoulder check, and a moment later, there was a man-sized splash in the ice-cold water. A **large**-man-sized one. Thank the gods for the element of surprise.

The crate next to Cole splintered as he heard the crack of a pistol. "So much for surprise," he muttered as he spun around. A young man – couldn't be more than 20 years old, if that – had a Luger trained on him. His short, black hair was obviously slicked back with gel; the strong wind could barely move it.

"Mister Jenkins, I presume?" He had the faintest hint of an accent – French, maybe? "You're proving somewhat problematic. Get on your knees, raise your hands, and you'll live. That was a warning shot."

Cole had to give it to him – he was an **excellent** liar. But Cole knew people. That shot only missed due to the wind, this kid was nervous, and there's no way he'd be letting Cole walk away from this alive. So, how well could he trust his protection spell?

Hell with it.

With a scream, Cole charged the gunman head-on. His audacity bought him a few seconds; the kid was **not** expecting this. But before Cole could close the distance, his new friend started unloading bullets at him. Most went wild, but one flew straight at Cole's face. His life flashed before his eyes . . . fortunately, by the time he'd made it to puberty, his magical field had already grabbed the bullet, spun it around, and slung it back to its origin!

The lead pierced the young man's arm; he screamed, dropping the piece. A moment later, Cole grabbed the damaged arm and wrenched it behind the little jerk's back. "You haven't seen problematic yet, kid. Now where's your boat? We're going on an impromptu cruise."

To work a ritual, you must first define exactly what it is that you're trying to accomplish. That determines the amount of energy – raw magical power – needed for the spell. The process of casting a spell is nothing more than the act of gathering this energy; once you have enough, a single skill roll determines how well you channeled it.

Casting is subtle – a whispered word or flick of the wrist is all it takes to direct the effect. However, if a mage is ever gagged *and* has his hands bound behind his back, he cannot gather energy or work rituals until he first rectifies the situation.

A Thaum is the basic unit of magical strength. It has been universally established as the amount of magic needed to create one small white pigeon or three normal-sized billiard balls.

*– Terry Pratchett,
The Light Fantastic*

These rules assume that the caster is an adept – someone who possesses the Ritual Adept (p. 6) advantage. If this is *not* the case, be sure to read *Non-Adepts and Magic* (pp. 19-20).

DEFINE THE RITUAL

Every spell must be defined clearly; e.g., “Using Lesser Strengthen Mind, everyone within four yards of me at the time that I cast the spell will gain Per+2 for the next hour.” That definition includes the *spell effect* (Lesser Strengthen Mind) and all of the applicable *modifiers* (Area of Effect, Range, Altered Traits, and Duration). A caster who uses the same ritual regularly should consider writing it down with a name (e.g., “Bestow Awareness”), to save the trouble of recalculating the energy cost each time. He may also want Ritual Mastery (p. 6) for it. See *Specific Definition* (p. 19) for more on what makes a spell unique, and Chapter 4 for worked examples.

The energy requirement for a ritual depends on the spell effect(s) and any applicable modifiers. The GM must adjudicate the details, and should feel free to modify the energy cost (up or down) for circumstances not covered here. The basic formula is:

Energy Cost = (spell effects + modifiers) × Greater effects multiplier.

For many spells, there will be multiple ways to accomplish the same thing. Banishing a ghost could be done with Lesser Destroy Crossroads (to disrupt its connection to our plane) *or* Greater Control Undead (to force it to move on). Telekinetically lifting a gun could be Greater Create Energy + Greater Control Energy (to create and direct kinetic energy) *or* Greater Control Matter (to empower the gun with the ability to move). The GM should be willing to accept any plausible combination of effects; a smart caster is *supposed* to play to his strengths!

The caster must define the parameters; he doesn’t gain any “inside knowledge” of the values he *should* use. If he chooses the wrong spell effects or fails to include a high enough spell modifier, he won’t know it until after his casting is successful . . . and his spell has no effect. (And even then, he may not realize why!)

Example: Rich, a caster in a high-tech setting tries to put a guard to sleep using Greater Destroy Mind. He casts the spell successfully, but it has no effect. He assumes that the guard resisted the spell, but the GM knows that the guard is really an android! Until Rich realizes this, he may waste his time on *several* useless Path of Body and Path of Mind spells.

SPELL EFFECTS

While the Path skill used determines the subject of the spell, the effect determines what *happens* to that subject. Every Path includes all of the effects below; the difficulty of working a “harder” effect is represented by a higher energy cost.

Any ritual that accomplishes more than one thing will require multiple spell effects; just add the costs together. For example, a spell to locate a person (specifically, his mind), communicate with him, and help him resist *others* trying to invade his mind

would use Lesser Sense Mind ×2 (one to locate and one to communicate) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (to aid resistance). One that boosted the subject’s ST, DX, IQ, HT, and Magic Resistance by a small amount would use Lesser Strengthen Body ×3 + Lesser Strengthen Mind + Greater Destroy Magic.

There is no limit to the number of spell effects *or* to the number of Paths that can be combined – though mixed-Path spells are slightly harder to cast (*Choose the Skill*, pp. 19-20). Note how many Greater effects are being used in the spell; this doesn’t change the costs here, but it will significantly affect the *final* cost of the spell (*Greater Effects Multiplier*, pp. 18-19).

In addition to the general notes for each effect, see the many examples listed under the Path skills (pp. 6-12).

Sense

Cost: 2

Learn something about the subject *or* communicate with the subject.

Stacking Spells

Magic does not “stack.” This is expressed as three separate but related rules.

1. A subject cannot be under the influence of the same *spell effect* (pp. 15-16) from different rituals. For example, you cannot cast Lesser Strengthen Body to give someone ST+1 and then cast another Lesser Strengthen Body to give the same person Ambidexterity. In such a case, the spell which took *more energy to cast* remains, while the other fizzles without effect. (You could have cast a *single* spell which combined *two* Lesser Strengthen Body effects, however.) For these purposes, a Greater effect and Lesser effect are two different things – Greater Strengthen Body to add DR 4 would overlap just fine with any *one* of the spells mentioned above.

2. Similar results from different rituals are never cumulative with each other, regardless of the spell effect used. For example, if someone is under the effect of Lesser Control Chance for +4 to rolls to remain undetected *and* Lesser Strengthen Body for +3 to Stealth rolls, he does *not* get +7 to Stealth! Only use the highest bonus (in this case, +4). However, if he also had a ritual giving him Luck, he could use his Luck to reroll one of those failed Stealth rolls, because “a reroll” and “a skill bonus” are not similar benefits. As well, if another ritual gave a guard -3 to Hearing, that would be fine; it benefits the sneaky subject, but it doesn’t actually interact with his Stealth skill at all. The GM has the final say on how “similar” two results are.

3. Spells cannot make anyone better at using magic. A ritual can never give a bonus to spellcasting, bestow Magery or Ritual Adept, etc. (It *could* add Magic Resistance or drain Magery, however.) Unlike normal Luck, Luck granted *via ritual* cannot be used for spellcasting. While a spell *can* add HP or FP to a subject, these cannot be sacrificed for magical energy. Traditional trappings (p. 19) conjured via spell are worthless for reducing energy costs. And so on. This restriction only applies to spells; permanent magic, such as that found in places of power (pp. 32-33) and enchanted items (pp. 33-35), *can* make a caster better at using magic!

Strengthen

Cost: 3

Protect, enhance, or otherwise augment the subject. This must be used to improve an existing quality within the subject, not to add totally new capabilities. For example, normal eyesight could be expanded to add Infravision, but arms could not be transformed into wings.

Restore

Cost: 4

Heal the subject, or undo a transformation. A Restore spell rarely needs a duration; if it heals the subject back to his normal state, he will remain that way.

Control

Cost: 5

Direct or move the subject, without changing it fundamentally. For tangible subjects, this includes physical movement, similar to telekinesis.

Destroy

Cost: 5

Damage or weaken the subject. Greater Destroy effects allow for *partial destructions* – the removal of a concept or aspect that is fundamental to the subject, without affecting it otherwise. Sample partial destructions include removing fire's ability to burn (but not its ambient heat and light), removing a ghost's ability to materialize (but leaving it otherwise unharmed and present), and removing a column's ability to support weight (without affecting its mass).

Create

Cost: 6

Bring the subject into being from nothing. Create cannot produce anything specific or unique; e.g., a particular person or the Holy Grail. Objects produced by Create effects are drawn from the caster's mind. When creating *manufactured* goods (not raw materials), poor visualization can produce useless junk! If the spell is successful, the caster must *also* roll against any skill used to design, build, or maintain the product, with a bonus equal to the ritual's margin of success; failure means it isn't properly formed. Difficult items may impose a penalty on this roll; the GM may assign a modifier or use the (very rough!) guidelines below, based on how expensive the item is.

Spell Effect Summary Table

Effect	Cost	Effect	Cost
Sense	2	Destroy	5
Strengthen	3	Create	6
Restore	4	Transform	8
Control	5		

Crafting Penalties Table

Percentage of Starting Wealth	TL3 Example	TL8 Example	Penalty
0.5%	\$5	\$100	0
1%	\$10	\$200	-1
2%	\$20	\$400	-2
5%	\$50	\$1,000	-3
10%	\$100	\$2,000	-4
20%	\$200	\$4,000	-5
50%	\$500	\$10,000	-6

Continue the 1, 2, 5 progression indefinitely.

Transform

Cost: 8

Significantly alter the subject. If none of the other effects seem to cover something, use Transform. Crossing between two categories requires a Transform effect for *both* Paths; e.g., to turn a tree into a stone pillar, use Greater Transform Body + Greater Transform Matter. You do not need to use Altered Traits (below) to explicitly add Alternate Form; changing things is what this spell effect *does*.

It may seem odd at first glance for Transform to cost more than Create; that means it's simpler to (e.g.) create a sword from *nothing* than to transform a stick into a sword. This is because Transform is often used to solve two problems at once – it can get rid of an obstacle *and* produce something useful, all in one fell swoop! In addition, Transform effects that produce manufactured goods do *not* require the craft roll described under *Create* (above) if the original item was sufficiently similar (in the GM's opinion) to the end result. For example, using Transform to turn a sandwich into a pistol would require a craft roll, but using it to turn a toy pistol into a real one would not.

SPELL MODIFIERS

Not all spells require modifiers. For example, a touch-based Lesser Restore Mind effect to snap someone out of being stunned would need no modifiers at all; the spell effect handles it just fine. If there's any question about whether a given modifier is required to accomplish a certain goal, the GM (as always) has the final word.

Spell modifiers *never* decrease the cost of a spell. A modifier may be free (+0 energy) for certain effects, but it will never have a *negative* energy cost.

Afflictions

Stunning a foe (mentally or physically) adds no additional energy; the spell effect is enough. For the other states on pp. B428-429, this costs +1 energy for every +5% it's worth as an enhancement to Affliction (pp. B35-36). For example, a nausea spell would require +6 energy. In general, a separate spell effect is needed for each affliction; the GM may make an exception if he feels that two conditions are *very* closely related.

Altered Traits

Any spell that adds or worsens disadvantages, reduces or removes advantages, or lowers attributes or characteristics adds +1 energy for every 5 character points removed.

One that adds or improves advantages, reduces or removes disadvantages, or increases attributes or characteristics adds +1 energy for every 1 character point added. Any disadvantage with a self-control roll (p. B120) allows the target a chance to avoid it; multiply the value of the disadvantage by 2.5 if there is *no* self-control roll allowed.

The GM may permit a single spell effect to alter multiple traits, but only if they make sense together; e.g., a Lesser Destroy Body effect that adds Hard of Hearing [-10] and Protected Hearing [5] for a net +7 energy.

If a trait has been artificially reduced (e.g., by another spell), a spell that adds it *back* to the subject will “heal” the loss permanently. See *Restore* (p. 16) and the example under *Magic vs. Magic* (p. 24).

You cannot add Magery, Ritual Adept, etc., and any HP or FP added cannot be sacrificed for magical energy. See *Stacking Spells* (p. 15) for why.

Area of Effect

Rituals that will affect more than one subject need this modifier. Figure the spherical area of effect, find its radius in yards on the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550), and add *twice* the “Size” value for that line to the energy cost (minimum +2). If the caster is not in the area, calculate range (p. 18) from him to the nearest edge.

Excluding potential targets is harder – add another +1 energy for every two specific subjects in the area that *won’t* be affected by the spell. The caster must designate each of these subjects explicitly, as if mentally “flagging” each one as excluded. “Exclude Sam, Kathryn, Brad, and those two guys over there” is fine, but “exclude every Martian” or “exclude everyone on my team” is not. For spells that do external damage (below) or otherwise fill the area with some sort of physical effect, excluding a target also allows the caster to exclude as much *unoccupied* space around it as he wishes. This makes noncircular areas of effect possible.

Bestows a (Bonus or Penalty)

Use this table to determine the energy cost of bonuses or penalties, based on whether the ritual will add a modifier to a broad range of rolls (e.g., active defense rolls, Sense rolls, or a wildcard skill), a moderate range (e.g., rolls to hide or Vision rolls), or a narrow range (e.g., Climbing rolls or social rolls affecting a specific person). You can give a *penalty* to magic use, but not a bonus; see *Stacking Spells* (p. 15) for more.

Modifier	Broad	Moderate	Narrow
±1	5	2	1
±2	10	4	2
±3	20	8	4
±4	40	16	8
±5	80	32	16
etc.	×2	×2	×2

Damage

If the spell will cause damage, whether directly or indirectly, consult the *Spell Modifiers Table* (p. 18) and then apply the rules here. If a spell lists “damage” without specifying whether it’s internal or external, assume internal.

This modifier *cannot* be combined with *Duration* (p. 18), but see *Enhancements* (below).

Internal (Direct) Damage

Most spells work like maledictions – if the subject fails to resist, he takes the listed damage. His DR does not protect! The spell effect is invisible to mundane senses; a bystander wouldn’t realize the subject has been injured unless he screams, falls over, etc.

External (Indirect) Damage

Some spells don’t target the subject *directly*, but instead apply external force; e.g., the classic “fireball.” For simplicity, this external magical force is referred to as a *missile*. A missile spell isn’t cast on the target, so there’s no resistance roll, no range (p. 18), and the subject’s weight (p. 18) doesn’t matter. Instead, the spell creates a missile in the caster’s hand.

Once created, the missile has to be delivered by touch (using DX, Brawling, etc.) or thrown using Innate Attack. This requires an attack roll on a later turn. It is not part of the spell – it is entirely mundane and uses the normal combat rules. If thrown, the missile has Acc 3, Range 10/100, RoF 1, and Rcl 1. You may hold on to the missile for as long as you like, but it occupies your hand and goes off immediately if you set it down or drop it (roll Will to avoid this if injured!).

A missile does *triple* the damage shown on the *Spell Modifiers Table* (e.g., a 3d+3 fireball for +1 energy) – or *double* damage if it’s also explosive. It is blatant and visible, and can be blocked or dodged normally. The target’s DR protects against it.

It’s possible to cast an indirect-damage ritual that doesn’t involve a hand-held missile (e.g., a lightning bolt hitting the target from the sky). Use the same rules, but with the following changes:

- The attack happens as soon as the spell is complete. The caster does not have to use another turn to attack.
- The caster still rolls against Innate Attack to hit, but cannot aim, use an All-Out Attack, etc.
- The spell must include energy for the range (p. 18) from caster to target, since the missile is being created at a distance.

Enhancements

Damage caused by rituals rarely requires enhancements, but they can be added if necessary. First, tally up the total *energy* required for the damage modifier (only). For example, a spell that inflicts 3d+1 cutting (internally) requires +14 energy for damage: the +9 from the table, multiplied by 1.5 for cutting. Then use the appropriate rule:

20 or Less Energy: Add another 1 energy for every +5% or fraction thereof.

21 or More Energy: Apply the enhancement percentage to the damage modifier energy cost (not the cost of the whole spell); round up.

You may add limitations, but only to bring down the cost of the enhancements. The net value cannot go below +0% and there is always a minimum +1 energy for adding *any* enhancements. (Adding *just* limitations is allowed as well, but it doesn’t reduce the cost of the spell at all!)

Never add enhancements that replicate existing spell modifiers. For example, you cannot add Area Effect or Selective Area (use *Area of Effect*, above), Increased Range or Long-Range (use *Range*, p. 18), and so on. Duration is an exception; any sort of enduring damage *should* be represented with enhancements such as Cyclic or Persistent.

Duration

Unless the spell is instantaneous, see the *Spell Modifiers Table* (below). A caster can return after the fact (before the spell lapses) and add more energy to prolong the duration, but not by more than the original time; see *After Casting* (p. 22) for details. Aside from healing and damaging spells, no ritual effect is permanent; all will *eventually* expire.

As an *optional* rule, if the GM wishes to make extremely long durations simpler to achieve, durations over a decade can add an energy cost of only (number of decades)+30. This makes it feasible to cast spells that will last for centuries. As an even *more* optional rule, he could also allow durations over a *century* to add (number of centuries)+39 energy – but as this makes it relatively easy to cast spells which will outlive most *nations*, it should be exercised with caution!

Conditional Termination

Some spells may call for unusual durations, such as “Until this acorn falls from the tree.” If the GM allows this, he must determine the Duration modifier for such an event, using the guidelines on p. 242 of *GURPS Thaumatology*. However, because the duration parameters of Ritual Path magic vary *significantly* from those in *Thaumatology*, the suggested modifiers there should be doubled; e.g., 6-8 energy for “Until you next sleep.” Price new modifiers in comparison with the *Spell Modifiers Table*, not with the duration table in *Thaumatology*!

Spell Modifiers Table

Duration*	Damage†	Weight	Added Energy‡
Momentary	1d	10 lbs.	0
10 minutes	1d+1	30 lbs.	+1
30 minutes	1d+2	100 lbs.	+2
1 hour	2d-1	300 lbs.	+3
3 hours	2d	1,000 lbs.	+4
6 hours	2d+1	3,000 lbs.	+5
12 hours	2d+2	5 tons	+6
1 day	3d-1	15 tons	+7
3 days	3d	50 tons	+8
1 week	3d+1	150 tons	+9
2 weeks	3d+2	450 tons	+10
1 month	4d-1	1,350 tons	+11
+1 month	etc.	×3	+1

* For durations over a year, the added energy becomes (number of years) + 21.

† For most damage. Multiply added energy by 0.5 for small piercing attacks, by 1.5 for cutting or large piercing attacks, and by 2 for corrosion, fatigue, huge piercing, or impaling attacks. Always round up.

‡ If a value falls between two entries, use the energy requirement for the greater one.

Extra Energy

The caster *can* just add extra energy to a ritual for no extra effect, whether to make it harder to dispel (*Meta-Magic*, below) or to overcome existing spell effects (*Stacking Spells*, p. 15). In practice, this option is most often chosen when the

caster simply gathers more energy than he was expecting to and doesn't need to add extra range, duration, effect, etc.

Healing

Use the *Damage* column of the *Spell Modifiers Table* (above) to determine HP or FP healed. For restoring damaged attributes and such, see *Altered Traits* (pp. 16-17). This cannot be combined with *Duration* (above), as it's one of the few magical effects that's already truly permanent.

Meta-Magic

Dispelling or altering magic requires additional energy equal to the cost of the original spell. See *Magic vs. Magic* (p. 24) for a more detailed discussion.

Range

For most spells, find the range in yards on the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550) and add the “Size” value for that line (minimum +0) to the energy cost. (If the caster guesses, and doesn't add enough range to reach the subject, the spell will have no effect.) For information spells, consult *Long-Distance Modifiers* (p. B241) and apply the penalty (inverted) as an additional energy cost; for cross-time spells, do the same thing, but read “miles” as “days.” Crossing dimensional barriers adds a flat 10 energy per dimension.

Speed

For movement spells, look up the speed in yards/second on the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550) and add the “Size” value for that line (minimum +0) to the energy cost. This includes Crossroads-based shortcuts – a gate to your home 12 miles away is allowing you to travel at an *effective* speed of 12 miles/second (+25 energy). Gates to other times or dimensions don't need a speed component.

Subject Weight

If the spell will cause a physical change of any sort (including direct damage and healing), or if the GM otherwise rules that the amount of mass affected is an important aspect of the spell, see the *Spell Modifiers Table* (above). This never applies to rituals with a purely mental effect, like information spells or mind-boosting spells.

For area spells, this is the weight of the largest individual subject you can affect – don't pay for the total weight of *all* subjects! Because it can be difficult and time-consuming to do a weight estimate for everyone in the area, smart casters throw an extra point of energy into this, just to be safe.

GREATER EFFECTS MULTIPLIER

Greater effects make the *entire* spell more difficult to cast. Add the energy required for all spell effects and the energy required for all applicable modifiers, then multiply that total based on how many Greater effects the ritual uses:

Greater Effects	Multiplier	Greater Effects	Multiplier
0	×1	3	×7
1	×3	4	×9
2	×5	+1	+2

Example: Cole wants to establish communication with Bob, his friend trapped in another dimension. There is no nearby rift, so this is Greater Sense Crossroads (to communicate across planes), Lesser Sense Mind (to locate Bob), and another Lesser Sense Mind (to speak with Bob), for (2+2+2), or 6 energy. Cole wants it to last 10 minutes (+1 energy) and cross-dimensional range adds a flat +10 energy. The effects and modifiers total 17 energy, but because there is one Greater effect, the *actual* spell cost is 51 energy. If Cole could find a gate to that dimension, he could use it to cast this spell with nothing but Lesser effects, which would bring the cost down to 17 energy.

TRADITIONAL TRAPPINGS

The GM should *reduce* the final energy cost by up to 25% for cool, flavorful embellishments; e.g., “For my blinding ritual, I put 20 pairs of reading glasses on mannequin heads, crank the Blind Boys of Alabama on the stereo, then work the ritual while smashing each pair of glasses” might be worth -15%.

This discount is subjective. The GM is free to simply choose a discount from 0% (not impressed) to -25% (incredibly impressed) based on how awesome and fitting the trappings sounded. Or he can use the following guidelines, judging the trappings on specific criteria:

Appropriateness: 0% if there was no real tie-in to the concept of the spell. -5% if there was at least a clear link between the trappings and the spell. -10% if the trappings embodied the spell so well that anyone watching could probably guess what the spell was designed to do.

Bother: -5% if at least *two* of the following phrases describe the trappings, 0% otherwise: they took a great deal of time and effort to pull off; they were expensive or otherwise consumed a lot of resources; or they were dangerous to arrange.

Coolness: +5% if the GM thought the description was boring (this can ruin the discount, but will never actually *increase* the cost of the spell). 0% if the GM liked the description. -5% if the GM loved the description. -10% if

the GM’s jaw dropped and he made a mental note to share this story on the Internet later.

For a more detailed system, see *Decanic Trappings* (p. 36). Use one or the other – not both!

Specific Definition

Ritual Mastery (p. 6) and grimoires (pp. 30-32) give a bonus to cast “a specific ritual.” For the purpose of these rules, a ritual is defined by the following things:

- The specific spell effect(s) (pp. 15-16); e.g., “Lesser Strengthen Body and Lesser Destroy Chance.”
- What those spell effects *do*. This is somewhat subjective, but there’s a clear difference between (e.g.) “Lesser Sense Mind to send my thoughts” and “Lesser Sense Mind to locate the nearest sapient being with IQ 5 or less.”
- Which of the following modifiers (pp. 16-18) are used, though you don’t have to list the specific value – it can be changed “on the fly” without issue: Area of Effect, Healing, Meta-Magic, or Speed.
- Which of the following modifiers are used *and* their specific effect – this cannot be changed without being considered a new ritual: Afflictions, Altered Traits (you must list the traits, but *if* they’re leveled, you can vary how many levels you add), Bestows a Bonus (you must list the rolls affected, but can vary the strength of the modifier), Bestows a Penalty (as for Bestows a Bonus), or Damage (you must list what *type* of damage and any enhancements, but can vary the amount).

Don’t bother listing Duration, Extra Energy, Range, or Subject Weight – or Traditional Trappings – as these can be varied freely with *any* spell.

See Chapter 4 for *many* examples.

Example: Cole has Ritual Mastery (Spontaneous Combustion) – a spell to burn his enemies from within. He notes this as, “Spontaneous Combustion: Greater Create Energy to set targets on fire (Damage, Internal Burning).” He gets +2 when using this spell at any range or on any subject, and regardless of how much damage he does. If he were to change the damage to external or crushing, or cast the spell over an area, he would forfeit his +2, as that would be considered a different ritual.

CHOOSE THE SKILL

Once the energy requirement is known, the caster can begin performing the ritual. At this point, it is important to determine which Path skill the caster will use. *All* rolls for this spell will be against this skill.

If effects from only one Path are being used, this is simple; e.g., a spell of Lesser Control Undead and Greater Destroy Undead would use Path of Undead for all rolls. For spells that mix effects from two Paths, the caster uses the *lower* of the two. (Remember that anyone with Thaumatology skill knows *all* of the Path skills at default!) If the spell requires *three or more*

Paths, the caster uses his lowest one *and* is at -1 (to *all* ritual-related rolls) for every Path past the first two.

NON-ADEPTS AND MAGIC

Adepts have a fairly easy time casting spells, due to the Ritual Adept (p. 6) advantage. For all other casters, apply the following four restrictions. All penalties stack – it’s possible to be at -20. This penalty applies to every skill roll made for the spell.

Connection

All rolls are at -5 unless the subject is present, the caster knows *exactly* where the subject is (within one yard), the caster has something intimately tied to the subject (e.g., a wedding ring or baby blanket), or the caster has a piece of the subject (e.g., hair or blood).

Consecrated Space

Spells must be cast from a properly prepared area or they suffer an additional -5 to all rolls. Any place of magical



potency (pp. 32-33) is considered consecrated. Otherwise, it takes work to consecrate an area for all future rituals; the non-adept caster must devote at least an hour per day to preparation, for a full week. (This cannot be sped up by taking more than an hour per day!)

In a pinch, the caster can roll against the better of Symbol Drawing or Thaumatology to prepare a hasty circle in 1d minutes; *for the next ritual only*, this reduces the penalty to -1 – or no penalty on a critical success.

Desecrated areas (*Powerful or Desecrated Places*, p. 21) must be fixed before they can be reconsecrated, whether permanently or hastily.

Magical Aptitude

If the caster does not have at least Magery 0, all rolls are at -5. In practice, this limits *effective* Path skill to 7, before bonuses from grimoires, Higher Purpose, Ritual Mastery, etc. Unlike the other three non-adept penalties, there is no way to overcome this one by accepting other restrictions; mages are simply *better* at spellcasting than non-mages.

As an *optional* rule, the GM may allow non-mages to add Magery 0 by paying 1 point at a time. If so, each point removes -1 of this penalty.

Time

Gathering ambient energy takes five *minutes* (not seconds) per attempt. Tapping into power sources takes one minute per attempt. Alternatively, the caster *can* use the adept times (see *Gathering Ambient Energy*, below) – but all rolls are at an additional -5, and tapping an energy source now requires a roll! The *Time Spent* (p. B346) rules may never be applied to magic.

ACQUIRE THE ENERGY

The energy needed for rituals does not correspond directly to FP or HP – it is a measure of the raw magical essence that permeates every person and thing. Once the energy requirement for a ritual is known, the caster must meet it by gathering ambient energy (below), tapping one or more energy sources (p. 21), or both.

This energy must be gathered on the spot for a given spell. The caster cannot gather energy and hold on to it for later use, or start gathering energy without a *specific* spell as the goal! Unless the caster rolls a critical failure, he may safely abort the spell at any time, harmlessly releasing any accumulated energy . . . but this does *not* restore any sacrificed HP or FP (p. 21).

GATHERING AMBIENT ENERGY

Drawing energy from the surroundings takes an adept five Concentrate maneuvers per gathering, followed by a skill roll (*Choose the Skill*, pp. 19-20). The adept may omit up to four of these Concentrate maneuvers by accepting -1 to skill per maneuver skipped; Altered Time Rate and Compartmentalized Mind can speed this up by allowing him to take multiple Concentrate

maneuvers per second. The caster may continue making gathering attempts until he has enough energy for the ritual. At every *third* attempt for a given ritual, apply a cumulative -1 to skill – long rituals are more difficult.

For each attempt, the result depends on the result of the caster's skill roll:

- **Critical Failure:** The ritual fails horribly! The GM should use *double* the energy collected (or 30 energy, if less than 15 has been accumulated) to power a “botch” ritual that harms the caster and friends, or helps their enemies. Feel free to eyeball the cost rather than slow down the game for exact calculations! See *Sample 30-Point Botches* (pp. 52-53) for examples.

- **Failure:** You obtain a single energy point. However, the spell acquires a “quirk” – the GM will add a minor, unintended effect. Multiple failures may result in multiple minor effects or a single, significant one. See *Sample Quirks* (p. 53) for suggestions.

- **Success:** You gather energy equal to your margin of success (minimum 1).

- **Critical Success:** As for *Success*, plus your *next* gathering attempt for this ritual only takes one second (even for non-adepts).

Powerful or Desecrated Places

Gathering energy is easier in a place of magical potency; see *Places of Power* (pp. 32-33) for more details.

At the other end of the spectrum, ritually desecrated areas are unable to produce *any* ambient energy. Casters will recognize this as soon as they *start* to gather ambient energy.

Intentional desecration is easy; it requires full access to the area, an hour of work per 100 square yards (or fraction thereof), and an Occultism roll – no roll needed if you have Thaumatology skill. *Restoring* the area is similar, but takes three times as long and a successful Thaumatology (instead of Occultism) roll.

TAPPING ENERGY SOURCES

It takes only one Concentrate maneuver (no roll necessary) to draw upon a single source of energy. The caster may draw upon as many sources as he likes, but only one at a time and one per Concentrate maneuver.

Mana Reserve

Everyone with Magery 1+ has a mana reserve, which can store (Magery level)×3 points of energy for quick, easy access. This can be refilled with Path of Magic skill, using the rules for gathering ambient energy (pp. 20-21); ignore any “quirks” due to failures. The GM should assume that mages “top themselves off” during downtime.

Voluntary Sacrifice

The caster may give of himself, burning away his internal reserves for emergency energy – as may any *willing* ally in contact with the caster. Each person is a separate source, and may only contribute to a given ritual once. This sacrifice *hurts*; standard shock penalties (even for FP) apply to everything *except* casting this spell. Every 2 HP or 3 FP sacrificed translate into a point of energy for the spell.

To count as *willing*, the person must understand the implications of what he’s doing – “Just grab my hand and trust me!” doesn’t work. He must know roughly what your spell will do *and* that his self-inflicted pain will contribute to its success. Thus, you cannot trick someone by lying to him about what kind of ritual you’re casting, who the subject is, etc. But you can certainly lie about your motives or anything *not* involving the details of the spell!

Similarly, you cannot force someone to help you via mental control. A mind-controlled subject (whether via magic, psi, or any other means) is not a *willing* subject because he’s not able to make that choice. Coercion is fine, though; you can hold a man’s daughter at knifepoint and demand that he help power your spell, as long as he had the *choice* to say no (regardless of the consequences of doing so). As an *optional* rule, the GM may

30 Energy?

The minimum energy in a botch was 20 in *GURPS Monster Hunters 1: Champions*. It’s been raised to 30 to help critical failures really *feel* like botches, not just quirks! This change should be considered optional (but highly recommended) in any *Monster Hunters* game.

decide that any energy contributed via coerced sacrifice is automatically quirked (*Gathering Ambient Energy*, pp. 20-21).

Involuntary Sacrifice

It is possible to draw energy from an *unwilling* subject . . . it just happens to kill him. This is the only way nonsapient beings can contribute to a spell. Only one unwilling subject may be sacrificed per ritual. He must be subdued for the duration of the casting, and killed at the very end. The energy produced depends on whether the victim is nonsapient (IQ 1-5) or sapient (IQ 6+):

Nonsapient: Energy equals $IQ \times (\text{the lower of HT or HP})$, divided by 5.

Sapient: Energy equals $IQ \times (\text{the higher of HT or HP})$, divided by 5.

For example, an IQ 12, HT 10, HP 14 man would produce $(12 \times 14) / 5 = 33$ energy. At the GM’s option, this may be adjusted for the purity of the victim; a newborn baby may generate twice as much energy, while a promiscuous drunk’s energy would be halved. Round down in all cases.

Natural Energy

Casters may drain the life energy out of the land around them. This may not be done in an area that’s already been drained, or one that has been ritually desecrated. Casters with Magery 0 may drain the energy from 1 acre; those with Magery 1+ may drain (Magery×2) acres. The caster is always in the center of the area drained. This produces 1 energy per acre but permanently blights the land! Crops won’t grow, animals avoid the area, and rain clouds darken the sky. As this can be done only *once* in any given area, and the effects are blatant and well-known, even the most evil casters will not do this lightly. Anyone with Thaumatology will recognize such an area automatically; others may roll against Occultism to do so.

Powerful Artifacts

The GM may introduce various items of power as plot devices. They will typically hold energy which is usable only for a certain Path (or even for a specific ritual), and may be in the form of a grimoire (pp. 30-32).

CAST THE SPELL

There is no time requirement other than that to gather the energy (pp. 20-21). On the caster’s turn in which the last necessary point of energy has been acquired, he rolls against the appropriate Path skill (*Choose the Skill*, pp. 19-20) to cast the

spell. This roll takes none of the modifiers under *Acquire the Energy*, only those listed under *Choose the Skill* (including any non-adept penalties). If the spell is to make a charm (pp. 26-28) or elixir (pp. 28-30), add any modifier for equipment quality.

● **Critical Failure:** The spell fails horribly – use the guidelines under *Gathering Ambient Energy* (pp. 20-21). As an *optional* rule, the GM may invoke the “Threefold Law” if the spell was one intended to cause harm to another living being: *Triple* the energy that goes into the botch instead of doubling it (minimum 30 energy)!

● **Failure:** The energy doesn’t flow properly. The caster must continue to concentrate for seconds equal to the margin of failure, after which he can try again at no penalty.

● **Success:** If the spell is not targeting a living subject, or if the subject is an aware *and* willing participant, it works. Use the margin of success to determine general effectiveness and precision. Otherwise, every potential subject who is *not* a willing participant resists with a Quick Contest using the better of his HT or Will, plus any Magic Resistance. The spell must *win* to affect each subject; if necessary, it uses its margin of victory to determine general effectiveness and precision. (Unaware subjects instinctively attempt to resist *any* spell, even a helpful one!)

● **Critical Success:** As for success, plus the caster’s mana reserve is instantly refilled (if low). There is no other special effect. Subjects *do* get a resistance roll.

For spells to learn information (not including invasive spells, like mind reading), the GM rolls instead of the caster. If such a spell fails by 5 or more or critically fails, he lies *instead* of the normal failure effects.

If the subject is currently under the effect of existing spells, check to see if *Stacking Spells* (p. 15) is an issue *after* making

sure the new spell is cast successfully. If this new spell conflicts with one of the existing ones, whichever cost *less* energy fizzles, and the other spell takes or retains full effect.

AFTER CASTING

Once cast, the spell will last for whatever duration the caster chose. A caster may cancel all the effects of his own ritual before they expire. This takes one second and does not require a roll, but he must be free to move and speak. He has no other connection with the ritual (unless that was added as an effect); he doesn’t know how subjects react unless he can see them, he doesn’t instinctively know when it will end, etc.

The original caster may come back to extend the spell’s duration. At *any* time before the spell ends, he may work a new ritual, using the same Path skill. The caster must be within range (the original range) of the subject or area; this cannot be done from a greater distance. The energy cost is equal to that required for the additional duration (p. 18) he wishes to add. No other modifiers (including the Greater effects multiplier) apply. If this inexpensive ritual is successful, the extra duration is added to the *end* of the spell. An extension ritual cannot lengthen a spell by more than its original duration; e.g., if a caster invoked a ritual with a one-week duration, and later wanted to extend that ritual by a month, he’d have to do it one week at a time (as four separate, 9-energy extension rituals). This does not violate *Stacking Spells* (p. 15), as it’s considered an extension of the same spell.

Sample Castings

Thomas and Sabrina demonstrate how to alter reality using Ritual Path magic.

Adept

Thomas is a witch with Magery 5 (and thus a mana reserve of 15), Ritual Adept, Thaumatology-19, Path of Spirit-17, and Path of Undead-15. He wants to give his seven-yard-radius home a ward (pp. 24-25) against any spirit beings or undead coming in for the next week. This is a Lesser Control Spirit *and* Lesser Control Undead effect, for a base 10 energy, modified by +6 (area) and +9 (duration) for a total of 25 energy. There are no Greater effects. He’ll be using Path of Undead, as it’s the lower of the two relevant Path skills.

He takes five seconds and rolls against Path of Undead, succeeding by 6, for 6 energy. Another five seconds and he succeeds by 4, for 10 total energy. Another five seconds and he fails; he has 11 total energy, but there’ll be a quirk – the GM decides that the field will also resist the first spell *he* casts across it. He then takes *one* second to tap into his mana reserve, withdrawing 14 energy, bringing him to a total of 25. He rolls against Path of Undead to complete the ritual and succeeds. Any spirits trying to enter his home must overcome his skill of 17 and any undead must overcome a 15, but for every threat that *does* get through, *both* skills drop by 1 for the purpose of the ward.

If Thomas wants to renew this every week, he can return home (any time before it expires) and work a new

ritual, using Path of Undead to add up to another 9 energy to extend the duration by one week. If he wanted to renew it for a month, he’d have to do it a week at a time, since the original spell was only good for a week. This does not replenish any “damage” to the ward, though – for that, he must recast it.

Non-Adept

Sabrina has Magery 0 and Thaumatology-21. All of her Path skills are defaulted from Thaumatology, and thus limited to 12. She is in a sewer looking for a magical artifact and casts a spell to see if it’s anywhere within 200 yards. This is a Greater Sense Magic effect, for 2 base energy. The only modifier is range, but that’s +0, as information spells take long-distance modifiers. The final cost is 6 energy, due to the one Greater effect.

As the sewer is unprepared space and Sabrina is not an adept (*Non-Adepts and Magic*, pp. 19-20), she first takes 1d minutes and a Thaumatology roll to bring her consecrated space penalty to only -1 for this ritual. She holds an ancient parchment describing the artifact to avoid a connection penalty. After five minutes, she rolls against an effective Path of Magic skill of 11 – succeeding by 3 gets her 3 energy. Afraid to try again, she takes one minute to sacrifice 6 FP and 2 HP, for the remaining 3 energy needed. Because it’s an information spell, the GM secretly rolls against her skill of 11, but fails by 5! He lies and says that the artifact is down the south tunnel . . .

CHAPTER THREE

ADVANCED MAGIC

*Don't look at me, the spell told everyone in the nightclub. Not everyone listened, but luckily, it got Cole past the bouncers at the back door. Luckily . . . how long could his luck hold out? Cole pondered turning back, but this wasn't just about Nate anymore. Now that he knew what the **Emerald Queen** had smuggled into the country, he couldn't let them get away with it.*

He sneaked down the stairs and connected corridor until he heard guards talking. Reaching into his pocket, he sorted through the assortment of cheap glass figurines (the best he could find on short notice) until he grabbed the right one – a little ballerina. He pointed into the room ahead and snapped her legs. Instantly, the guards fell silent; a quick peek confirmed that they were asleep.

Cole grabbed the forehead of a sleeping guard and pulled out a glass chef. He briefly considered casting the spell on the spot, saving the charm, but his plan was to get in and out as quickly as possible. He cracked the figurine on the desk, and his mind-reading ritual left hibernation and delved into the man's memories. Now he knew where he was going.

Left, then left again. Another charm unlocked the door. Unfortunately, upon turning the doorknob, Cole felt an outside force dispel his cloak. "Guess I'm done hiding," he muttered, as he entered the room.

The conference room had tables roughly arranged in a U shape, probably to facilitate meetings. The two men sitting at the far end stopped in mid-conversation as Cole walked through the door. At least he hadn't been expected.

"Grab him!" The half-dozen thugs in the room didn't hesitate any longer than the man giving the orders. They charged Cole angrily. He grabbed the glass fireman he'd kept around his neck for emergencies and threw it to the ground. A wave of mental energy exploded from it, washing over the men as each now saw Cole as his greatest fear. Cole didn't know what that necessarily was, but just to be safe he screamed and waved his arms in what was hopefully a menacing manner.

One man whimpered and jumped up on the nearest table. Another backed into the corner, his limbs flailing defensively. The one with the goatee just started screaming, as if frozen in place. Two ran – right past Cole and out of the room. The final man either wasn't affected or was a "fight your fears" kind of guy. Cole ducked his punch, then fumbled for another charm. The second swing connected, knocking Cole to the floor with a bloody nose, but not before he'd pulled out a miniature astronaut. He let himself land on it as he fell.

The broken glass released a wave of strength and energy in Cole. This one had taken several tries to get right; he'd been up half the night. But it was worth it to see the look on the guard's face as Cole blocked his kick and expertly twisted his leg to drive

*him to the ground. "Big strong man, picking on a little scrawny guy like me, eh?" Stronger, faster, and heartier, Cole rose to his knees and drove an elbow into the man's face before he knew what had happened. "Bet you don't like it when the tables get turned!" The thug grabbed Cole's face, trying to gouge out his eyes, but Cole rolled to the side and trapped his arm. "Lesson learned? Okay, nap time now!" With as much force as he could muster, Cole slammed his forehead into his foe's. It **hurt**. But when the stars cleared, Cole was the conscious one.*

"To be fair, I may have enjoyed that a little more than was healthy," Cole muttered. "Now, let's see about . . . uh, hello?" Great. The ones he gave a damn about had slipped out the back. Taking advantage of the body-enhancement spell while it lasted, Cole gave chase.

*If he is to choose the path
of magic then he must choose
responsibly, he must know
enough about the labyrinth
to walk a true path through it.*

– Neil Gaiman,
The Books of Magic

Casters have many "tricks of the trade" to enhance their ritual invocations. Conditional spells and charms let you prep spells for instant use later, grimoires and places of power can compensate for low skill levels, the sephiroth affiliations can reduce energy costs, and enchanted items can do almost anything!

This entire chapter is optional. The GM is free to pick and choose which of these sections apply to the campaign – and, of the ones he uses, which are *known*. Nothing will be lost if he decides that charms exist but other conditional rituals don't, that there are no enchanted items except rings, and that grimoires cost 10 times as much. If the GM uses *anything* from this chapter, however, it's suggested that *Additional Detail* (pp. 24-25) be part of it, as the information there covers some important concepts.

ADDITIONAL DETAIL

These rules expand on some of the concepts introduced in Chapter 2, and provide a few additional ways for spellcasters to use magic.

“BLOCKING” SPELLS

If the GM agrees that a defensive ritual makes sense as an out-of-turn response to another person’s actions, the caster can perform the ritual as a “blocking” spell. This can be done no more than once per turn, counts as an active defense, and requires the adept to accumulate the necessary energy in *zero* time!

Ambient energy can be gathered instantly at -10 to skill; this supersedes the normal penalty to reduce time. An energy source may be tapped instantly; this requires a skill roll at -5. (Non-adepts take an *extra* -5 to these rolls, for casting quickly; see p. 20). The caster *can* instantaneously pull from multiple sources on the same turn.

If any of the rolls fail before enough energy is drawn, the ritual isn’t quick enough to work – *and*, if the caster was the one targeted, he does not get another active defense unless he chose the All-Out Defense (Double Defense) maneuver!

The Golden Rule

Whenever a spell needs the equivalent of an attribute or a skill, and no other rule seems to cover it, substitute the effective Path skill used to cast it. For example, a binding spell’s ST would be equal to the Path skill with which it was cast. To improve this, use the Bestows a Bonus spell modifier (p. 17).

DIVINATIONS

Sense effects are the only way to get information with magic, and they require a specific subject; e.g., a caster cannot use Greater Create Matter to conjure a book with information he doesn’t know. A *divination* is an exception to this, which uses Greater Sense Chance to determine the most likely answer to a given question. The response will be in a flash of information; the GM will determine its clarity and directness based on the margin of success *and* on whether a straight answer would short-circuit the plot.

Complexity makes this difficult, however. Consulting the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550), the GM should find the total number of possible answers in the “Linear Measurement” column (reading “yards” as “answers”) and apply the penalty in the “Speed/Range” column to the final roll to cast the ritual (pp. 21-22). For example, asking which of the eight city districts will see the worst violence tonight would be -4 to skill. Casters *cannot* “get around this” by starting broadly, and then narrowing their questions; e.g., you cannot divine a PIN one digit at a time. Willful and malicious attempts to abuse divination effects should net ridiculously vague answers, headaches, or Fright Checks, depending on how annoyed the GM is.

MAGIC VS. MAGIC

Per *Meta-Magic* (p. 18), any spell that targets *another spell* as the subject must add a surcharge equal to the full energy cost of that spell. The caster can easily assess that amount by *first* invoking a Lesser Sense Magic ritual. Because the targeted spell has no HT or Will, it resists using the Path skill with which it was cast.

As an *optional* rule, the GM may declare that this surcharge is equal to the energy in the spell *before* any discount for *Traditional Trappings* (p. 19) was applied. This makes traditional trappings even more useful, and spells slightly harder to counter, on average.

The meta-magic rules mean that countering or altering a vast, area-affecting ritual is equally hard whether you’re trying to break it for just one subject or for an entire town. This is *intentional*. Spells cast using epic levels of power *should* be epically hard to destroy! Many subjects can be individually rescued without targeting the spell directly, however, simply by coming up with a *different* spell effect that counters the effects in another way.

Example: Cole comes to a town that’s been ensorcelled by a vengeful witch with Greater Destroy Mind + Altered Traits, IQ-5 + Area of Effect, 1 mile + Duration, 2 years. He needs to talk to one of the women there, but isn’t strong enough to counter the 252-energy spell. Instead, he casts Lesser Restore Mind + Altered Traits, IQ+5, for 104 energy, on the woman in question. Because it’s only restoring her IQ to its previous state, Cole’s ritual permanently heals her – much like a healing spell repairs damage (*Restore*, p. 16) – without Cole having to take on the witch’s spell *directly*.

WARDS

A *ward* is a defensive ritual to protect a person or area against a particular type of supernatural threat. You can create a ward against magic and unnatural creatures (e.g., undead or spirits), but *not* against “mundane” threats like human beings – including casters, mages, and adepts – as only the supernatural is vulnerable to such a broad countermeasure. (In other words, the GM decides which racial templates include the 0-point feature “Affected by wards.”)

You may cast a ward on a specific subject or as an area effect. If successful, the margin of success is the penalty to detect the ward (unless the caster *wants* it to be blatant, in which case it’s the bonus). The effect depends on what’s being warded off.

Spell Wards

Wards against magic are very common; such a ritual requires a Lesser Control Magic effect. If successful, the ward resists hostile spells (anything the subject attempts to resist, whether aware of it or not) being cast on the subject or into the area. The caster of that spell must *win* a Quick Contest of Path skills for his spell to take effect; if he’s targeting a protected area, he need only win *once*, not once per subject. The hostile caster uses the same Path skill and modifiers (e.g., for using multiple Paths or for being a non-adept) that were used to cast the spell. The ward’s creator uses the Path skill and modifiers that were used to cast the ward.

If the hostile caster loses or ties, his spell fizzles against the ward. He may cast another spell, but he is at a cumulative -1 in the Quick Contest; unless one of his attempts manages to break through, he'll eventually be "locked out" of the ward. If he wins, he is no longer affected by the ward at all! On top of that, the ward's effective Path skill drops by 1 against spells cast by every *other* caster. Thus, if enough casters can penetrate a ward, it will eventually become useless. A ward can only be "healed" by recasting it.

A ward against spells is *not* a ward against spellcasters. If a mage can't cast spells on a subject, there's nothing preventing him from picking up a baseball bat and getting hostile in a much more direct way!

Monster Wards

In most campaigns, supernatural creatures are affected by wards; the GM decides on any exceptions to this rule. Lesser Control Spirit can create a ward against angels, demons, fairies, and similar spirits. Lesser Control Undead protects against ghosts, vampires, zombies, and so on. In *some* games, even certain living creatures are considered "supernatural" enough to ward; for example, it may be possible to ward off lycanthropes (but not normal humans) using a combination of Lesser Control Body and Lesser Control Mind.

The ward resists any appropriate creature that tries to harm the subject in any way *or* that tries to cross (or attack across) the barrier of an area-effect ward. The beast must *win* a Quick Contest: the higher of its HT or Will (plus any Magic Resistance) against the Path skill the caster used to create the ward, the latter adjusted for any modifiers that applied at the time of casting.

If the creature loses or ties, it can try again on subsequent turns, but every attempt is at a cumulative -1. If it wins, this

Familiars

A familiar is an animal companion that gives its master some sort of magical benefit. In this way, it is much like an enchanted item (pp. 33-35). A caster with a familiar should first buy it as an Ally (p. B36) with Special Abilities (and often Summonable). He should then take advantages to represent the benefit, with the limitation Granted by Familiar. For example, a caster might be an adept only when his cat is around; he buys the cat as an Ally *and* takes Ritual Adept (Granted by Familiar, -40%) [24]. For a full treatise on Allies as familiars, see **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies**.

ward no longer affects that creature, *and* the ward's effective Path skill(s) is reduced by 1 against every *other* threat! Thus, if enough creatures can penetrate a ward, it will quickly become useless. A ward can only be "healed" by recasting it.

WORKING TOGETHER

If multiple casters work together on the same ritual, they can accumulate much more energy in a shorter time – add their energy totals together. The caster with the highest skill always makes the final roll. All rolls involved with the ritual are at -1 for every caster past the first, however, and critical failures affect everyone equally.

Some casters (particularly evil cultists) are known to keep hordes of disposable minions nearby, chanting and "assisting" with rituals, but the only true assistance such henchmen can (and do!) give is to sacrifice (p. 21) FP and/or HP, one minion at a time.

CONDITIONAL RITUALS

A caster can delay a ritual so that it doesn't take effect until a certain condition (the *trigger*) is met. Once cast, the conditional spell "hangs" on its subject indefinitely until triggered, at which point it takes effect and lasts until its duration runs out. (Keep track of the spell's original margin of success, especially if it needs to be resisted.) The caster cannot activate the spell except via the trigger, cannot cancel the spell before it expires, and cannot go back and prolong the duration. By casting conditionally, he's given up control of the spell!

Alternatively, a conditional ritual can be reversed – set to take effect immediately, but then to *expire* when triggered (or, of course, when its duration runs out). This allows the caster to bestow a spell on a mundane person, giving the *subject* the ability to turn it off.

Making a spell conditional requires the addition of a Lesser Control Magic effect. This does *not* change the ritual into a different one for the purpose of *Specific Definition* (p. 19); the Lesser Control Magic is effectively a "wrapper" for the ritual, not a part of it. The same holds for any Sense effects added to make the trigger more intelligent (see *The Trigger*, below). For all *other* purposes, however – including the Greater effects multiplier (pp. 18-19) – treat these effects as being part of the spell itself.

Any given caster can have only (Thaumatology + Magery) conditional rituals "hanging" at once. For example, a caster with Thaumatology-15 and Magery 3 could have up to 18 conditional rituals waiting simultaneously. If he were to cast a 19th one, his *oldest* conditional spell would be immediately defused without effect. There is no overt sign of this, so the subject of the old spell will not necessarily realize that he is no longer under its potential effects.

The stacking rules (p. 15) apply to conditional rituals as well – a subject cannot be protected by two conditional rituals with the same effect, or be covered by a conditional ritual with the same effect as an active spell. In such a case, the weaker spell is immediately defused without effect.

THE TRIGGER

The trigger for a conditional ritual must be defined when the spell is cast, and cannot normally be changed. It must be phrased in a clear and simple manner, and must be obvious enough that a normal person watching the subject would *automatically* be aware of it happening; e.g., "Ward the doorway if anyone other than the five of us enters this room." If the triggering conditions are complex or unclear in any way, the spell will not go off; to be fair, the GM should let the caster know ahead of time.

The spell does *not* gain any supernatural ability to determine whether the trigger has occurred! “Sound an alarm if Billy escapes from jail” isn’t going to work if the spell is hanging on the other side of town. The caster may *add* an appropriate Sense effect (possibly with its own modifiers) to the spell to give it this capability. Similarly, the trigger can be fooled or set off accidentally! A successful Mimicry (Speech) roll can let someone else set off a “when *I* say this word” trigger, a gust of wind can accidentally set off an “if this bowl is removed from the table” trigger, and so on. Triggers are mundane; they never judge *intent*, only whether the triggering condition appears to have taken place.

Casters can make up for slow ritual casting times by hanging several conditional spells on themselves, with verbal triggers. This is fine – “cast spontaneous combustion on whoever

I’m pointing at when I say *ignus burnem*” is a valid conditional ritual. In many ways, such casters are like classic fantasy wizards, preparing a set number of “spell slots” early each day, to be activated instantly later. Consciously triggering such a spell requires a Ready maneuver *or* can be done as an active defense; either way, there’s no roll needed. The GM may vary this for unusual triggers, but should restrict casters to no more than one conditional spell triggered per turn.

Most casters choose trigger phrases that would never come up in casual conversation. Using *common* words makes it less obvious what’s happening, but risks accidental triggering; a critical failure against Fast-Talk, Public Speaking, etc., is the perfect excuse for the GM to maliciously decide that a slip of the tongue set off a spell . . .

Quick-and-Dirty Rituals and Charms

When a caster wants to work conditional rituals or make charms during downtime, the GM may wish to condense the process down to as few rolls as possible. Since rituals either fail spectacularly or succeed, the real questions are whether the casting was a critical failure, and if not, whether it had any quirks. To determine these two things, first use the rules in Chapter 2 and 3 to figure out:



1. The caster’s effective skill for the ritual in question – including any penalty for using multiple Paths in a ritual, charm-creation bonus from a workspace kit, energy-gathering bonus from a place of magical potency, etc. If this is 6 or less, game it out in detail; don’t use these rules.

2. How much *ambient* energy the ritual will require. This is the amount of energy that cannot be obtained from sources like mana reserve and FP. Compare this to the *safe threshold* on the table below; e.g., if a caster with skill 12 needs to gather 13 energy, he’s exceeding *twice* his safe threshold.

Effective Skill	Safe Threshold	Effective Skill	Safe Threshold
7	1	15	11
8	2	16	15
9	3	17	29
10	4	18	42
11	5	19	55
12	6	20	65
13	7	21	75
14	9	+1	+10

Once that is known, roll 3d on the table below to see if the ritual ended in success or critical failure. Apply the following modifier:

Modifier: -2 if the caster used *no* ambient energy, -1 if he used up to *half* his safe threshold, 0 if he used up to his safe threshold, +1 if he exceeded his safe threshold, +2 for exceeding *twice* his safe threshold, +3 for more than *three times* the safe threshold, and so on.

Roll	Result
15 or less	Success! Now roll for quirks (below).
16	Critical failure based on <i>half</i> the spell’s energy.
17 or more	Critical failure based on the spell’s <i>full</i> energy.

If the caster succeeded, make a second roll against effective skill, applying the *reverse* of the modifier above; e.g., +2 for no ambient energy. Success means the spell has no quirks! Otherwise, it has one quirk, *plus* another quirk for every two full points by which the roll failed.

Example: Cole (effective skill 15) must gather 24 energy for a charm. This exceeds twice his safe threshold, so he rolls 3d+2 on the table – succeeding with 11! He then rolls against skill 13 (the +2 becomes -2), and fails by 2; his charm thus has *two* quirks.

These rules are balanced for *downtime* magic, not to shorten the process for spells cast on the fly! They assume the caster is able to take his time in a safe environment. When working rituals or making charms during the game, if time matters *at all*, use the standard rules.

CHARMS

Charms are a subset of conditional rituals (pp. 25-26), cast onto fragile objects to turn them into “physical spells.” They follow the same rules, except as noted in *Features of Charms* (p. 27). The object is usually an inexpensive glass or ceramic token – many casters use cheap jewelry – but anything that can

be broken or torn with little effort (e.g., origami constructs or cloth shirts) will do.

Producing a charm takes longer than casting a spell (conditional or otherwise), but requires no additional rolls. The steps, in order, are:

1. Prepare the fragile object in your workspace (p. 28). This takes 30 minutes of chanting, painting it with elixirs, and so on.

2. At the end of that 30 minutes, *immediately* cast a conditional ritual onto the object. This takes its normal time (see Chapter 2). All skill rolls to cast this spell are modified by the quality of the workspace kit, as for nontechnological skills (p. B345): -5 for no workspace at all, -2 for an improvised workspace (e.g., a mundane kitchen), no modifier for using a normal workspace kit, +1 for using a good-quality kit, or +2 for using a fine-quality one.

3. If the spell succeeds, you have a charm! If not, the object is unharmed (unless you *critically* failed), but you must start over from step 1, preparing it again.

Example: Sabrina's Path skills are limited to 12, due to her mediocre magical aptitude. However, she partially compensates for this by searching and securing a place of magical potency (+1 to gather ambient energy, see pp. 32-33) and setting up a fine-quality workspace kit there (+2 on all rolls to make charms). When creating a charm, she's at +3 to rolls to gather energy for it (+1 from the sacred space and +2 from the kit because workspace kits improve *all* spellcasting rolls when making a charm), and at +2 (from the kit) to the final casting roll!

Features of Charms

A few things make charms unique from other conditional rituals:

- Until a charm is activated, its "subject" is the charm itself – the physical token. Thus, while a caster *cannot* have a dozen instances of the same conditional spell cast on himself at once, he *could* carry a dozen charms of that same spell.

- The subject (or potential subject) or user of a ritual can be changed by moving the charm. This can be convenient, as it lets a caster easily supply his friends with magical protection . . . though it also lets a knowledgeable *foe* eliminate this protection by stealing the charm!

- The ritual can be triggered by the subject breaking the charm. This takes a Ready maneuver, which is far faster than a typical spell! Or it can be done defensively, counting as a parry (but with no roll needed if the charm is ready). Most non-adepts rely heavily on charms to take advantage of this speed. The spell goes off automatically, using its original margin of success if it matters.

- Alternatively, the spell's duration may start from the moment the charm is created, but with the charm specified to break when it turns off or fails. For example, a ward may alert the subject that it's been penetrated by shattering the pendant it's bound to.

Ammunition Charms

It is legal to turn a bullet or arrow into a charm; the trigger is "when shot into a target." If the shot misses, the charm dissipates when it hits the ground; otherwise, it goes off once in contact with the subject! There is rarely a need to include a range (p. 18) modifier on the spell, as it is considered delivered via touch.

This can be used to devastating effect with damaging spells. Any external/indirect damage is considered linked, not follow-up, and has to penetrate DR on its own – but since the subject

has already been hit by the shot, he does *not* get a chance to dodge or block the spell. Internal/direct damage ignores DR as usual, though the subject gets the normal resistance roll.

GIZMOS AND CHARMS

A caster can use a Gizmo to pull a charm out of his pocket, declaring that he made it some time ago. If so, he may immediately use *Quick-and-Dirty Rituals and Charms* (p. 26) to roll for this retroactive action. He is at no penalty, as he's not creating the charm *now* – he made it days ago!

If the first roll succeeds, then the charm works – though possibly with quirks (as determined by the *second* roll). If it critically fails, however, then that critical failure is *not* retroactive; it happens right now! Obviously, the caster thought he did a good job, but was horribly wrong. Succeed or critically fail, the Gizmo is used up.

BUYING CHARMS

In some settings, stores (often the same stores that deal in grimoires, p. 31) may sell premade charms. This can be very convenient, though there's an inherent danger in using someone else's charm: The maker may decide that the charm has been out long enough, and make enough *new* ones that the old charm deactivates! Roll 3d *every week* that the PCs don't use a purchased charm; on a 17 or higher, it no longer functions. This target number drops by 1 every month – to 16 or higher, then 15 or higher, and so on.

The cost of a charm depends on three things.

Skill: By far, most charms are cast at skill 12, which is good enough for many purposes. But for some spells (like wards), the utility depends heavily on Path skill. Higher skill requires Magery or expensive gear, raising costs! Skill sets the base cost, as shown in the *Charm Base Cost Table* (below). This cost varies by setting, and is based on the typical monthly pay (p. B517) for the TL (worked examples are given for TL3 and TL8).

Availability: High-demand, broadly applicable rituals will have more grimoires (making them easier to cast) and more dedicated casters making a living from their sales; this lowers price. The most universally needed charms – wards, healing spells, lucky charms, etc. – *halve* the base cost. The majority of charms use the base cost. Strange, custom-order, or overly specific charms *double* the base cost.

Energy: The base cost of a charm assumes it was built with 10 energy or less. If it took more energy, multiply the base cost by (energy/5)-1, using the *total* energy in the charm. Don't round!

Charm Base Cost Table

Skill	Multiplier of Typical Monthly Pay	TL3	TL8
12	×0.1	\$70	\$260
13	×0.2	\$140	\$520
14	×0.3	\$210	\$780
15	×0.5	\$350	\$1,300
16	×0.7	\$490	\$1,820
17	×1	\$700	\$2,600
18	×1.5	\$1,050	\$3,900
19	×2	\$1,400	\$5,200
20	×3	\$2,100	\$7,800

For higher skill, subtract 19 from skill and look up that value on the “Size” column of the *Size and Speed/Range Table* (p. B550), reading “yards” as the multiplier. These prices assume middlemen, overhead, etc.; if PCs wish to sell charms, the price will be what the market can bear, not necessarily something reverse-engineered from the above!

Example: Cole is three states away from his workspace and needs a good-luck charm to protect Nate’s widow, *now*. He finds an old curio shop that sells charms out of the back room, including the perfect one: Lesser Control Magic + Lesser Restore Chance + Altered Traits, Luck, made with 24 energy. It was cast with skill 12 (\$260) and is a common charm (halved to \$130). The extra energy multiplies this by $(24/5)-1$, or 3.8, for a final price of \$494, but that’s worth it to Cole for the peace of mind.

While skill and energy are presented separately here, they’re actually linked; you can’t buy a “skill-12, 100-energy charm” because a skill-12 caster cannot safely create a charm that powerful! As a guideline, the GM should look at the safe thresholds

Champions on a Budget

All of the rules and details in this supplement are consistent with those from the *GURPS Monster Hunters* series, with the exception of pricing. The prices of workspace kits, grimoires, etc., have been revised for both balance and ease of use throughout a wide range of tech levels. While it’s recommended to use the new prices in this work, the GM should feel free to use whichever fits his campaign better.

under *Quick-and-Dirty Rituals and Charms* (p. 26) and assume that most casters will rarely exceed $10+(\text{threshold}\times 4)$ energy. This limits skill-12 charms to about 34 energy or less.

When using a purchased charm, if the margin of success matters (e.g., for resisted spells), determine it by rolling $1d+(\text{skill level})-14$ (minimum 0).

See *Invasions of Privacy* (pp. 31-32) for another concern when buying charms.

WORKSPACE KITS

These are required to make charms without penalty. Each turns a room into a full magical workspace suitable for charm creation. The cost varies by setting, based on the typical monthly pay (p. B517) for that TL.

Workspace Kit, Basic. A collection of special pans, spoons, candlesticks, burners, etc. Takes an hour to safely set up or pack. Cost equals one month’s typical pay (e.g., \$700 at TL3 or \$2,600 at TL8). 20 lbs.

Workspace Kit, Good. Several boxes full of high-end gear, with inlaid copper pentagrams, magically inert utensils, etc. Gives +1 on *all* rolls to make a charm. Takes five hours to set up or pack. Cost equals five months’ typical pay (e.g., \$3,500 at TL3 or \$13,000 at TL8). 200 lbs.

Workspace Kit, Fine. Enough gear to *pack* a huge room! Anodized orichalcum handles, swamp-gas burners, and so on. Gives +2 on *all* rolls to make a charm. Takes 20 hours to set up or pack. Cost equals 20 months’ typical pay (e.g., \$14,000 at TL3 or \$52,000 at TL8). 2,000 lbs.

ALCHEMICAL ELIXIRS

Elixirs are a form of conditional spell (pp. 25-26) – many casters think of them as “bottled magic.” They are similar to but distinct from charms (pp. 26-28). Like charms, the subject of the elixir’s effect doesn’t have to be determined when the spell is cast; rather, it affects whoever drinks it, rubs it on, etc. The GM is the arbiter of what effects an elixir can achieve; elixirs tend to revolve around altered traits, bestowed bonuses, or healing, but any effect that “makes sense” is allowed.

Elixirs come in multiple forms, each weighing about an ounce. Note that the cost and weight of any containers or protection for the elixir is separate from that of the elixir itself.

Grenade: To be thrown at a target. Invariably stored in a fragile vial or thin, waterproof sack (e.g., a balloon), which shatters upon impact.

Ointment: Must be rubbed onto bare skin to take effect. Can be stored in a jar, tube, or any other waterproof container.

Pastille: A thumb-sized pill that, when lit, affects all those who inhale its smoke. Usually kept wrapped in fire-resistant cloth or in a fireproof container for safety reasons.

Potion: A drinkable liquid. Stored in any waterproof container.

Powder: Can be blown at the target or put into food or drink to be consumed. Often kept in a small bag or jar.

Grenades and pastilles *must* be made with an area of effect ritual; no other elixir can be! Grenades and pastilles are also the only forms that can inflict external damage (p. 17).

Other forms may be available. See *Elixir Delivery Methods* (*GURPS Thaumatology*, p. 107) for examples.

CREATING ELIXIRS

Brewing an elixir requires an alchemy lab (p. 29) and uses the normal equipment modifiers for nontechnological skills (p. B345). Thus, working in the field with nothing gives -5 to *all* skill rolls to make an elixir, borrowing a friend’s house or a chemistry classroom gives -2, a normal alchemy lab gives no modifier, a good-quality one gives +1, and a fine-quality one gives +2.

The actual creation requires two steps. First, the special ingredients (p. 29) must be combined in a complex and precise process that takes one hour. After that, the spell must be cast upon the liquid *immediately*, making it into an elixir. If it fails, you must start over – but the ingredients are not ruined unless you rolled a *critical* failure. If it succeeds, you have an elixir!

The rules for casting the ritual change in a few key ways when making an elixir:

- The spell requires an additional Lesser Create Magic effect. This is not considered part of the spell for the purpose of *Specific Definition* (p. 19), but it is increased normally by any Greater effects multiplier (pp. 18-19).

- For *Choose the Skill* (pp. 19-20), use the *better* of Alchemy or the lowest Path skill involved! Your effective Alchemy skill cannot exceed 12+Magery for this purpose. All modifiers (e.g., for being a non-adept or using three or more Path skills) apply normally.

- You cannot use *Traditional Trappings* (p. 19) to get a discount on the energy cost. Instead, all discounts come from the ingredients you choose. Particularly devoted alchemists thus have large workspaces full of odd or rare ingredients.

Alchemical Gear

The cost and weight of an alchemy lab varies depending on its quality. Use the statistics of the workspace kits on p. 28. Any workspace kit (regardless of quality) counts as improvised equipment for the purpose of making elixirs. Similarly, any alchemy lab (regardless of quality) counts as improvised equipment when making charms.

Any grimoire (pp. 30-32) adds its usual bonus when making an elixir for that ritual. As well, brewers can purchase *formulae* for half the price of grimoires; these act like grimoires but give their bonus *only* when making an elixir. (If you have both, use only the highest bonus.)

INGREDIENTS

What makes an elixir special are components that symbolize its action. The better the ingredients, the better the final product, and (perhaps more important) the better the discount on the ritual. For example, a potion of flight might use a feather as its main ingredient. For this purpose, the quality list might look like:

Improvised: A synthetic feather, drawing of a feather, or badly damaged feather.

Basic: An intact feather from a random bird, found lying on the ground.

Good: An intact eagle's feather.

Fine: An eagle's feather stained with the life-blood of a hawk it just slew.

Legendary: A feather from Atsátsoh, sky-king of the North American eagles.

Don't worry about the safety of consuming the ingredients! The brewing process turns everything – even the most inedible or poisonous items – into something digestible. The actual ingredients required (or allowed) must be negotiated between

the player and GM, based on the underlying ritual. Alternatively, use *Decanic Trappings* (pp. 36-37) as inspiration (but with the energy reduction rules provided here).

Use the *Ingredient Chart* (below) to determine the discount for the ingredients used. As well, sample weight and cost values are provided. These are guidelines for gauging the categories above, or can even allow the GM and player to *ignore* the details, simplifying elixir preparation by letting a brewer buy generic “alchemical ingredients.” The cost depends on the setting, and is based on the typical monthly pay (p. B517) for that TL – with worked examples for TL3 and TL8.

Multiple Ingredients

Multiple ingredients can reduce energy even further. The ingredients must *all* be within one quality step of the best ingredient being used; e.g., if you've already included a fine-quality vial of mountaintop snow, no amount of basic-quality dewdrops will help further. Using at least eight ingredients gives you an extra -5% discount, while using 30 or more ingredients gives you another -10%!

This multiple-ingredient discount cannot exceed *half* of the discount given by the next step up in quality. For example, if you are using a mix of basic and improvised ingredients (base -10% for the basic ingredients), you are limited to another -7.5% from using multiple ingredients, because good ingredients (the next step up) provide -15%.

USING ELIXIRS

Before *using* an elixir, you must have it ready. If you have it exposed (e.g., in a bandoleer), this takes only two Ready maneuvers (one to draw it, one to open or ready it). However, it can be targeted in combat – or grabbed, by winning a Quick Contest of DX with you! To prevent this, you may store it in a pocket or backpack, but this increases the time needed to acquire it – see p. B383, and add *another* Ready maneuver to open or ready it! The GM may allow Fast-Draw (Potion), which removes a flat one second from the above times.

Once ready, usage depends on the elixir's form:

Grenade: One Attack maneuver to hit, using Throwing skill. If the target parries or blocks, his weapon or shield is affected (if applicable). If he dodges or you miss, use *Scatter* (p. B414).

Ointment: Must be rubbed on bare skin, taking *two* Ready maneuvers. This requires a willing, pinned, or unconscious subject. (If someone else is doing the rubbing, he must be wearing gloves or using a cloth, otherwise *he* is affected by the elixir instead!)

Ingredient Chart

Type	Reduction	Weight	Percentage of Monthly Pay	TL3	TL8
No Ingredients	0%	–	–	\$0	\$0
Improvised	-5%	0.1 lb.	1%	\$7	\$26
Basic	-10%	0.3 lb.	3%	\$21	\$78
Good	-15%	1 lb.	10%	\$70	\$260
Fine	-20%	3 lbs.	30%	\$210	\$780
Legendary	-25% or more	*	*	*	*

* GM's decision.

Pastille: Must be lit (one Ready maneuver, or an Attack that does at least 1 point of burning damage) then thrown (one Attack maneuver) or dropped (free action). The area effect of the underlying spell will determine the volume of the smoke. Anyone who doesn't breathe (or holds his breath *ahead of time*) is unaffected, unless it inflicts external damage.

Potion: One Ready maneuver to drink. Cannot be safely administered to an unconscious subject.

Powder: Can be loaded into a blowpipe, using the loading times and rules for the specific weapon. Alternatively, it can be tossed in a subject's face; make an Attack roll using Throwing at -5 (for hit location). Mixing it with food or drink is a long

action taking about a minute. Cannot be safely administered to an unconscious subject.

LIMITS ON ELIXIRS

The GM must decide which of these three options to use when including elixirs in his game. If he does not, the default assumption is that they are limited as conditional spells.

Limited as Conditional Spells

Each elixir counts against the limit of the caster's conditional spells (pp. 25-26), just as charms do. Thus, if a caster is limited to 17 conditional spells, and he has 12 normal conditional spells, three charms, and two potions active, he is at his limit. If he casts another conditional spell, makes another charm, or brews another elixir, his oldest conditional spell, charm, or elixir immediately becomes inert. (If it's a potion, it's still safe to drink – just useless.) He has no way to instinctively realize this has happened.

Limited by Alchemy Skill

Separate from conditional spells, casters can only have a number of active elixirs equal to (Alchemy skill level + Magery level). If a caster has Alchemy-15 and Magery 2, he may have 17 active elixirs (of any type) at once. If he brews an 18th one, his oldest elixir immediately becomes inert, as for *Limited as Conditional Spells* (above).

Unless the GM rules otherwise, Alchemy skill is *not* limited to 12+Magery for this purpose, allowing highly skilled brewers to have *many* elixirs active at once.

Expiration Dates

There is no cap on the number of elixirs you can make. Instead, elixirs last a number of days equal to (Alchemy skill + Magery level)×2. For example, the ointments of a brewer with Alchemy-13 and Magery 2 will last for 30 days. After this time, they expire, as for *Limited as Conditional Spells* (above).

For balance, the GM may wish to charge an extra dollar cost for each equal to that required for a single good ingredient (*Ingredient Chart*, p. 29).

Elixir Example

Annie is a top-notch alchemist with Magery 2, Ritual Adept, Alchemy-16, Path of Body-12, and Path of Magic-11. She has also spent a lot on a fine-quality alchemy lab (+2 on all rolls to make elixirs), which she has set up in her home.

She wants to create a potion that will make her reaction speed faster. First, she defines the ritual as Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, Basic Speed+1.00 (20) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). Adding the Lesser Create Magic (6) required for elixirs, it comes to 33 energy.

After that, she brews the potion; this takes an hour. She has eight ingredients that the GM agrees are appropriate for this potion: a hummingbird's feather, a rabbit's foot, some rabbit's blood, fur harvested in the wild from a live cheetah, a few drops of mercury, a few drops of rocket fuel, an imported hot pepper, and some hand-picked imported coffee beans. The GM rules that the cheetah fur and rocket fuel are fine-quality ingredients, while the others are good. Her base discount is -20%, plus another -5% for using at least eight ingredients, bringing the final cost down to 25 energy.

Annie would normally be rolling against her Path of Magic skill (the lower of the two Paths), but because it's an elixir, she can substitute her Alchemy skill instead. It's limited to 12+Magery for this purpose, or 14. Her alchemy lab gives her another +2, so her final effective skill is 16 for creating this potion. She rolls against this skill several times, until she's accumulated 19 energy, and then chips in the remaining 6 energy from her mana reserve and makes the final casting roll. Her total time to create the potion was just under 61 minutes.

GRIMOIRES

The world is *full* of dark, foreboding texts just begging for the uninitiated to play with them! Each is a recipe for one specific ritual (*Specific Definition*, p. 19), and gives a flat bonus (generally from +2 to +10) to all rolls to cast that specific spell. A grimoire is the only way that most non-mages can hope to invoke a useful ritual. Using a grimoire *doubles* all casting times, due to the necessary reading, and makes what you're doing obvious to onlookers.

A grimoire is as much a prop as a learning tool – casters cannot gain its bonus merely by memorizing it or copying the

text, and there are no “digital grimoire” computer files that provide the same benefit. The most imposing and potent are written on parchment or vellum rather than paper . . . some in a deep-brown, almost reddish ink . . .

Grimoires often come with one or more of the following features. In all cases, if a Thaumatology roll is required to translate or decode something, failure means the time was wasted (further attempts are at a cumulative -2), while on a critical failure, the ritual is forever beyond the reader's understanding.

Dead-language grimoires are written in an ancient tongue. If the caster can read *and* speak the language, apply the grimoire's full bonus for Native comprehension, reduce it by 1 for Accented, or *halve* it (round up) for Broken. If not, someone else with written comprehension can translate it; this requires a successful Linguistics or Thaumatology roll and 2d-(margin of success) hours of work, minimum 30 minutes, for *each* ritual. (If the translator is not a Native speaker, reduce the bonus as above. Treat the use of a two-way dictionary as a Broken translation.)

Encrypted grimoires are disguised as normal books. Extracting the secrets within requires a successful Cryptography or Thaumatology roll and 3d-(margin of success) hours of work, minimum one hour, for *each* ritual. If the grimoire is also written in a dead language (above), a reader with Broken (or no) comprehension *cannot* unlock its secrets, Accented gives -2 to the roll, and Native is at no penalty.

Artifact grimoires can also act as energy sources (p. 21) which are only usable for the rituals within. These are extremely rare and have no set price; they are plot devices.

BUYING GRIMOIRES

A grimoire's bonus affects its weight – larger modifiers require more text, diagrams, and so on. The cost of a grimoire depends on the setting, and is based on the typical monthly pay (p. B517) for that TL. The *Grimoire Table* (below) gives worked examples for TL3 and TL8.

Grimoire Table

Bonus	Weight	Multiplier of Typical Monthly Pay	TL3	TL8
+2	2 lbs.	×0.2	\$140	\$520
+3	2.5 lbs.	×0.5	\$350	\$1,300
+4	3 lbs.	×1	\$700	\$2,600
+5	3.5 lbs.	×2	\$1,400	\$5,200
+6	4 lbs.	×5	\$3,500	\$13,000
+7	5 lbs.	×10	\$7,000	\$26,000
+8	6 lbs.	×20	\$14,000	\$52,000
+9	8 lbs.	×50	\$35,000	\$130,000
+10	10 lbs.	×100	\$70,000	\$260,000

A dead-language *or* encrypted grimoire costs 20% less. One that is both costs 40% less.

A formulary (p. 29) is half price, cumulative with the modifiers above.

Collections

If multiple grimoires are being purchased (or are discovered) at once, they may be part of a *collection*. This is a single book which encompasses multiple rituals, and may be used when casting any of them. The rituals must *all* share at least one common Path skill, but the bonuses do not have to match.

A collection costs the same as the individual grimoires would – the savings is one of weight, not money. Take the weight listed for the *best* bonus, then add 1/5 of the total weight for every other ritual.

Example: Cole wants a collection aiding three rituals: a cloaking spell (Greater Destroy Energy), a spontaneous combustion spell (Greater Create Energy), and a hacking spell (Greater Strengthen Chance and Lesser Sense Energy).

All three use Path of Energy, so they can be collected. Cole buys grimoires worth +3 (\$1,300), +4 (\$2,600), and +2 (\$520), for a total of \$4,420. The collection weighs $3+(4.5/5) = 3.9$ lbs. (nearly 200 pages of vellum!) and he can use it for +3 to cloak, +4 to burn, or +2 to hack.

Availability

Even more so than most esoteric tools, grimoires can be difficult to acquire. First, only vendors dealing in ancient magical texts (often operating out of “normal” book stores) even offer the product at all. Just as important, an infinite number of rituals exist, which means weak odds of finding a grimoire for the *one* ritual you want. Thus, when a caster goes shopping, what he wants may not be available. This can be represented in two different ways. (Don't use either during character creation; a caster can start the game with whatever the GM allows and he can afford.)

Quick and Simple

For each ritual, whether as a standalone book or as part of a collection, roll 3d-8 to determine the maximum bonus available. If the result is less than +2, *no* grimoire is obtainable for that spell – you must wait one month before trying again. You can buy a lesser version if you can't afford the best.

Sellers rarely keep potent grimoires in stock; once ordered, you must come back to pick it up. If the setting has instant long-distance communication *and* air shipping, you can pick it up in 1d days. If it has only one of those two things, you can get it in 1d weeks. If neither, it takes 1d months. If you need a grimoire for something *right now*, roll 3d-12 instead of 3d-8.

Realistic and Detailed

You must use Research to track down the specific grimoire you want. Roll once per full day of searching. If you have a Contact who deals specifically with rare books or magical items, and he's available to help you, roll against his skill *as well* (this replaces the +1 bonus mentioned below for a generic Contact helping you).

Modifiers: A penalty equal to the reverse of the grimoire's bonus*; a modifier based on how common the GM considers the ritual, from -2 for rare to +2 for common; +1 for every friend or Contact who successfully rolls against Research to help you, or -1 for each one who *fails* the roll (double these for critical successes or failures).

* For collections, use the largest bonus plus (the sum of the other bonuses)/5, rounded up.

You may use Luck on this roll; Serendipity makes it unnecessary (treat it as an automatic success). The results:

Critical Success: The grimoire is available nearby – go buy it!

Success: You track it down, but it'll take you 1d days/weeks/months to get your hands on it. Use the guidelines under *Quick and Simple* (above).

Failure: Nothing! You can resume your search tomorrow.

Critical Failure: It can't be found. Really. Stop searching.

Invasions of Privacy

Grimoire and charm (pp. 26-28) dealers are part of a niche market, which makes it almost impossible to guarantee privacy.

When someone buys a +7 compilation of destructive spells, the magical underworld keep its head down for the next few weeks. Thus, anyone can try to research recent grimoire sales.

There are a few different approaches:

- Asking a magical Contact.
- Using Current Affairs or Streetwise to find the word on the street.
- Hacking a dealer's database with Computer Hacking or Computer Programming (if possible within the setting).
- Using Influence skills (p. B359) on a known magical merchant.

In all cases, the roll to obtain the information is at -5 with only a vague idea of what kind of grimoire may be involved, -3 with a detailed description, or no penalty if the exact ritual(s) are known. *If* the GM has decided that a grimoire of that type *was* sold recently, he secretly adds (its ritual bonus)-2 to this roll – but also applies penalties equal in size to any Reputation the seller has for discretion and/or the buyer has for being scary (“You talk, you die!”), which may give a net penalty!

If the modified roll succeeds, the investigator learns whether someone bought such a grimoire, and when. Success by 5+ or a critical success *also* reveals a fair amount of detail about who bought it.

Casters should note that their enemies can use this technique against them! If someone obtains a powerful grimoire or charm, people in the local magic scene *will* eventually find out about it. Some paranoid casters avoid buying such things for this very reason . . . or work hard to develop a scary Reputation!

CREATING A GRIMOIRE

The GM does not have to allow PCs to create grimoires. In many settings, a grimoire is, by definition, an *ancient* book of power – so a PC can write his own, but it will take a few centuries for it to achieve its potential! Thus, these rules are *very* optional, even in a grimoire-heavy campaign.

A grimoire is created using *New Inventions* (pp. B473-474). If the GM allows PCs to use Gadgeteer for magical items, use *Gadgeteering* (pp. B475-477) instead. Be wary of allowing this, however; a Quick Gadgeteer can whip up a new grimoire in mere hours!

The inventor must decide how large of a bonus he wishes the grimoire to provide. It is a Complex invention (regardless of the bonus), created using the *lowest* applicable Path skill for that ritual. Ritual Mastery adds to effective skill, both for rolls and for meeting minimum requirements. The Concept modifier is -(bonus+4), or just -(bonus) for gadgeteers. Facilities are not necessary, but each Prototype attempt has its usual cost (full retail price for most people, or price/100 for quick gadgeteers) for magical ink, authentic parchment, etc.

There is one *significant* drawback to a user-created grimoire, however. Because the caster wrote it based on his *own* knowledge of the ritual, the grimoire doesn't help him very much! *Halve* the bonus that he gets from using his own grimoire, rounding up. Others using it experience no such problem and receive the full bonus.

PLACES OF POWER

Some places have magical significance. These are often places where rituals have been cast for several decades, but they also include locations with an inherent magical affinity. For example, a modern office building may have “auspicious architecture” which provides magical bonuses to anyone on the fifth floor. (See *GURPS Thaumatology: Urban Magics* for more examples.)

Such a place is full of magical potential, which makes gathering ambient energy (pp. 20-21) much easier. It adds a bonus, from +1 to +5, to all energy-gathering rolls, though *not* to any other rolls, such as the final casting roll.

The GM decides where each place of power is, and how much of a bonus it provides. If he wishes, he can tie this directly to how long it's been used for rituals and similar magic. This is *not* necessary, however – a +5 place may have never had a spell cast anywhere near it.

<i>Time Used for Rituals</i>	<i>Bonus</i>
20 years or more	+1
50 years or more	+2
100 years or more	+3
500 years or more	+4
1,000 years or more	+5

Some bonuses depend less on longevity than on *specific* timing. A woodlands fairy ring may give +1 normally, but +2 on moonless nights and +3 during a lunar eclipse. For extremely

rare bonuses, the GM may choose to exceed the suggested +5 limit; e.g., the peak of a mountain may provide *no* bonus most of the time, but be fated to jump to +8 between 4:32 p.m. and 4:35 p.m. on February 11, 2014, due to a particular alignment of astrological energies! Such places make annoying bases for PCs but *excellent* plot devices for grandiose NPC plans.

Risky Business

A place of power not only provides more energy, but also lessens the risk by making it harder to fail (or critically fail). This is intentional! As an *optional* rule, if the GM wants energy gathering to be just as risky inside a place of power as outside of one, don't add the bonus to Path skill. Instead, *if* the gathering roll succeeds, it draws extra energy equal to the place bonus.

FINDING A PLACE

The vast majority of these sacred sites are old, unknown, and located away from the public. Finding one for your personal use requires access to a sage, library, or similar collection of knowledge (the Internet works, in modern games) and a successful roll against Hidden Lore of an appropriate specialty; e.g., Hidden Lore (Ley Lines), Hidden Lore (Sacred Places), or Hidden Lore (Magical Architecture). You may substitute Archaeology at -2 (which also limits the search to ancient sites *only*) or Research at -5.

This roll is at -4 if you relied on the Internet or a modern public library (instead of an occult one), and is further modified by how restricted the search area is:

<i>Area Searched</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Anywhere on Earth	+2
A particular large nation <i>or</i> equivalent area	0
A particular small nation <i>or</i> large state	-2
A particular large city <i>or</i> town and surrounding area	-4
A particular small town <i>or</i> borough of a large city	-8
A particular neighborhood	-16

If successful, the site's bonus is +1 for every three points of success or fraction thereof (maximum +5). For its location, figure the maximum distance it could be from your home base while still remaining in the area searched, and then multiply that by (4d-4)×5%. Further searches in the same area are at a cumulative -1.

The GM will come up with the details, as well as determine if anyone else is using it! To leave the latter to chance, multiply the site's bonus by 2, and then add 5. Secretly roll 3d against this target number; on a success, the site has been claimed, though the caster has no way of knowing this!

Example: Cole wants to find a nearby place of power, using Hidden Lore (Sacred Places). He uses a library (no modifier) to

search for a likely spot somewhere in his city (-4). He succeeds by 4, which means he finds a location giving +2 to gathering rolls. The farthest city limit is 10 miles away; he rolls (4d-4)×5% and gets 55%, so the site is 5.5 miles away. If the GM rolls (2×2)+5=9 or less on 3d, the site is occupied.

Known Sites

Don't use these rules if you already know about a particular site and are trying to track it down! For this, the GM will secretly roll against your best appropriate skill (Archaeology at -2, Hidden Lore, or Research at -5) as modified below. (*Exception:* Archaeology will not locate a *modern* site.) The margin of success will determine how detailed the information is; on a critical failure, he lies!

Modifiers: A base -3; -4 for using the Internet or a modern public library; the site's energy-gathering bonus; long-distance modifiers (p. B241) based on distance to the site.

*Most places of power are old,
unknown, and distant.*

ENCHANTED ITEMS

While many casters prefer to rely solely upon their personal strength, some find that an enchanted item or two is worth its weight in gold. There are two common types:

Bound Spell: The item replicates the effects of a spell, but can do so without requiring energy – it is a permanent magical effect. Examples include a cloak which allows the wearer to fly and a wand which fires lightning bolts. Each bound-spell item uses up one of the caster's conditional spell "slots," as if it were a charm; see *Conditional Rituals* (pp. 25-26).

Magical Tool: This item makes the caster a more potent mage while he uses it, adding Magery, Ritual Adept, or both. If the item grants Magery, the additional mana reserve is considered to be part of the caster's reserve for all purposes; it is not a separate source (*Tapping Energy Sources*, p. 21).

These categories are not mutually exclusive! It's entirely possible for a wand to grant Ritual Adept to the wielder *and* be able to move objects telekinetically. The advantage to such a "combination item" is that it weighs less and is easier to work with – it's certainly simpler to wield *one* wand than having to juggle four or five of them – but it *does* make it easier for foes to render the caster useless with one disarming move.

An enchanted item is bought as an advantage or set of related advantages. Each advantage should take *one* enchantment limitation (below). Bound spell items (only) also add the limitation Magical (-10%), which reflects the fact that they don't work in desecrated areas, are subject to counterspells, and count as a charm toward the owner's maximum conditional spells.

Example: Cole's mentor gave him two gifts when he left training. The first is an amulet that boosts his magical ability; it is attuned to him *only* and is bought as Magery 2 (Amulet, Protected, -35%) [13]. This increases Cole's mana reserve by 6

and allows him to learn Paths two levels higher than he normally could. If he ever loses it, both his maximum mana reserve *and* any Paths known higher than 12+(his *normal* Magery level) drop. He doesn't get a discount on the cost of the Paths because of this; the limitation on the Magery covers it.

The second gift is a wand of movement, which allows him to lift objects without having to go to the trouble of a Control Matter ritual. Though he's attuned to it, anyone who picks it up can use it intuitively. He buys this as Telekinesis 10 (Magical, -10%; Wand, Unprotected, -60%) [15].

ENCHANTMENT LIMITATIONS

Each of these modifiers has two values. The first, smaller point break is for a *protected* version of the enchantment. A protected item can be loaned to others, but it will not work if stolen; the owner must mentally will the item to work for anyone other than himself. The second, larger point break is for the *unprotected* version. An unprotected item works for whoever is using it, whether it was given freely or stolen. (This does not apply to long-term use, however; see *Acquiring Enchanted Items*, pp. 34-35.)

All enchanted items are homogenous and have HT 12. If one is damaged to 0 HP, it stops functioning; it can be repaired later with an appropriate skill (e.g., Jeweler for an amulet). If it is taken to -HP, it requires major repairs; the skill rolls are at -2 and require replacement parts (e.g., gold wire, rare wood, or gems) with cost equal to 1d×(half of the typical monthly pay for your TL, per p. B517). Because of their magical nature (and the character-point investment), do not bother making survival checks for enchanted items; no matter how badly one is damaged, assume the caster *will* be able to repair it, eventually.

Amulet

-35% or -50%

A small (2" diameter) amulet which must be worn on the outside of any clothing or armor. Anyone within reach of you can grab it by winning a Quick Contest of DX. SM -7, DR 4, HP 4, 0.1 lb.

Circlet or Tiara

-35% or -55%

A narrow (1" high) band which must be worn on the forehead, outside of any clothing or armor. Anyone within reach of you can grab it with an unopposed DX roll. SM -11, DR 4, HP 4, 0.1 lb.

Cloak

-55% or -70%

A light cloak which must be worn on the back (not used defensively with the Cloak skill) to function. Anyone *behind* you, within reach, can grab it off you with an unopposed DX roll; others must grapple you first, and then win a Quick Contest of DX. SM -1, DR 2, HP 10, 2 lbs.

Ring

-25% or -35%

An ornate ring which must be worn on the outside of any clothing or armor. Anyone who grapples your hand must then win a Quick Contest of DX to remove it; alternatively, a thief may attempt to fool you during a handshake by winning a

Quick Contest of Sleight of Hand against your Per (at +5 if you have reason to be wary). SM -11, DR 4, HP 3, neg.

Staff

-50% or -65%

A 6' piece of wood. Decide whether it's a walking stick or a quarterstaff (p. B273); the latter is a useful but *obvious* melee weapon! Others may attempt to disarm (p. B401) you or to grab your staff and win a Quick Contest of ST to take it away. SM -3, DR 2, HP 13, 4 lbs.

Wand

-45% or -60%

A slender, 1' piece of wood, bone, ivory, etc. Others may attempt to disarm (p. B401) you or to grab the wand and win a Quick Contest of ST to take it away. SM -6, DR 2, HP 6, 0.5 lb.

ACQUIRING ENCHANTED ITEMS

During character creation, adding enchanted items is as simple as paying the character-point cost. But once play begins, it's a little bit trickier. Every enchanted item is a unique creation . . . a labor of love . . . something that's essentially a *part* of the owner – and the character-point investment reflects this. Thus, it's extremely unlikely that "magic-item stores" will exist. There are ways, however.

Looting

After defeating a foe, looting the body is a time-honored tradition. However, a protected item will not work at *all* for the looters. An unprotected one works great at first, but as it spends more time away from its proper owner, it begins to weaken, losing about 10% effectiveness per day (the details are up to the GM). In all cases, if the looter wants to keep the item, he has to pay its character-point cost to "attune" to it.

Coincidence

If the player has something specific in mind, he may use a more proactive version of *Looting* (above). He and the GM sit down and come up with the item he wants, then he spends bonus character points equal to the cost of the item. The GM will then work with the player to introduce the item into the game in a believable way. This may be as straightforward as finding the item in a tomb, or as involved as having to defeat a foe who's using the item against the heroes!

Slow and Sure Enchanting

If a PC lacks the points, or wants to game out the creation of an enchanted item, he can use downtime to create it.

Beverage Selection

As an alternative to *Alchemical Elixirs* (pp. 28-30), the GM may treat potions as enchanted items. In this case, the "item" is actually a formulary, equipment, and/or training that allows the caster to *make* a limited supply of the potion. Follow the guidelines under *Alchemical Elixirs* regarding ingredients, usage, etc., but buy the potions as an advantage with the following enchantment limitation. (It has only one value, as potions are *always* considered unprotected.)

Potions

Variable

You carry between one and 10 vials, each holding an ounce of liquid that grants one use of the advantage after being imbibed. (Advantages that lack measurable "uses" last for one minute.) The value of this limitation depends on how many potions you can have ready at once. After drinking some, you may replenish back to your maximum; this requires access to alchemical or chemistry equipment, appropriate ingredients, and about an hour of work (total, not per potion).

Each potion is SM -7, DR 1, HP 3, 0.05 lb. Glass vials have Fragile (Brittle), but most casters use metal or (in a modern game) plastic vials, which do not. Potions cannot be repaired if damaged; instead, make new ones.

Potions	Limitation	Potions	Limitation
1	-80%	4	-60%
2	-70%	5-6	-55%
3	-65%	7-10	-50%

There is a charm about the forbidden that makes it unspeakably desirable.

– Mark Twain

Each day spent enchanting requires eight hours of work; it cannot be sped up by pulling longer shifts, nor can it be drawn out by working shorter ones. The enchanter *can* take days off without hurting his project, however; e.g., if he only has weekends free to enchant, he's allowed to put in just two days a week.

After every 25 total days of enchanting, the caster must make a Path of Magic roll. If this is successful, he gains one character point which can only be put toward the cost of the enchanted item. If not, the time was wasted. When he has enough character points to afford the item, the enchantment is complete!

THE SEPHIROTH AND DECANS

Each Path skill (pp. 7-12) maps to one of the nine “lower” sephiroth (*GURPS Thaumatology*, pp. 253-254), with the core skill, Thaumatology, mapping to Kether. While this can be ignored, or treated as background color, it's also possible to use these correspondences to achieve powerful magical effects.

Each of these nine sephiroth maps to four decans, and each decan can be thought of as an astrological identifier for a particular zodiacal combination of house and planet; e.g., Ouare is Saturn descending through Taurus. These relations are summed up on the *Decanic Correspondences Table* (below).

Decanic Correspondences Table

<i>Path</i>	<i>Sephirah</i>	<i>Decans</i>	<i>Zodiacal Combination</i>
Body	Yesod	Belbel	Gemini/Venus
–	–	Eneuth	Sagittarius/Mars
–	–	Ieropaël	Virgo/Saturn
–	–	Phthenoth	Pisces/Moon
Chance	Hod	Akhoui	Pisces/Jupiter
–	–	Anatreth	Sagittarius/Jupiter
–	–	Atrax	Virgo/Mercury
–	–	Sphandôr	Gemini/Mercury
Crossroads	Tiphareth	Isrô	Aquarius/Jupiter
–	–	Iudal	Taurus/Mercury
–	–	Kumeatêl	Leo/Jupiter
–	–	Nefthada	Scorpio/Jupiter
Energy	Geburah	Hephesimereth	Aquarius/Saturn
–	–	Phoubêl	Leo/Sun
–	–	Sahu	Taurus/Venus
–	–	Tepsisem	Scorpio/Mars
Magic	Chesed	Alath	Libra/Mercury
–	–	Alleborith	Capricorn/Mercury
–	–	Arôtosael	Aries/Jupiter
–	–	Saphathoraël	Cancer/Venus
Matter	Netzach	Agchoniôn	Aquarius/Venus
–	–	Akton	Scorpio/Moon
–	–	Ouare	Taurus/Saturn
–	–	Roêlêd	Leo/Mars
Mind	Chokmah	Harpax	Capricorn/Saturn
–	–	Methiix	Cancer/Moon
–	–	Naôth	Libra/Venus
–	–	Ruax	Aries/Mars
Spirit	Binah	Anostêr	Capricorn/Venus
–	–	Barsafael	Aries/Sun
–	–	Charchnoumis	Cancer/Mars
–	–	Marderô	Libra/Saturn
Undead	Malkuth	Axiôphêth	Sagittarius/Sun
–	–	Bianakith	Pisces/Mars
–	–	Buldumêch	Virgo/Venus
–	–	Kurtaël	Gemini/Saturn



DECANIC TRAPPINGS

The word “decan” originally comes from the Greek word *dekanos*, meaning “ruler of ten.” Each decan governs a 10° segment of the zodiacal arc; thus, all 36 of them collectively hold power over the entire (360°) astrological compass. Casters who realize this can tap into the energy of these decans when invoking a ritual. If these rules are used, they replace the simpler ones under *Traditional Trappings* (p. 19).

The sephirah of each Path has four associated decans, as detailed in *Thaumatology* (pp. 248-252). By invoking the correspondences (*places* and *materials*) associated with a decan, a caster can draw upon its energy for his spell. This process becomes even more efficient when invoking correspondences from two, three, or even all *four* decans! The decans being appealed *must* correspond to the Path skill being used for the spell; see *Choose the Skill* (pp. 19-20).

Each of the correspondences below gives a certain number of *decan points* (DP). At the end, these will be used to determine the final energy discount for the spell. Every spell starts with 0 DP.

Place: If the spell is being cast in a place favorable to the decan, add 5 DP. If the place is an unequivocal *archetype* of the decan’s nature, the GM may increase this, to a maximum of 10 DP. You may get only one place bonus per decan – and it’s hard to get this from more than one decan at a time!

Materials: Using materials appropriate to the decan adds DP, as per the *Decanic Materials Table* (below). Expensive materials (worth more than half a month’s income) are more effective than inexpensive ones, and materials that will be consumed by the ritual pack more punch than reusable ones. (Of course, the reusable ones are much more convenient!) You may acquire multiple material bonuses for the same decan, but they give diminishing returns; use the “First” column for the largest-DP one, the “Second” column for the next-largest, and so on.

Add up the DP accumulated for all four decans and determine the energy discount based on total DP:

0 to 20 DP: The DP are the percentage discount. For example, 10 DP becomes -10%.

21 to 60 DP: Subtract 20 from the DP, halve the result (round up), and then add 20. That is the percentage discount. For example, 30 DP becomes -25%.

61 or more DP: Subtract 60 from the DP, quarter the result (round up), and then add 40. That is the percentage discount. For example, 80 DP becomes -45%.

The GM is entitled to adjust the final discount by up to ±5% based on how cool, appropriate, and evocative the ritual was (as described by the player).

Example: Cole needs to cast a powerful Path of Mind spell to search the memories of an entire neighborhood – that’s a *lot* of

energy. He decides to call upon the associated decans: Harpax, Methiax, Naôth, and Ruax. First, he chooses his casting place carefully, keeping it close to the neighborhood to minimize his range modifier. He finds an artists’ studio on the campus of a university. Using the information in *Thaumatology*, the GM agrees to let it count as a place for Methiax and Naôth: 10 DP!

That night, Cole breaks in with a bulky load of offerings. For Harpax, he wears his expensive green jade necklace (5 DP) and burns amanita mushrooms (2 DP). For Methiax, he couldn’t find anything, but he sets off the reusable flashbulbs in the studio (2 DP) and puts a fractal screensaver on the computer (1 DP). For Naôth, he carefully unpacks a rare Les Paul guitar a friend lent him (5 DP, but the GM makes it 6 DP when he succeeds at a default Musical Instrument roll to play it) and burns bay leaves (2 DP). Finally, for Ruax, he breaks out his prize: an expensive, highly illegal bouquet of opium poppies (10 DP) that he stole. He scatters them into a spiral pattern (1 DP) before burning them.

Cole’s total is 39 DP. To find his discount, he subtracts 20 (19), halves the result (10), then adds 20 (30). His spell’s energy cost is reduced by 30% – a tremendous savings!

Smart casters will carry expensive, reusable items that correspond to their favorite Paths. For example, Cole carries that jade necklace around with him, because he knows how handy it is for his Path of Mind spells.

*To the hill sigh for the dead
In that dreadful view survey lies
my crown of Kether
I arise to Tiphereth heading for
the pagan sadness
Pagan sadness that frees me of
the Malkuthian chains
– Malkuth, “My Last
Touching Battlefield”*

Zodiacal Trappings

Every decan is tied to a particular combination of zodiacal house and planet. Thus, if the caster cannot find enough genuine decanic correspondences, he may substitute zodiacal ones (*Thaumatology*, p. 247). However, this requires twice as much effort, because each *pairing* of house correspondence and planet correspondence counts as a single decanic correspondence. If they fall into two categories (e.g., one is consumable and one is reusable), average the DP value, rounding down.



Decanic Materials Table

Materials	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Expensive and Consumable	10 DP	5 DP	2 DP	1 DP	–
Expensive and Reusable	5 DP	2 DP	1 DP	–	–
Inexpensive and Consumable	5 DP	2 DP	1 DP	–	–
Inexpensive and Reusable	2 DP	1 DP	–	–	–

Example: What if Cole couldn't find those poppies? Ruax is also Mars ascending through Aries. Thus, he could have worn a ruby brooch (expensive and reusable) representing Mars *and* burned a bouquet of lilies (inexpensive and consumable) representing Aries, giving him 5 DP for Ruax.

Houses and planets don't have places . . . but they do have dates! If a spell is cast when the astrological month matches the house *and* the day of the week matches the planet, that's considered the equivalent of a decanic place bonus, for 5 DP. If the spell is *already* getting a place bonus for that decan, however, this time bonus adds only 2 DP.

Example: Cole found a place that gave bonuses for Methiax and Naöth. But if he had *also* invoked Ruax by casting the spell on a Tuesday (Mars) between March 21 and April 19 (Aries), he would have received a "place" bonus for Ruax as well, for *another* 5 DP. If he had instead cast it on a Monday (Moon) between June 22 and July 22 (Cancer), he would have received an extra 2 DP for Methiax; the bonus is lessened because he's already getting 5 DP for Methiax from the artists' studio.

DAATH

Daath may be a hidden "11th sephirah," lying between Binah and Chokmah. Some call it an "anti-sephirah." Its existence is hotly debated; if the GM is using sephirotic correspondences, it's up to him whether Daath exists. (He is *expressly* permitted to lie about this to the players either way.) If it exists, it's up to the GM what Daath does and what it represents. The following rules are only a *suggested* way of handling it.

Heresy and Speculation

Heterodox Kabbalistic theory speculates that when God made the world, He made it *twice*. The first was a test, and it failed in His eyes, so He destroyed it and made a new one. But pieces of the old world (despite no longer existing) fell into the sephiroth, landing in Daath – *becoming* Daath. Daath is nonexistence. Not destruction, because destruction exists. Everything we know exists – every object, every idea, every action. Even in the emptiness of space, *space* exists. Time exists. Even anti-matter exists! Daath is a refutation of the very *concept* of existence, in a way that is too primal and fundamental for any sane person to wrap his mind around.

If the GM decides that Daath has a ritual Path, it should be *exceedingly* hard to find teachers for it! There are a few *qliphothic cults*, worshipers of the Time before Time, who may know it – but given that they are literally opposed to Creation itself, they're not exactly a friendly and talkative bunch. At a *minimum*, they will generally expect unswerving dedication to the cult and the complete severing of all other mortal ties.

Path of Nonexistence (Daath)

IQ/VH

Prerequisite: Thaumatology.

This Path interacts with That Which No Longer Is and That Which Should Not Be. "Nonexistence" is a poor translation, but the best language can manage. Use of nonexistence can remove things from reality – not in the sense of destroying them, but as if they had never been in the first place. For Lesser effects, this change takes place immediately but does

not undo the past; Greater effects are retroactive! (The *degree* to which this is true will vary, to avoid giving the GM a heart attack. As a rule, the more people who'd be affected by a retroactive change, the less thorough it is; wiping a fallen brick from existence will remove the bump on your friend's head, but cutting Hitler from existence is likely to replace him with someone just as bad.)

There is one significant drawback to using the Path of Nonexistence: *All failures are treated as critical failures*. This is Creation's way of fighting back against this insidious cancer. In theory, this would not be the case were it used *within Daath*, but so far no one has found a way there and back to verify this.

The spell effects are described in less detail than those for the Paths on pp. 7-12. This is intentional, to give the GM as much freedom as possible to decide what this plot device can accomplish in the game.

Sense Nonexistence: Can detect paradoxes, identify the effects of a Daath ritual (or predict the potential effects of one), find things which were not meant to exist, and sense weak spots in reality. A Greater effect can detect the retroactive effects of a Greater Daath spell; a Lesser one cannot.

Strengthen Nonexistence: By increasing the lack of existence in an area (or on subject), this effect makes it *weirder*. It could make a man start talking backward, make a wheel roll uphill, or bring toys to life. The fundamental nature of the subject can't change, but the way it interacts with reality certainly can!

Restore Nonexistence: Anything which exists impermanently can be unmade. This typically applies to thoughts and magical phenomena, both of which arise from nothing and last for a finite time. It never affects anything physical (all tangible things are made of atoms that have existed since the beginning of Time) or broad, social concepts (which *can* last forever).

Control Nonexistence: Can carefully direct the degree and vector of anti-existence to nullify *actions*. Greater effects can be used to alter history – though see the description above for more on that.

Destroy Nonexistence: Destroys the rule that says a certain thing *cannot* exist. It can conjure almost anything, as long as it fundamentally breaks the laws of existence. Examples include a raging fire that burns the soul instead of the flesh, a perpetual energy machine, or a Klein bottle. This is a *dangerous* effect unless the caster first uses Sense Nonexistence to predict what will happen when this "thing" interacts with Creation!

Create Nonexistence: A creation of nonexistence can remove physical things from reality. This generally takes the effect of a damaging spell of some sort, but any subject removed from Creation is beyond healing or recovering. (Though in theory, a Destroy Nonexistence effect might be able to undo it . . .)

Transform Nonexistence: This effect can target *concepts* such as Love, Socialism, or Dessert. Once transformed, it becomes impossible for *anyone* to think about that concept, or even to realize that it exists, without using a Sense Nonexistence ritual! After a Lesser Transform, anyone coming across this concept in a book, etc., will just be confused; a Greater Transform edits all record of the concept. It's not easy, though – to remove a concept, *every single person* who is aware of it must be targeted. Thus, it's much easier to remove local concepts; e.g., you'd have to target the whole world to remove "Christmas," but you could target a city to remove "Our Christmas Parade."

CHAPTER FOUR

THE GRIMOIRE

Cole shrugged off his trenchcoat, now burned to a crisp, before stepping over the body of what was once the coven leader. He sighed. It had been a long time since he'd had to kill, and back then, he did it for very different reasons. "Well," he mused out loud, "I guess this means you've been avenged, buddy." Still, he had kind of been hoping it would make him feel better.

He wasn't done here, of course. The old iron key opened up the lock and (more important) didn't set off any of the spells and countermeasures like a ritual might have. It took effort to pull open the old metal door; its bottom scraped along the stone floor, setting his nerves on edge.

Cole sighed. Everyone wanted power. And with magic, power is energy. Mana. Whatever you want to call it.

Places have energy. Some more than others, especially at certain times. When the stars align in just the right way, an adept standing in the right spot can practically be a god. But places aren't portable – not very convenient.

Certain objects have energy. Ancient artifacts, created using magics unknown to this day. Of course, all the good ones are taken. So getting one into your own hands means starting a minor war. Not something that a local coven would want to deal with.

People have energy. Obviously, since that's the whole idea of casting spells. But even if someone doesn't know a thing about magic, you can get energy out of him – either willingly or with an athame through the heart. But every once in a while, a person is born with an unusual abundance of energy. A potential prodigy... or the kind of sacrifice that can fuel something **very** powerful.

Inside the room, on a thin straw mattress, was the little girl. Bound and gagged. Looking up at him with fear in her eyes. She couldn't have been older than eight. He'd saved his last charm specifically for this moment. Cracking the glass cowboy in half, he heard his words being translated into Laotian as he spoke. "It's okay. I'm a friend. I'm here to rescue you."

The following spells are worked examples of the ritual rules laid out in Chapters 2 and 3. Casters who like one should consider learning Ritual Mastery (p. 6) or purchasing a grimoire (pp. 30-32) for it. Several are adapted from **GURPS Magic**, specifically to illustrate the similarities and differences between the two magic systems. However, none of these spells are any more or less "official" than those you create yourself! If the GM doesn't like the way one of these rituals is constructed, then he has the right to rebuild it to fit his vision; see *The "Right" Way* (p. 49) for more.

These spells are formatted to match the guidelines for *Specific Definition* (p. 19):

Name: This is just a suggestion. Feel free to rename the spell to whatever you'd like!

Spell Effects: The effects (pp. 15-16) which comprise the spell. Some spells are commonly cast as conditional rituals (pp. 25-26) or charms (pp. 26-28), which requires an *additional*

Lesser Control Magic effect. This extra effect is *never* listed here, even if the spell can only be cast conditionally – both for consistency and because that effect is not technically part of the ritual itself, but a "wrapper" around it.

Inherent Modifiers: The modifiers which help define the ritual. While the degree or level of each modifier can be adjusted (if possible), removing any of these modifiers or changing the specific things they add causes this ritual to count as a new and different spell.

Greater Effects: A tally of the Greater effects in the spell, along with the Greater effects multiplier (pp. 18-19).

Description: A detailed, plain-language explanation of what the ritual does. The details assume a typical casting (below) and are thus somewhat subject to change at the caster's whim. For example, Alertness (p. 39) can easily be cast to give +4 to Sense rolls for the next hour (instead of +2 for the next 10 minutes) – it just requires more energy than what the typical casting suggests. Be mindful of Lesser effect limits, however! Because Alertness is based on Lesser Strengthen Mind (p. 12), it can't provide more than +5 to Sense rolls without becoming a different ritual – one based on *Greater Strengthen Mind*.

Typical Casting: A full example of how the spell is usually cast, with *all* modifiers (not just the inherent ones) and any side details (such as the Lesser Control Magic required to create a charm or conditional ritual). This ends with the energy cost, both as a flat value and as a more detailed breakdown of (base energy cost)×(Greater effects multiplier).

*I don't distinguish
between magic and art.
When I got into magic,
I realized I had been doing
it all along.*

– Alan Moore

Simple Conditional Conversion

Turning a normal spell into a conditional ritual or charm requires a 5-energy Lesser Control Magic effect. This adds 5×(Greater effects multiplier) to the total energy required. When turning a conditional spell or charm into a normal spell, *subtract* that value.

Air Jet

Spell Effects: Greater Control Matter.

Inherent Modifiers: Damage, External Crushing (Double Knockback; Jet; No Wounding).

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell conjures a jet (p. B106) of air extending from the caster's hand or an object that he is holding. The target takes 3d crushing damage; this does no actual damage, but it does inflict blunt trauma and is doubled for knockback purposes.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Matter (5) + Damage, External Crushing 3d (Double Knockback, +20%; Jet, +0%; No Wounding, -50%) (1). 18 energy (6×3).

Alertness

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Bonus, Sense rolls.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell temporarily boosts the subject's ability to process incoming impressions, giving him +2 to all Sense rolls for the next 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Bestows a Bonus, +2 to all Sense rolls (10) + Duration, 10 minutes (1). 14 energy (14×1).

Amplify Injury

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Vulnerability to Physical Attacks.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell causes the target to suffer *double* normal injury from physical attacks (those that use some sort of material substance to cause harm) for the next 10 minutes. This does not increase the damage from energy, mental attacks, etc. The target must be within 10 yards.

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Body (5) + Altered Traits, Vulnerability to Physical Attacks ×2 (8) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). 63 energy (21×3).

Babble On

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Mind + Lesser Strengthen Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect + Altered Trait, Babel-Tongue.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell grants the subjects (at least two) the ability to converse with one another in a mystically made-up language called "Babel-Tongue" – so called after the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel. All subjects who are to be affected must be within 3 yards of the caster. The "Babel-Tongue" language is created anew for each casting; it cannot be learned normally. Only those under the effects of this spell (or who have some other supernatural means to speak unknown and alien languages) can comprehend it.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Mind (2) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Altered Trait, Babel-Tongue (Native/None) (3) + Area of Effect, 3 yards (2) + Duration, 1 hour (3). 13 energy (13×1).

Bag of Bones

Spell Effects: Greater Control Undead + Lesser Create Undead.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell is typically cast as a charm, which is then attached to a skeleton – normally a human one, though any skeleton weighing up to 100 lbs. will suffice. Once broken, the charm imbues dark magic into the bones, making them into an animated skeleton that follows the directions of the caster. After a day, the magic fades and the undead monster collapses into a heap. Statistics for animated skeletons can be found in several books, including on p. 152 of **GURPS Magic**; if you lack them, use ST 9, DX 12, IQ 8, HT 10, with DR 2, no skills, and other traits appropriate to an animated skeleton.

Typical Casting: Greater Control Undead (5) + Lesser Create Undead (6) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Duration, 1 day (7) + Subject Weight, 100 lbs. (2). 75 energy (25×3).

A Weighty Matter

Nearly every ritual in this chapter that effects a physical change in the subject includes a subject weight (p. 18) modifier of 300 lbs. – and then simplifies things by referring to "a target" or "a subject" in the description. This doesn't mean that the typical casting is enough to affect literally *any* subject! When fighting a 1,500-lb. sea serpent, a caster will need another +2 energy to cover the additional weight; failure to add this means the spell fizzles upon casting.

Body of Shadow

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Body + Greater Transform Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Shadow Form.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

The subject's body fades away, leaving only his shadow behind. This gives him the Shadow Form advantage (p. B83) for the next 10 minutes. His clothing, gear, etc., falls to the ground around him. Though the subject is now made of living darkness, he gains no special ability to *see* in the dark.

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Body (8) + Greater Transform Energy (8) + Altered Trait, Shadow Form (50) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). 350 energy (70×5).

Call Spirit

Spell Effects: Greater Control Spirit.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This ritual implants a compulsion in a specific subject spirit to travel at its greatest speed to the location of the caster at the time the ritual is cast. If the spirit is unable to reach that location within one day, the compulsion ends. The subject must be within 10 miles of the caster, but the magic will reach across the dimensional barrier into the spirit realm.

Note that this ritual does not affect the spirit's attitude toward the caster. Indeed, a spirit called this way likely will be quite hostile when it arrives!

Typical Casting: Greater Control Spirit (5) + Duration, 1 day (7) + Range, 1 dimension and 10 miles (34). *138 energy (46×3).*

Chill

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell lowers the temperature in an area. It is typically used to reduce a 1- to 3-yard area down to freezing, creating a way for low-tech casters (or those wealthy enough to hire them) to preserve food. It can also be used to cool a room. It cannot be used to set a specific temperature; for that, a Greater Control Energy effect is required.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Energy (5) + Area of Effect, 3 yards (2) + Duration, 1 month (11). *18 energy (18×1).*

Cleanse Disease

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This ritual utterly eradicates any disease-giving bacteria, fungi, parasites, viruses, and so on within three yards, no matter how contagious or drug-resistant they might be. (The GM may always choose to give supernatural or otherwise "special" pathogens a resistance roll, of course.) This ritual only cleans an area of disease; it won't actually *cure* anyone.

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Body (5) + Area of Effect, 3 yards (2) + Subject Weight, 10 lbs. (0). *7 energy (7×1).*

*Your computer will happily
and completely obey you.*

Computerized Ally

Spell Effects: Greater Control Energy + Greater Create Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

This is typically cast as a charm – usually on an inexpensive flash drive, to avoid suspicion. When the drive is inserted into the USB port of a computer, the machine immediately "awakens." For the next hour, it is treated as an intelligent being with IQ equal to twice its Complexity (p. B472), minimum 8.

It will happily and completely obey the person who triggered the spell. This includes finding (and decrypting) its files, running programs, and volunteering any information of which it would have a record. For example, it would know which users had logged in recently, but it could not say who was standing next to that user (though if a webcam was functional at the time, it may have video). The GM should play the computer as an eager, intelligent person, not as a literal-minded automaton!

Typical Casting: Greater Control Energy (5) + Greater Create Mind (6) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Duration, 1 hour (3). *95 energy (19×5).*

Conjure Credentials

Spell Effects: Greater Create Matter + Lesser Sense Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell is typically cast as a charm and allows the caster to create (on the spot) credentials that are being *asked* for by someone else. The caster need not be specific about what credentials these are; the spell will sense what the asker is expecting to see and provide them. For example, if the caster is stopped by a traffic cop without his driver's license, he could use this spell to create a believable copy of it, but only *after* the policemen asked him for it. These credentials will automatically stand up to a "spot check," because they are drawn from the mind of the person asking for them! Versions that must fool other people also require a successful Forgery roll (see *Create*, p. 16).

Unbelievable or grandiose credentials (e.g., "I am the King of England" for a blue-collar worker or "I am a responsible adult" for a child) require a Forgery roll at a *significant* penalty or simply cannot be created at all – GM's call.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Matter (6) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Lesser Sense Mind (2) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 10 lbs. (0). *42 energy (14×3).*

Counterproductivity Curse

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Chance.

Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Penalty, rolls to create, make, or repair.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The bane of the working man, this spell gives -2 to the target's rolls to create, make, or repair things. Tools break, plans are lost, finances are frozen, etc. Job-related things just go completely wrong for the target while under the influence of this spell, though in a believable and plausible manner. This effect lasts for one week and can target anyone within 10 yards.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Chance (5) + Bestows a Penalty, -2 to rolls to create, make, or repair things (10) + Duration, 1 week (9) + Range, 10 yards (4). *28 energy (28×1).*

Create Pocket Dimension

Spell Effects: Greater Create Crossroads + Lesser Create Matter.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell creates a pocket dimension about the size of a small studio apartment (700 square feet). The caster and any being he brings along can access it. It functions identically to "normal" reality in all respects and has its own self-renewing supply of air, but *nothing* else (no furniture, food, water, etc.). It lasts for a month, though most casters will regularly renew it; the fate of anything left in the pocket when the spell lapses or is canceled is up to the GM.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Crossroads (6) + Lesser Create Matter (6) + Area of Effect, 5 yards (4) + Duration, 1 month (11). *81 energy (27×3).*

Cure Disease

Spell Effects: Lesser Restore Body.
Inherent Modifiers: None.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This ritual eradicates a single organism (bacterium, virus, fungus, etc.) infecting the subject. The caster must touch the subject and definitively identify the disease to be cured during the casting. The ritual will not cure genetic diseases nor flush poisons or complex parasites from the subject. Any damage or other effects of the disease remain.

This spell can only affect diseases with a finite duration; to fix permanent infections (e.g., AIDS), use *Greater Cure Disease*, which is similar but uses a Greater Restore Body effect, for 21 energy.

Typical Casting: Lesser Restore Body (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). 7 points (7×1).

Death Touch

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Body.
Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Toxic.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell allows the caster to momentarily channel the energy of death itself into any living being, with a touch. If the subject fails to resist, he takes 3d toxic damage (bypassing DR).

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Body (5) + Damage, Internal Toxic 3d (8) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). 48 energy (16×3).

Death Vision

Spell Effects: Greater Sense Chance + Lesser Destroy Mind.
Inherent Modifiers: Affliction, Stunning.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

If the subject of this spell (who must be within 10 yards of the caster) does not or chooses not to resist, he sees a vivid hallucination of his own death. If he has a disadvantageous Destiny, this may be a preordained death – otherwise, it's one possible death. Regardless, he is mentally stunned until he can make a Will roll to recover.

Typical Casting: Greater Sense Chance (2) + Lesser Destroy Mind (5) + Affliction, Stunning (0) + Range, 10 yards (4). 33 energy (11×3).

Destruction

Spell Effects: Greater Create Energy.
Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Burning.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This is typically cast as a charm. By breaking the atomic bonds that hold a person or thing together, this ritual turns its target (who must be within 15 yards and weigh 1.5 tons or less) into a cloud of fine ash. If the target fails to resist, he or it takes 20d burning damage immediately, ignoring DR. With an average of 70 points of damage, most people and things will be immediately eradicated.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Energy (6) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Damage, Internal Burning 20d (76) + Range, 15 yards (5) + Subject Weight, 3,000 lbs. (5). 291 Energy (97×3).

Detect Secret Doors

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Crossroads.
Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This ritual simultaneously reveals the location of every secret door or concealed compartment within 10 yards of the caster. This only applies to *deliberate* concealment; a door or compartment that is naturally hidden from the caster will not be revealed by the ritual.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Crossroads (2) + Area of Effect, 10 yards (8). 10 energy (10×1).

Diagnose

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Body.
Inherent Modifiers: None.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This ritual reveals the full, detailed cause of one specific symptom afflicting the subject. The caster must touch the subject. If there is no way a doctor in the setting could diagnose the problem (even with a critical success), the spell provides no information.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Body (2). 2 energy (2×1).

Diamond Mind

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Mind + Lesser Strengthen Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Indomitable and Unfazeable + Altered Trait, Mind Shield.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This is typically cast as a charm. This ritual perfects the subject's mind, driving away all fear, doubt, and possibility of being socially influenced by others (unless they possess Empathy, of course). It even protects the mind from supernatural intrusions, adding +5 to resistance rolls against psi powers and the like.

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Mind (3) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Altered Traits, Indomitable and Unfazeable (30) + Altered Trait, Mind Shield 5 (20) + Duration, 1 hour (3). 192 energy (64×3).

Dreamcatcher

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Body + Lesser Strengthen Mind ×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Less Sleep 4 + Altered Traits, Remove Nightmares, Light Sleeper, and Insomnia + Bestows a Bonus, +5 to resist certain attacks.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This is almost always cast as a charm, usually (but not always) on an actual dreamcatcher. The target finds his slumber especially restful and needs four fewer hours of sleep (to a minimum of one). If he suffers from Nightmares, Light Sleep, or Insomnia, those disadvantages are suspended for the duration. Additionally, he has +5 to resist all supernatural attacks that involve his dreams or that attack his mind while he is sleeping.

Once activated, this charm lasts for one week. For longer protection, the duration may be increased at the time of casting or reinforced with later castings (see *After Casting*, p. 22).

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Magic (5) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Altered Trait, Less Sleep 4 (8) + Altered Traits, Remove Nightmares, Light Sleeper, and Insomnia (30) + Bestows a Bonus, +5 to resist supernatural powers used against a sleeping or dreaming target (32) + Duration, 1 week (9). *93 energy (93×1).*

Dull (Sense)

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Penalty, One specific sense.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This is a different spell for each sense (e.g., Dull Vision or Dull Hearing). The target's sense is at -2 for the next 30 minutes. He must be within 10 yards.

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Mind (5) + Bestows a Penalty, -2 to one type of Sense roll (4) + Duration, 30 minutes (2) + Range, 10 yards (4). *15 energy (15×1).*

Duplicate Object

Spell Effects: Greater Create Matter + Lesser Sense Matter.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

With this ritual, the magician can duplicate any inanimate object! He must have the object in his hand (or touching it, for large items) while casting the ritual. Once completed, an exact replica appears within his other hand (or within its reach).

The item duplicated can weigh up to five tons (which covers most "big ticket" items, like automobiles), and lasts for an hour before winking out of existence. It is an *exact* replica; if a broken gun is copied, the dupe is *also* broken! This applies to other facets of the item as well; e.g., that gun would have the same number of bullets loaded as the original.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Matter (6) + Lesser Sense Matter (2) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Subject Weight, 5 tons (6). *51 energy (17×3).*

False Memory

Spell Effects: Lesser Create Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell inserts a single false memory into the subject's mind. It must be something simple and uncomplicated: "You fell asleep once while on guard duty," "You own a different car than the one listed on your registration," etc. It lasts for a month, after which the subject realizes he was mistaken. He must be within five yards.

Typical Casting: Lesser Create Mind (6) + Duration, 1 month (11) + Range, 5 yards (2). *19 energy (19×1).*

Feral Rage

Spell Effects: Greater Control Mind + Lesser Strengthen Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, increased ST + Altered Trait, Berserk.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell, often cast as a charm (usually a bead sewn to a bear- or wolf-skin shirt), elicits a bloodthirsty rage in the subject. He has +3 ST (and HP) and is under the effects of Berserk (p. B124) for the duration of the spell – with no way to snap out of it! On the bright side, this makes him immune to stun and shock, unslowed by injuries, and so on. The spell fades after a minute; his allies may wish to avoid him until then!

Typical Casting: Greater Control Mind (5) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, ST+3 (30) + Altered Trait, Berserk (No Self-Control Roll) (5) + Duration, 1 minute (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *156 energy (52×3).*

Fighting Irons

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Matter + Lesser Strengthen Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell is typically cast as a "blocking" spell (p. 24) with momentary duration; alternatively, it can be cast ahead of time (perhaps as a charm) with enough duration to cover a typical fight.

If successful, you can attempt to use a firearm in hand to parry an incoming blow. It can only affect attacks which can be parried normally! The spell makes your gun "solid" enough to deflect it without taking damage *and* improves your reflexes so you can parry at (Guns/2)+3 instead of (DX/2)+3. If this ritual fails, and you had attempted it as a "blocking" spell, you don't get another defense.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Matter (3) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Duration, Momentary (0) + Subject Weight, 10 lbs. (0). *6 energy (6×1).*

*Pyro: I can only manipulate
the fire. I can't create it.*

*Magneto: You are a god
among insects. Never let anyone
tell you different.*

– X2: X-Men United

Fireball

Spell Effects: Greater Create Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Damage, External Burning.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell conjures a ball of flame that the caster can then throw at a target. It does 3d burning damage.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Energy (6) + Damage, External Burning 3d (0). *18 energy (6×3).*

Mana Level

One of the fundamental concepts of the standard **GURPS** magic system is *mana level* (p. B235): a rating of the ambient magical energy available in an area. While Ritual Path magic never uses the term “mana level,” the concept of ambient energy is *key*. Thus, it’s easy to equate the two, for worlds that mix the two magic systems (p. 45).

For the purpose of standard magic, a desecrated area is considered *no mana*, most places are *normal mana*, a place of power (pp. 32-33) that gives +1 to +3 is *high mana*, and one that gives +4 or +5 is *very high mana*. The GM may allow a hasty desecration (done in 1/10 the normal time) to create a *low mana* area, or rule that some simply occur naturally.

For a given mana level, the effect on Ritual Path magic is as follows:

No Mana: Treat the entire area as irrevocably desecrated (*Gathering Ambient Energy*, pp. 20-21).

Low Mana: Rolls to gather ambient energy are at -5. This does not affect tapping into energy sources or the final casting roll. By definition, no place of power can exist in a low mana area; places of power are high mana locations.

Normal Mana: Use the rules as written.

High Mana: Treat the area as a +2 place of power.

Very High Mana: Treat the area as a +5 place of power.

Variations

- The modifiers above are *suggestions*; the GM should feel free to vary them to fit the setting. If the campaign needs very high mana areas to be so valuable that kingdoms will go to war over them, perhaps they give +10 instead of +5!

- For greater variety, the GM may decide that mana level is *separate* from any specific places of power within the area. Track each modifier separately and apply both to gathering rolls; e.g., a caster at a +3 place of power in a low mana area suffers a net -2.

- Mana level and Ritual Path energy-gathering modifiers do not *have* to be conflated! Even if both types of magic exist in a campaign, the GM may rule that their “ambient energies” are totally unlinked; e.g., a grove might be low mana (for standard magic) but a +2 place of power (for Ritual Path magic). This is especially likely if the two represent very different traditions (e.g., holy vs. Hermetic).

Ghost Shirt

Spell Effects: Greater Control Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Damage Resistance

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell is usually cast as a charm, often a bead or bone sewn into a shirt (a buckskin or bone vest is traditional). Once invoked, the spell protects the wearer for the next 30 minutes as if he had a DR 6 force field (see p. B47) – but only if the attack comes from a physical source. Energy, spiritual attacks, etc., ignore this protection.

Typical Casting: Greater Control Energy (5) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Altered Trait, Damage Resistance 6 (Force Field, +20%; Limited, Physical attacks, -20%) (30) + Duration, 30 minutes (2) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *135 energy (45×3)*.

Gift of Gab

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Body + Lesser Strengthen Mind ×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Voice + Bestows a Bonus, Fast-Talk + Bestows a Penalty, rolls to detect lies.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

For the next hour, this spell makes whatever the subject says seem to be the absolute truth, even if it’s not. While under the effects of the spell, the subject temporarily gains the Voice advantage, with an *extra* +2 (net +4) to Fast-Talk! As well, any rolls to determine whether the subject is lying (e.g., for Body Language, Detect Lies, or Empathy) are at -2.

Note that these bonuses do not violate *Stacking Spells* (p. 15) because they’re all incorporated into a single ritual.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Altered

Trait, Voice (10) + Bestows a Bonus, +2 to Fast-Talk (2) + Bestows a Penalty, -2 to rolls to detect subject’s lies (4) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *31 energy (31×1)*.

Glamor Glamour

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Body + Lesser Transform Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Appearance + Altered Trait, Very Fit.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This ritual transforms the subject into a more physically appealing version! He still looks like himself, but more attractive and fit. For the next six hours, his Appearance is improved by *two* steps (e.g., an average person becomes Handsome or Beautiful) to a maximum of Very Beautiful/Handsome. This isn’t just a cosmetic change – his body improves, making him Very Fit in the process. A great spell for parties!

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Transform Body (8) + Altered Trait, Appearance (12) + Altered Trait, Very Fit (15) + Duration, 6 hours (5) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *46 energy (46×1)*.

Global Positioning Sorcery

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Mind ×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, 3D Spatial Sense + Bestows a Bonus, Navigation.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell endows the subject with an unerring sense of direction. For the next 24 hours, he has 3D Spatial Sense (and all that that entails) with a *further* +3 bonus on all Navigation rolls; this gives a net Navigation bonus of +6 for Air, Land, or Sea and +5 for Hyperspace or Space!

Note that these bonuses do not violate *Stacking Spells* (p. 15) because they're all incorporated into a single ritual.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Altered Traits, 3D Spatial Sense (10) + Bestows a Bonus, +3 to Navigation Rolls (4) + Duration, 1 day (7). *27 energy (27×1).*

Hall of Records

Spell Effects: Greater Create Crossroads + Greater Sense Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

Projects the spirit of the subject into the Akashic Hall of Records, where the subconscious memory of everyone is stored. There, he can look for information, as long as *someone* knows it. Use the *lower* of Psychology or Research to find information; on a failure, the information is false (though those who thought it *believed* it to be true). Meanwhile, the subject's body lays unconscious.

The typical casting lasts for an hour, but this will often need to be varied. The time required to find the answer to a question depends on how many people know the *truth* (the GM should estimate). If many people believe the *wrong* information regarding the subject in question, the Psychology or Research roll may be penalized (GM's call).

<i>Number of People</i>	<i>Time</i>
Over 1,000,000	2 minutes
Up to 1,000,000	10 minutes
Up to 100,000	1 hour
Up to 10,000	5 hours
100 to 1,000	1 day
Fewer than 100	Not available

Typical Casting: Greater Create Crossroads (6) + Greater Sense Mind (2) + Duration, 1 hour (3). *55 energy (11×5).*

Halt

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Speed.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell brings a target within 10 yards to a sudden, harmless stop. The target can be as heavy and fast as a charging rhinoceros or accelerating pickup truck. The spell works by instantly canceling out the subject's momentum. Falling objects stop safely, and then immediately start falling again.

Assuming a typical casting, a subject weighing more than five tons is completely unaffected. A target moving faster than 20 yards/second does not stop completely; instead, its velocity is slowed by 20 yards/second. (If this spell is being cast on the fly, it can easily be varied to match the mass and speed of the specific subject.)

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Energy (5) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Speed, 20 yards/second (6) + Subject Weight, 5 tons (6). *63 energy (21×3).*

Haste

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Basic Speed.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell temporarily raises the subject's Speed (and thus his Move and Dodge) by 1 for the next 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, Basic Speed+1.00 (20) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *27 energy (27×1).*

Hidden Housekeeper

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Spirit + Lesser Create Spirit.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell conjures a semi-sentient spirit that exists only to clean, cook, and organize – a “housekeeper.” It is considered to have IQ 6, Telekinesis 8, and Housekeeping-12 (the equivalent of a professional servant) and is *only* capable of performing mundane domestic tasks, from cooking simple meals to cleaning. (There is no way to get it to adventure or fight for you, and a single point of damage destroys it.) It exists for half a day before dissipating.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Spirit (5) + Lesser Create Spirit (6) + Duration, 12 hours (6). *17 energy (17×1).*

Hinder

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Body×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Reduced Move + Bestows a Penalty, all Dodge rolls.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The subject of the spell, who must be within 10 yards, suffers -2 to his Move and Dodge for the next 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Body (5) + Lesser Destroy Body (5) + Altered Trait, Basic Move-2 (2) + Bestows a Penalty, -2 to Dodge rolls (4) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *24 energy (24×1).*

Hunger

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Fatigue (Starvation).

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell inflicts 1d FP of starvation damage on anyone within 10 yards. On average, this is the equivalent of a full day of missed meals. Fatigue taken in this fashion can only be recovered by a day of rest and adequate nourishment (see *Starvation*, p. B426).

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Body (5) + Damage, Internal Fatigue 1d (Starvation, +40%) (8) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *20 energy (20×1).*

Hush

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Mute and Silence.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell grants the subject Silence 3, for +3 to Stealth rolls when moving or +6 when still . . . but makes it impossible for him to speak while under its effects! It lasts one hour.

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Energy (5) + Altered Traits, Mute and Silence 3 (20) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *31 energy (31×1).*

Implant Mind-Shard

Spell Effects: Greater Create Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Split Personality with custom disadvantage package.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This ritual creates an imperfect replica of the caster's mind within another person. It resides within the subject for the next *year*, fighting for control of his mind and body. In times of stress, the subject must make a self-control roll (12 or less) to avoid switching personalities.

The implanted personality is represented by a -20-point package of the most defining mental disadvantages of the caster; the GM can choose these or make the selection *random*. When the subject assumes the implanted personality, the -20-point package *replaces* -20 points of his *own* disadvantages.

Example: James is a goodly knight who's been cursed with this ritual by the evil Garret. The GM strips Garret's key disadvantages down to a -20-point package: Gluttony (9) [-7], Odious Personal Habit (Manic Laughter) [-5], Proud [-1], and Sadism (15) [-7]. When James' personality swings over to Garret's shard, these *replace* James' natural Code of Honor (Chivalry) [-15] and Guilt Complex [-5].

For an interesting twist, the GM can allow the *physical* disadvantages of the caster to carry over psychosomatically; e.g., a limb that no longer works because the subject's mind is convinced that it's useless.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Mind (6) + Altered Traits, Split Personality and -20-point disadvantage package (7) + Duration, 1 year (22). *105 energy* (35×3).

Intercom

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell allows the subject to mentally communicate with the caster as long as both stay within 100 yards of each other. The effect lasts for one hour.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Mind (2) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Range, 100 yards (10). *15 energy* (15×1).

Itch

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Affliction, Itching.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell causes the subject (who must be within 10 yards) to develop a fierce and irritating itch. This causes the subject to suffer a -2 to DX for the next 10 minutes or until he takes one full second to scratch the itch. He can do nothing else while scratching. (Itching is a +10% Affliction enhancement found in **GURPS Power-Ups 4: Enhancements**.)

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Body (5) + Affliction, Itching (2) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *15 energy* (15×1).

Mixing Magic Systems

Ritual Path magic works well as the only form of magical power in a game, particularly in a "secret magic" or otherwise quasi-realistic setting. However, it can be easily mixed with other magic systems. For example, a fantasy world may have wizards built with the standard **GURPS** spell system, while priests use the power of prayer (and Ritual Path magic) to accumulate energy for their spells.

The advantages (flexibility, no upper cap on power, etc.) of Ritual Path magic should offset its disadvantages (long casting times, etc.) alongside other magic systems. However, in a setting where spells *need* to be available for fast casting (e.g., **Dungeon Fantasy**), the GM may want to raise the cap on the number of conditional spells (p. 25) a mage can have active. Allowing Thaumatology+(2×Magery) or even Thaumatology+(4×Magery) active conditional spells makes mages more useful without overshadowing non-mages.

Mixing Magery

Standard Magery and Magery (Ritual Path) do not overlap in any way; e.g., a wizard with standard Magery (only) has no mana reserve and is at -5 to invoke rituals from this supplement (see *Magical Aptitude*, p. 20). To keep this fair, the GM may allow multi-system casters to treat the two forms of Magery as alternative abilities, buying the less expensive variant for 1/5 normal cost.

If Thaumatology receives a bonus from standard Magery, *ignore* this bonus for the purpose of calculating caps for Path skills and conditional rituals; always use unmodified Thaumatology skill.

Kiss of Silver

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Matter

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell temporarily transforms a weapon (weighing up to 10 lbs.) into another substance. This is often used to play on a supernatural foe's vulnerability; e.g., by turning a sword into silver. Despite the name, though, it can alter the composition of a weapon in *any* manner – a knife could become obsidian, orichalcum, or even diamond. (For exotic materials, the GM may require a Geology or Metallurgy roll to get the composition just right.) It cannot turn weapons into pure energy – though a similar ritual that added Greater Transform Energy would allow this! The spell lasts 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Matter (8) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 10 lbs. (0). *27 energy* (9×3).

Legs of the Kangaroo

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Body + Lesser Strengthen Body ×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Basic Move + Altered Trait, Super Jump + Bestows a Bonus, Jumping.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

The subject of this spell can make prodigious running leaps! He has +1 to Move for all purposes, and his jumping distances are doubled – *after* factoring in the Move bonus.

Any rolls the GM requires to jump, avoid falling after a jump, etc., are at +2. The subject can be the caster *or* anyone the caster touches. The effects last for one hour.

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, Basic Move+1 (5) + Altered Trait, Super Jump 1 (10) + Bestows a Bonus, +2 to Jumping Rolls (2) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *96 energy* (32×3).

Life Preserver

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Matter
Inherent Modifiers: None.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell is typically cast as a charm, then attached to a brightly colored, lightweight object. When activated, the ritual allows the object to float and support up to a total of 300 lbs. (including its own weight) for up to a month. Longer durations are possible, but rarely necessary; few people can survive a month at sea with no provisions.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Magic (5) + Lesser Control Matter (5) + Duration, 1 month (11) + Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *24 energy* (24×1).

*And the light shineth in darkness;
and the darkness comprehended it not.
— John 1:5 (KJV)*

Light

Spell Effects: Lesser Create Energy.
Inherent Modifiers: None.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell causes an object to glow, about as brightly as a lantern, for the next 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Lesser Create Energy (6) + Duration, 10 minutes (1). *7 energy* (7×1).

Live Off the Land

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Mind + Lesser Strengthen Body ×2.
Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Outdoorsman + Altered Trait, Reduced Consumption (Cast-Iron Stomach) + Altered Trait, Temperature Tolerance.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell is an invaluable tool for the caster on the lam. It grants the subject instinctive knowledge of the outdoors and wilderness survival. He gains Outdoorsmen 1, Reduced Consumption 2 (Cast-Iron Stomach), and Temperature Tolerance 4 for the next week.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, Outdoorsman 1 (10) + Altered Trait, Reduced Consumption 2 (Cast-Iron Stomach, -50%) (2) + Altered Trait,

Temperature Tolerance 4 (4) + Duration, 1 week (9) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *37 energy* (37×1).

Lockpick

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Matter.
Inherent Modifiers: None.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell instantly opens any mechanical lock touched by the caster.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Matter (5) + Subject Weight, 10 lbs. (0). *5 energy* (5×1).

Mantle of Glory

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Spirit.
Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Terror (Awe).
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This is typically cast as a charm. The caster unleashes the full glory of the subject's soul for a moment, causing awe in any who witness it. The GM should limit this ritual to beings who either have or *are* a spirit.

Everyone who sees the subject when the charm is activated must make an immediate Fright Check at -3. Failure requires a roll on the *Awe and Confusion Check Table* (**GURPS Powers**, p. 85). If that book is not available, roll on the *Fright Check Table* (pp. B360-361) instead, interpreting the results as coming from a state of awe instead of fear.

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Spirit (3) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Altered Traits, Terror (Awe; -3 to Fright Check) (60) + Duration, Momentary (0). *204 energy* (68×3).

Medicine Bag

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Magic.
Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Bonus, all resistance rolls against supernatural forces.
Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell, usually cast as a charm, protects the wearer from the paranormal powers of hostile supernatural forces. It grants +2 on *all* resistance rolls made against magic, innate abilities, etc. when employed by supernatural forces that mean to harm the wearer of the charm. This protection lasts for a season (three months), after which the medicine bag disintegrates into powder.

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Magic (3) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Bestows a Bonus, +2 to resistance rolls against supernatural forces (10) + Duration, 3 months (13) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *102 energy* (34×3).

Messenger Animal

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Mind + Lesser Sense Mind + Lesser Strengthen Mind.
Inherent Modifiers: None.
Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

With a touch, this spell imbues a normal animal with the capability and intent to mystically carry a message to its chosen target. The message should be simple (200 words or less). It is delivered as fast as the animal can travel.

The animal can find a named location, then comb the area, looking for the specific recipient. Once located, it will recite the message in the caster's voice. If the creature cannot reach the recipient in one month, the spell lapses. Small flying creatures are thus highly popular!

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Mind (5) + Lesser Sense Mind (2) + Lesser Strengthen Mind (3) + Duration, 1 month (11). *21 energy (21×1).*

Minor Healing

Spell Effects: Lesser Restore Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Healing.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell heals any living being, restoring 1d HP. It does not eliminate disease or poison. The level of healing can be varied, as usual, without this counting as a different ritual. See *Restore Body* (p. 7) for more on how much Healing you can add before this becomes a Greater effect (and thus a different ritual).

Typical Casting: Lesser Restore Body (4) + Healing, 1d (0) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *7 energy (7×1).*

Necrosis

Spell Effects: Greater Control Crossroads.

Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Corrosion.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell causes the target, who must be within 10 yards of the caster, to age visibly. Whether living, unliving, or inanimate, the subject must resist or take 3d corrosion damage, ignoring DR.

Typical Casting: Greater Control Crossroads (5) + Damage, Internal Corrosion 3d (16) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *84 energy (28×3).*

Nixie's Curse

Spell Effects: Greater Create Matter.

Inherent Modifiers: Damage, Internal Fatigue (Drowning).

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This curse causes the target of the spell to start drowning regardless of whether he is in a body of water. It can target any air-breather within 10 yards. If he fails to resist, he takes 3d fatigue damage that can only be regained in fresh air; if he falls unconscious from this, he won't recover unless resuscitated (p. B425)!

Typical Casting: Greater Create Matter (6) + Damage, Internal Fatigue 3d (Drowning, +0%) (17) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *90 energy (30×3).*

Off the Grid

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Chance.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Zeroed.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This spell temporarily gives the subject Zeroed, usually just long enough to pass a single, quick check. Add Duration if authorities will be poring over his records or spending effort searching for him; it doesn't change the ritual, just the energy cost.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Chance (5) + Altered Traits, Zeroed (10). *15 energy (15×1).*

Panacea

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Body + Lesser Strengthen Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Regeneration + Altered Trait, Resistant to Metabolic Hazards.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

For one day, this spell grants the subject +8 to all resistance rolls for sickness, diseases, poisons, etc. It also speeds up his natural healing, letting him recover 1 HP every 12 hours. If he currently has a disease or illness, he may make another resistance roll with the new bonus!

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, Regeneration (Slow) (10) + Altered Trait, Resistant to Metabolic Hazards (+8) (15) + Duration, 1 day (7) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *123 energy (41×3).*

Pentagram Trap

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Spirit + Lesser Sense Spirit.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This is a ward (pp. 24-25) against spirits, cast as a conditional spell. It only activates if a spirit enters the warded area. Once triggered, the ward will hold the spirit in the area for a week (or until broken through).

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Magic (5) + Lesser Control Spirit (5) + Lesser Sense Spirit (2) + Area of Effect, 5 yards (4) + Duration, 1 week (9). *25 energy (25×1).*

Petrify

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Body + Greater Transform Matter.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

With a touch, the subject of this spell is transformed into a lifelike granite statue of himself. The victim can weigh up to 360 lbs.; his petrified form weighs 2.75 times as much. After one day, he reverts back to his original form.



Typical Casting: Greater Transform Body (8) + Greater Transform Matter (8) + Duration, 1 day (7) + Subject Weight, 1,000 lbs. (4). *135 energy* (27×5).

Project Voice

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Energy + Lesser Strengthen Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Penetrating Voice + Bestows a Bonus, Ventriloquism.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The subject's voice is amplified, such that anyone within earshot can hear it clearly despite ambient conditions (+3 to rolls to hear the subject speak). In addition, the subject gains +2 to Ventriloquism rolls, as the ritual allows him to "throw" his voice magically. These effects last for 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Energy (5) + Lesser Strengthen Energy (3) + Altered Trait, Penetrating Voice (1) + Bestows a Bonus, +2 to Ventriloquism rolls (2) + Duration, 10 minutes (1). *12 energy* (12×1).

Rain of Fire

Spell Effects: Greater Create Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect + Damage, External Burning (Accessibility, Outdoors Only; Overhead).

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

Droplets of fiery liquid rain down from the sky in a 5-yard radius; the targeted area must be outdoors and within 20 yards of the caster. Everyone and everything in that area takes 1 point of burning damage per second. The rain of fire lasts for 3d seconds. The only way to avoid the damage is to find overhead cover or leave the area.

Note that the 3d damage being spread out over multiple turns is a special effect; it makes this spell useless against fully armored foes, but allows the caster to deny the area to enemies for several seconds instead of just one.

Typical Casting: Greater Create Energy (6) + Area of Effect, 5 yards (4) + Damage, External Burning 3d (Accessibility, Outdoors only, -20%; Overhead, +30%) (2) + Range, 20 yards (6). *54 energy* (18×3).

Remove Reflection

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Supernatural Features (No Reflection).

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

The subject of this spell (who must be within 5 yards) does not cast a reflection for the next 10 minutes. This can scare

him into believing the caster has stolen his soul, trick witch hunters into targeting the subject instead of the mage, and so on. Anyone who notices his predicament reacts to him at -2.

A similar *Remove Shadow* spell exists, with the same energy cost.

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Energy (5) + Altered Trait, Supernatural Features (No Reflection) (2) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 5 yards (2) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *39 energy* (13×3).

Resist Cold

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Damage Resistance (Limited, Cold) and Temperature Tolerance (Cold).

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The subject is insulated against low temperatures for the next three hours. This grants him Temperature Tolerance 4 against cold temperatures *and* DR 4 against cryogenic attacks (whether magical, ultra-tech, or something else).

The sister spell, *Resist Heat*, provides DR and Temperature Tolerance versus heat and fire, but otherwise has the same statistics.

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Energy (5) + Altered Traits, Damage Resistance 4 (Limited, Cold, -40%) and Temperature Tolerance 4 (Cold) (16) + Duration, 3 hours (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *28 energy* (28×1).

Resist Magic

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Magic.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Magic Resistance.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell temporarily grants the subject Magic Resistance 3 for the next 10 minutes. If the subject has the ability to use magic, it is impaired (-6 to all casting rolls) for the duration of this spell. See *Magic Resistance* (p. 5) for more.

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Magic (5) + Altered Traits, Magic Resistance 3 (6) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *45 energy* (15×3).

Seek Person

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Body.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

Gives the caster an instantaneous flash of knowledge, revealing the direction and distance to the subject of this spell. The subject must be within 100 miles.

I must then [define "magick"] in such a way that ALL may understand instantly that their souls, their lives, in every relation with every other human being and every circumstance, depend upon MAGICK and the right comprehension and right application thereof.

– Aleister Crowley, Magick in Theory and Practice

Technically, this spell tracks the subject's *body*. Thus, it will find his corpse if he's dead, but if his mind has been switched with someone else's, it won't locate his new center of consciousness. A variant using Lesser Sense Mind has the opposite issue. Some casters may instead prefer a version of this spell that uses *both* effects, for +2 energy, to ensure accuracy; e.g., if a target has been mind-switched, it'll locate his mind *and* his body and make the distinction clear. All three are considered different rituals.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Body (2) + Range, 100 miles (6). *8 energy* (8×1).

Serpent's Grace

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Body + Lesser Strengthen Body×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Flexibility + Altered Trait, Slippery + Bestows a Bonus, Grappling rolls.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

The subject of this spell becomes as flexible and supple as a serpent. For the next hour, he has Flexibility (making him agile in tight spaces), Slippery 2 (not from sliminess, but from being hard to restrain), and +2 on all grappling rolls regardless of skill.

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Trait, Flexibility (5) + Altered Trait, Slippery 2 (4) + Bestows a Bonus, +2 to grappling rolls (4) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *84 energy* (28×3).

Show of Character

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Mind + Lesser Transform Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Unnatural Features.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This ritual physically alters the subject, who must be within five yards, subtly marking him for a day with one of his dominant characteristics. Examples include intensely green eyes for a jealous person, a literal silver tongue for a smooth-talker, and blood-stained hands for a hitman. This gives the subject -3 to rolls against Disguise and Shadowing (on foot), and because it's tied to his nature, it *also* gives others +3 on rolls to realize what kind of person they're really dealing with.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Mind (2) + Lesser Transform Body (8) + Altered Trait, Unnatural Features 3 (3) + Duration, 1 Day (7) + Range, 5 yards (2) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *25 energy* (25×1).

Signal Booster

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

This minor but useful spell temporarily boosts the reception of any device weighing 30 lbs. or less that requires radio signals (or any other sort of electrical signals) to function properly;

e.g., a cell phone or radio. Assume that the device has perfect signal reception for the next 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Energy (3) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 30 lbs. (1). *5 energy* (5×1).

Silence

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell completely suppresses any sound in a 5-yard-radius area for the next 10 minutes. It can affect an area up to 20 yards away.

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Energy (5) + Area of Effect, 5 yards (4) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 20 yards (6). *48 energy* (16×3).

The "Right" Way

There is no one "right" way to cast a spell. Almost any ritual in this chapter could be reimagined as a different combination of effects and modifiers. For example, Resist Cold (p. 48) could use Lesser Strengthen Body if being cast on a person, Lesser Strengthen Spirit if cast on a demon, and so on. Signal Booster (above) could use a Crossroads effect to warp distance to the nearest radio tower. Project Voice (p. 48) could replace the Altered Traits and Bestows a Bonus with a single Bestows a Bonus for the moderate class of "being heard."

All that matters is the GM's approval. Every ritual is an agreement (and sometimes a negotiation) between the player and GM; if the player wants to do something a certain way and the GM agrees, then that *is* the "right" way to do it. (And if the GM realizes that he let an unbalanced effect through for too little energy, he has the right to change his mind later. Magic is fickle.) Such logic applies to this entire chapter – if the GM feels that a certain spell needs to be changed, then the GM is right and *this chapter is wrong!*

Slow

Spell Effects: Greater Control Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Decreased Time Rate.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

Temporarily slows down a subject (who must be within 10 yards), giving him a single level of Decreased Time Rate for the next 10 minutes.

Typical Casting: Greater Control Body (5) + Altered Traits, Decreased Time Rate (20) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *99 energy* (33×3).

Sorcerous Covenant

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Chance.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Cursed.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This spell is always cast as a charm, upon a written contract. The contract must explicitly describe this ritual and its effects! When two or more subjects willingly sign it (blood is traditional, but not mandatory), the ritual binds each to fulfill his part.

The spell will only work if all parties involved are aware and willing; thus, there is never a resistance roll.

Once invoked, the spell magically monitors the contract for the next 10 years. If any party breaks his part of the contract, he is immediately Cursed (p. B129). This plagues him until he fulfills his end of the bargain – or until this spell lapses, if he survives that long. If multiple people break the contract, they *all* suffer the curse; smart folk build a negation clause into the contract in case it becomes literally impossible to fulfill.

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Chance (8) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Altered Traits, Cursed (15) + Duration, 10 years (31) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *186 energy* (62×3).

Sorcerous Mark

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Magic.

Inherent Modifiers: Bestows a Penalty, certain resistance rolls.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

With a touch, this spell marks its subject with a unique, invisible, mystical identifier that lasts for one week. While it exists, if the caster works a ritual to track or locate the subject, the target resists at -3. The identifier is typically a sigil or other device that represents the person casting the spell.

This is considered a Lesser effect because it's modifying the specific later *spells*, not any traits inherent to the subject. Additionally, it does not violate *Stacking Spells* (p. 15), because it does not improve the caster's spellcasting ability; it penalizes the target's resistance rolls.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Magic (3) + Bestows a Penalty, -3 to resistance rolls against this caster's locating spells (4) + Duration, 1 week (9) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *19 energy* (19×1).

Sticks to Snakes

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Body + Greater Transform Matter + Lesser Control Mind + Lesser Create Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

With a touch, this spell turns any length of wood weighing up to 30 lbs. (about the size of a small log) into a living snake of the same size. It is under the caster's control for the duration of the spell (one hour).

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Body (8) + Greater Transform Matter (8) + Lesser Control Mind (5) + Lesser Create Mind (6) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Subject Weight, 30 lbs. (1). *155 energy* (31×5).

Suspend Gravity

Spell Effects: Greater Destroy Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

Nullifies gravity in a 10-yard-radius area for an hour; this area can be up to 20 yards away from the caster. See *Different Gravity* (p. B350) for the effects. Anyone caught in the area, or who later enters it, must roll against the better of HT or Free Fall or become nauseated; see *Space Adaptation Syndrome* (p. B434) for details.

Typical Casting: Greater Destroy Energy (5) + Area of Effect, 10 yards (8) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Range, 20 yards (6). *66 energy* (22×3).

Sylph Form

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Body + Greater Transform Matter.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Body of Air.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

This spell is usually cast as a charm. When broken, it transforms the subject (but *not* his clothing or equipment!) into a being of elemental air. This lasts 10 minutes. See *Body of Air* (p. B262) for details.

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Body (8) + Greater Transform Matter (8) + Lesser Control Magic (5) + Altered Trait, Body of Air (36) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *305 energy* (61×5).

Terrify

Spell Effects: Lesser Control Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The subject is hit by a wave of fear. If he fails to resist this spell, he must make an immediate Fright Check at a penalty equal to his margin of loss (from the resistance roll). This spell can target anyone within 20 yards.

Typical Casting: Lesser Control Mind (5) + Range, 20 yards (6). *11 energy* (11×1).

Track Traveler

Spell Effects: Lesser Sense Crossroads.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

If a particular gate was used within the past day, this ritual will reveal the origin or destination of the last being to make the trip. That is, the caster sees a brief flash of the "other side" of the gate at the moment the traveler went through it. The caster must be within arm's reach of the gate, although he need not physically touch it.

Typical Casting: Lesser Sense Crossroads (2) + Range, 1 day (2). *4 energy* (4×1).

Transmogrification

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Body.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

A classic fairy-tale and mythological spell, this ritual transforms a person (who must be within 20 yards) into an animal. It is a physical change; his intelligence remains the same. This is a different ritual for each animal. Both the subject *and* the chosen animal must weigh 300 lbs. or less. The spell lasts for a day, unless someone else transforms him back using a counter-spell or similar ability.

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Body (8) + Duration, 1 day (7) + Range, 20 yards (6) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *72 energy* (24×3).

Travel by Wire

Spell Effects: Greater Transform Body + Greater Transform Energy.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 2 (×5).

By touching an electrical outlet, phone jack, etc., you can temporarily transform yourself into a signal of the appropriate type and send yourself anywhere that there is another electrical outlet, phone jack, and so on that you've seen. Technically, this is not instantaneous teleportation; you travel along the appropriate lines and junction boxes at one mile per second, for up to 10 minutes. Anything interrupting the line you are currently traveling on (e.g., an electrical line being severed) has a chance of ending the spell instantly; roll against Will at -3 to avoid this and find a way around the break. Once you arrive at your location, your body reforms in a burst of energy as you exit the line.

Typical Casting: Greater Transform Body (8) + Greater Transform Energy (8) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Speed, 1 mile/second (18) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *190 energy (38×5).*



True Form

Spell Effects: Greater Control Body.

Inherent Modifiers: None.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This ritual forces any living subject to revert to its true, native form. He must weigh 1,000 lbs. or less (in both forms) and must be within five yards. Obviously, this will only work on a subject whose form has been altered, whether willingly (as by the Shapeshifting advantage) or unwillingly (as by a ritual incorporating Greater Transform Body). The magic manifests for only an instant; this ritual does not prevent anyone from altering the subject's form in the future.

Variants of this spell, based on Greater Control Spirit and Greater Control Undead, exist for unliving subjects.

Typical Casting: Greater Control Body (5) + Range, 5 yards (2) + Subject Weight, 1,000 lbs. (4). *33 energy (11×3).*

Truthteller

Spell Effects: Greater Control Mind.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Traits, Compulsive Talking and Truthfulness.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

This ritual compels its subject (who must be within five yards) to tell the truth. Once affected, he cannot avoid answering questions *and* cannot lie or deceive for the next hour. Any questioner will still need to use Interrogation or Psychology to figure out what to ask and how, but this becomes an unopposed roll; treat the target as being fully cooperative.

Typical Casting: Greater Control Mind (5) + Altered Traits, Compulsive Talking (No Self-Control Roll) and Truthfulness (No Self-Control Roll) (8) + Duration, 1 hour (3) + Range, 5 yards (2). *54 energy (18×3).*

Verdant Fecundity

Spell Effects: Lesser Strengthen Body×2.

Inherent Modifiers: Area of Effect + Altered Traits, Resistant to Disease.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

All flora in a 20-yard-radius area gain +3 on any rolls to resist diseases *and* grow twice as fast as they normally would, allowing for a shorter growing season. This spell thus lasts for six months, during which time a year's growth is possible. Individual plants over 100 lbs. are unaffected by a typical casting; add more energy for Subject Weight if you'll be affecting trees, etc.

Typical Casting: Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Lesser Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Traits, Resistant to Disease +3 (3) + Area of Effect, 20 yards (12) + Duration, 6 months (16) + Subject Weight, 100 lbs. (2). *39 energy (39×1).*

Wallwalker

Spell Effects: Greater Strengthen Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Clinging.

Greater Effects: 1 (×3).

For the next 10 minutes, the subject can climb along walls and ceilings as if he had Clinging. He must still use all four limbs to climb, as this does not technically make his limbs "sticky" or let him defy gravity – it merely elevates his natural climbing ability to ridiculous levels.

Typical Casting: Greater Strengthen Body (3) + Altered Traits, Clinging (20) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *81 energy (27×3).*

Weaken Blood

Spell Effects: Lesser Destroy Body.

Inherent Modifiers: Altered Trait, Hemophilia.

Greater Effects: 0 (×1).

The target (who must be within 10 yards) temporarily acquires Hemophilia (p. B138) for the next 10 minutes. If wounded while this spell is active, he suffers a very real chance of bleeding out!

Typical Casting: Lesser Destroy Body (5) + Altered Trait, Hemophilia (6) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). *19 energy (19×1).*

APPENDIX

BOTCHES AND QUIRKS

Sometimes the forces of magic fight back against a poorly trained (or just unlucky) caster. Whenever possible, the GM should customize the problem – make it relevant to *this* caster casting *this* spell in *this* situation. But sometimes the GM is in a hurry or can't think of anything . . . and that's what this appendix is for.

SAMPLE 30-POINT BOTCHES

These magical backlashes are all built on 30 energy points, reflecting the minimum energy expended in a critical failure (see p. 20). For simplicity, the GM can represent higher-energy botches by scaling these up; e.g., for a 60-energy botch, he can start with one of these, but double the damage, duration, and so on. Note that most of these are not defined clearly enough to be spells (*Specific Definition*, p. 19); they're intentionally designed to *adapt* to the caster or situation.

A sample botch is provided for each Path – but that doesn't mean you *have* to match the botch to the Path in question. If a caster critically fails a Body/Matter ritual, but the Energy botch below seems more appropriate for this situation, use it! (In particular, don't choose a spell effect that would be overridden by an existing, more powerful one; see *Stacking Spells*, p. 15.) And don't hesitate to change things, either. Don't overly worry about energy cost; magic is fickle. As long as the botch ends up *roughly* as powerful as it should be, it's fine.

Because this was caused by the caster's critical failure, he never gets a resistance roll or active defense against the effects! (But if the botch conjures a foe, the caster defends against its attacks normally.) Anyone else in the area may resist or defend against the spell normally.

Path of Body: For the next three hours, the caster and anyone within 10 yards (who fails to resist) are in constant severe pain (p. B428), losing High Pain Threshold if they have it! Alternatively, the GM may impose -50 points in other physical disadvantages and/or attribute penalties. This is Lesser Control Body (5) + Affliction, Severe Pain (8) + Altered Trait, Remove High Pain Threshold (2) + Area of Effect, 10 yards (8) + Duration, 3 hours (4) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3). Variants may replace the Afflictions and Altered Traits with -50 points in other Altered Traits.

Path of Chance: For the next hour, the caster and anyone within three yards (who fails to resist) are more likely to roll critical failures! Add 3 to all success rolls *only* for the purpose of determining if the roll is a critical failure. (For example, with a skill of 15, a roll of 14 is a critical failure *instead* of a success

because 17 is a critical failure, but a roll of 13 is a normal success because 16 is *not* a critical failure.) Treat an effective roll of 19+ as 18. This is Lesser Control Chance (5) + Area of Effect, 3 yards (2) + Bestows a Penalty, -3 for Critical Failures (20) + Duration, 1 hour (3).

Path of Crossroads: If there is a gate or weak point within a mile of the caster, a powerful being on the other side is alerted to the caster's existence, location, and relative power level, and may decide to cross over to take advantage of this. If not, for the next 12 hours, the caster radiates "interplanar energy"; any being visiting from another dimension may make a Sense roll to detect the caster nearby (even through walls, etc.) and gauge his relative power level. This is *either* Lesser Sense Crossroads (2) + Range, 1 dimension and 1 mile (28) *or* Greater Strengthen Crossroads (3) + Duration, 12 hours (6) + Supernatural Feature (see above) (1).

Path of Energy: The spell blows up! The caster takes 4d burning damage (DR protects normally); see *Explosions* (p. B414) for everyone else in the area. This is Greater Create Energy (6) + Damage, External Explosive Burning 4d (4).

Path of Magic: For the next six hours, the caster can tap into energy sources but cannot gather ambient energy – either to power a ritual *or* to refill his mana reserve! This is Greater Control Magic (5) + Duration, 6 hours (5).

Path of Matter: The GM must decide what the caster's most valuable possession is, considering everything within 10 yards and weighing 30 lbs. or less. That item immediately takes 3d+2 corrosion damage, ignoring DR! This is Lesser Destroy Matter (5) + Damage, Internal Corrosion 3d+2 (20) + Range, 10 yards (4) + Subject Weight, 30 lbs. (1). The GM should vary these modifiers, trading off Damage, Range, and Subject Weight to fit the situation; e.g., if the most appropriate object is within 3 yards (1) and weighs 75 lbs. (2), this botch might inflict 4d-1 damage (22).

Path of Mind: The caster and everyone within 10 yards (who fails to resist) is at -3 to IQ (and thus Will and Per) for the next six hours! This is Lesser Destroy Mind (5) + Altered Trait, -3 IQ (12) + Area Effect, 10 yards (8) + Duration, 6 hours (5).

Path of Spirit: The magical energies spontaneously create a demon or similar hostile spirit creature! The GM should choose a typical, human-sized adversary, based on what exists in the game world. It will be a "generic" version, using just the standard racial template. It sticks around for 10 minutes or until defeated or escaped. This is Greater Create Spirit (6) + Duration, 10 minutes (1) + Subject Weight, 300 lbs. (3).

Path of Undead: As for *Path of Spirit* (above), but some sort of undead creature is summoned; e.g., a ghost, a wraith, or (if there's a variant powerful enough to be a threat) a zombie or skeleton.

SAMPLE QUIRKS

Quirks are extremely common in Ritual Path magic spells. To keep them from getting out of hand, the GM is expressly allowed to “stack” quirks; e.g., three failures to accumulate energy can produce three minor quirks or one really bad quirk. For simplicity, these are referred to here as *single*, *double*, or *triple* quirks, reflecting how many failed rolls it takes to generate each one. (If the GM wishes to come up with *quadruple* quirks or worse, he's free to do so.)

The GM decides how to split up the total quirks. For example, if a caster rolled six failures when gathering energy, that could be six single quirks; a single, a double, and a triple quirk; two triple quirks; or anything in between. He can come up with whatever quirks seem appropriate, choose from the examples below, or determine them randomly by rolling 2d. Reroll duplicates and results that don't make sense for the spell in question – or tweak them so they're different or *do* work!

Each quirk is marked as “instant” or “lasting.” The former happens immediately after the spell is cast; it does something bad and then it's over. The latter sticks around for the duration of the spell, but with a minimum duration of 1d minutes and a maximum of 1d hours.

Single Quirks

2-3 – You take 1 point of burning damage, bypassing DR. (Instant.)

4-5 – Your casting is *very* noticeable; anyone can tell that you cast it and who or what the subject is. (Instant.)

6 – The subject or area effectively has a ward (pp. 24-25) against *your* spells (only) that stays up, at full strength, even if you penetrate it. (Lasting.)

7 – Your spell effect is *very* noticeable; the subject or area glows faintly, has magical sparkles, etc. Reroll for spells with no duration. (Lasting.)

8 – You gain a quirk related to the spell in question. (Lasting.)

9 – Nearby spirits animate or manifest, and begin causing petty annoyances for everyone in the area. (Lasting.)

10 – You gain Unluckiness. (Lasting – though you'll only suffer one unlucky break.)

11-12 – You lose 1d-2 FP. (Instant.)

Double Quirks

2-3 – Nearby spirits animate or manifest, and begin causing minor problems specifically for you and your friends. They will not follow if you leave the area. (Lasting.)

4 – You take 1d-4 burning damage, bypassing DR. (Instant.)

5-6 – The immediate area changes in a minor but permanent way. For example, the grass nearby dies (if outdoors), flowers sprout from the walls (if indoors), or the ground around the caster becomes scorched with mystical markings. Unless this is fixed (which cannot be done with magic!), anyone with Thaumatology skill will automatically realize some kind of ritual was cast here; others can make an Occultism roll to realize this. (Instant.)

7 – You gain a -2- to -5-point disadvantage related to the spell in question. (Lasting.)

8-9 – You become surrounded with some sort of minor supernatural effect. Examples include a cloud of subtle energy, varying light levels, the smell of brimstone, or a soft thrumming sound. This is obviously magical – and may make it difficult to be stealthy (GM's call). (Lasting.)

10 – You lose 1d FP. (Instant.)

11-12 – Your mana reserve is completely depleted – though anything lost *does* get dumped into the spell as extra energy (p. 18). Reroll if already empty or if the casting roll was a critical success. (Instant.)

Triple Quirks

2-3 – You take 1d-3 burning damage, bypassing DR. (Instant.)

4-5 – Nearby spirits animate or manifest, and attack you and your friends. The GM should make these foes fairly weak; the downside to this quirk isn't the likelihood of death or serious injury, but the time and effort required to defeat this new foe. Alternatively, you can run; they will not pursue. (Lasting – unless defeated or fled from.)

6 – You gain Unluckiness, but with no restrictions on how often you suffer bad effects – somewhat like a very weak version of Cursed. (Lasting.)

7 – You gain a -7- to -10-point disadvantage related to the spell in question. (Lasting.)

8 – The ritual also affects a target it wasn't supposed to, who may resist normally. If the ritual affected *multiple* people, it affects another 10% of targets it wasn't supposed to, rounded up. Details are up to the GM. (Instant – though it then lasts for its full duration.)

9 – Roll vs. Will. On a failure, you're stunned; you may make a Will roll every turn to recover. (Instant.)

10 – Your mind opens up when casting the spell. Everyone in the immediate area gets a brief psychic impression of who you are and how you feel about the subject. (Instant.)

11-12 – You lose 1d+2 FP. (Instant.)



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Given these books – and sometimes, somebody to translate them for you – you could learn almost everything important that I know in about a year. To make something of the material, of course, you'd have to have the talent, since magic is also an art.

*– James Blish, **Black Easter***

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