



Part Four: Playing a Spellcaster

There are two types of spell-casters in the archipelago. **Mages** use their **Will** to cast **Spells** and are members of one of the three schools of magic. Priests (who are usually referred to as **Reverents** or **Celebrants**) use their **Faith** to cast the **Mysteries** of their religion. Regardless of the type of spell-caster there are certain commonalities involved in the game mechanics of casting either type.

Spells and Mysteries

You will not find a full list of Spells or Mysteries detailed here or indeed anywhere. Those that are used in combat to attack other characters use the standard damage and effect calls detailed in the combat section and hence there is no need for every player in the game to know what a spell of a given name does. Instead each spell caster has his or her own personalised list supplied to them with their character sheet.

Priests are gifted their Mysteries directly from the Gods and have no control over which they learn. Mages will begin the game with a list given to them, but then have far greater control about adding to their list (see Magic in the Archipelago for further details).

The starting Spell or Mystery list is not an IC document and should not be shown to other players. If you wish to make an IC document detailing what your powers are then you may, but bear in mind that it will not allow you to teach other people how to cast what you can.

See the sections on **Religion and Magic within the Archipelago** for some common spells available.

Casting Spells and Mysteries



Grand Design does not enforce the use of spell cards or any other mechanism to keep track of a character's current Will or Faith. Instead an honour system is used. We suggest that you may want to adopt some suitable reminder to assist you in keeping track of how much Will or Faith you have left. For example a pouch filled with beads could be used, with beads being withdrawn every time Will or Faith is spent. In order to cast a spell or mystery that you have learnt there are certain conditions you must meet:

Firstly you must have enough Will or Faith to cast it. In the case of Astrologers you will need to have stored the Spell in your Ephemeris (See **Magic in the Archipelago** for more details).

Secondly you need to speak the vocals for the spell. The descriptions of Spells and Mysteries do not lay down the vocals required instead players are free to invent their own vocals when casting. Minimum and suggested forms for vocals are below. More elaborate spell vocals are permitted and in some cases (stated in the spell description) will be required. Vocals need not be loud and booming and may be spoken in hushed tones should the caster desire.

Thirdly gestures are required for casting; these are left for the interpretation of the caster. However you must have one hand free (not restricted by a shield) and empty (not holding a weapon) to make the required actions.

Minimum Casting Vocals

Mage

“By my will I [appropriate description / name for spell] [damage or effect call if required]”

Priest (Reverent or Celebrant)

“Through my Faith in [name of god or religion] I [appropriate description / name for mystery] [damage or effect call if required]”

For example:

“By my will I summon forth a Solar Bolt. *Rune hit to the chest.*”

“Through my faith in Abbast I Heal your Arm *One Health Level.*”

The part of the vocal in italics is an OOC description, not part of the IC spell vocal.

NB: Several virtues and flaws exist that can change the requirements for vocals and gestures of any given character.





Range and Duration

There are three ranges that Spells and Mysteries can be cast over. Each Spell or Mystery will specify a range, if none is specified assume the range is vocal.

- Vocal effective over a distance at which the caster can make his or herself clearly understood. As a general rule if you are casting at a target some distance away and they clearly do not hear you then you should assume that they are out of range and you should expend the will required to cast the spell normally. Players should allow themselves some degree of leniency however when casting into loud or hectic situations (such as combat). If you believe that the target of your spell did not hear you due to other distractions but would clearly normally be within audible distance then do not spend the will required for the spell.
- Touch the caster must continue touching the target throughout performing the Spell or Mystery
- Self which can only be cast on the Caster him/her/itself.

There are five durations that Spells and Mysteries can last for. The only exceptions to this rule are those that cause damage; these happen instantly and the damage lasts until healed.

- 1 minute
- 5 minutes
- Dusk/Dawn lasts until dusk or dawn, whichever is sooner
- Permanent
- Special see Spell / Mystery description

Casting in Combat

Combat Spells and Mysteries that target opponents all use the standard damage / effect calls listed in the combat section. It is these calls that it is important the target hears and not the name of the spell cast. It is very important when casting spells in combat that you clearly indicate your target and make the damage or effect call as audible as possible.

All Spells and Mysteries that do not use standard calls to describe their effect require long enough to communicate **accurately** (IC/OOC as preferred) the effects of the spell to the target after the vocals have been completed. If you are unsure of the mechanics of any of your mysteries please ensure you ask a referee preferably before you first use them! The organisers of Grand Design believe that combat should be quick and fluid and do not encourage Time-stops to be called by players to explain to each other what spell effects do.

Concentration

Spells and Mysteries that have been marked as 'concentration required' generally cannot be cast in a combat situation as the stress of combat is too great to allow the caster to concentrate properly on the complicated processes of casting these spells. Sudden unexpected interruptions, being struck or casting other spells or mysteries will always end the casters concentration. Generally such spells require the presence of a referee before they can be cast. The organisers will take a very dim view of anyone attempting to hold up a combat to cast one of these spells. We ask players to show a degree of understanding when casting spells that require a referee as there will be times when refs are in high demand, however we will endeavour to make sure that there are a reasonable number of referees present in game at any given time.

Curses

Some Spells and Mysteries are classified as Curses. When a Curse is cast it does not come into play immediately. Rather the effect takes some time to materialise in game, the exact length of time varies. Upon completing a Curse the casting player must find a referee and detail the Curse, the Conditions (see below) and the intended victim.

In all cases the caster is free to determine what conditions are required to lift the Curse. However the following restrictions apply:

- The Conditions should generally be achievable through the actions of the victim, and outside the control of the caster.
- If the caster of the Curse is slain then the curse comes to an end. This Condition always applies regardless of other conditions. The caster does not have to specify any other Conditions than this.
- There is no limit on the number of alternative Conditions the caster can apply.
- The Conditions are always alternatives, never additions. The victim need only ever complete one of the Conditions to lift the curse.





Example Acceptable Conditions:

I Curse you until you steal from Leo the Merchant his entire stock of metal, or sleep with your neighbour's wife, or kill me.

I Curse you until you end the drought troubling the Realm of Koth or kill me.

Some curses give flaws to the victim, in the case that the victim already has one of the flaws in question the detrimental effect of that flaw is generally increased. Once the conditions and nature of the curse have been established the referee will produce a laminated card detailing the full effects of the curse and the details of the conditions by which it may be removed. It does not include the name of the caster. This card is handed to the victim player by a referee at the first available opportunity and is treated as in character knowledge.

If the character fulfils the requirements made of them then that player should inform a referee who will judge if the requirements have been fulfilled and if so remove the curse card from that player. If the character that cast the curse is slain then the referee will inform the cursed player that the effect no longer applies and will remove the card. To help the referees if your character dies and you still had curses active on other characters then inform a referee at once. There is no limit to the number of curses a person can have active upon them or cast by them.

Regaining Will or Faith

All spell-casters return to their full complement of Will or Faith at dawn. Alchemical preparations also exist that allow the drinker to recover lost Will or Faith.

