



Part Five: Magic in the Archipelago

This section describes the various forms of magic that are practised within the archipelago. The powers of the divine are detailed separately in the section **Religion in the Archipelago**. Casters of spells are often referred to (amongst other things) as Mages, this term is used throughout what follows.

The Schools of Magic

Magic in the Archipelago is divided into three schools: Rhabdomancy, Natural Philosophy and Astral Magic. Each of the schools is described individually.

Spells within each school are divided up into **Circles**. Each circle represents a level of understanding. Spells from the higher circles are much more powerful than those from the lower ones and require much more will to cast. A mage character will have purchased a number of circles of magic from one school using their starting character points or later on experience points. Characters may only learn and cast spells from within the circles they have purchased. Characters may start with circles of both Rhabdomancy and Philosophy if they have purchased the appropriate virtue. It is not possible however to combine Astral Magic with either of the other two schools.

Despite their differences the practitioners of each of the schools go through a very similar period of study prior to attaining spell-casting abilities. In game terms this is represented by the skill **Arcane Attunement** that must be purchased before any circles of power in a school of magic. A character need only buy this skill once regardless of the number of schools of magic he / she wishes to dabble in.

Learning New Spells

Characters may learn new spells during downtime providing they have an in character source of knowledge to learn spells from. A character is restricted to only being able to learn spells that he / she could cast (e.g. it is not from a school or circle of magic that the caster has yet to attain). Two typical means of doing this are described below.

Learning from a tutor: the individual learning the spell spends some time in study with an individual who knows the spell and is prepared to teach them. The time required to complete the learning of the spell varies from case to case but a duration of a few weeks is typical.

Learning from written material: any literate spell-caster can write the details of a spell they know onto what is known as a teaching scroll. This scroll can then be used by any literate character that understands the language it was written in to learn the spell without having to occupy anyone's time in teaching. Producing a teaching scroll can often occupy a mage for several months at a time but can prove time effective for the author if many students wish to study that spell. Collections of teaching scrolls are often bound together into tomes or grimoires; such things are highly valued amongst Mages. In practise it can take longer for a student to learn from a teaching scroll than from a tutor (a month or so is typical).

Note no experience points are required for a Mage to learn a spell by either mechanism, only time is required.

Will Costs for Casting Spells

All spells cost the caster a number of will points equal to the circle of magic they belong to e.g.:

Circle 1 spells cost the caster 1 will power
Circle 2 spells cost the caster 2 will power
etc.

Again this situation is slightly different for Astral Mages but ultimately all spell casters are restricted by the amount of will they have purchased.

See **Playing a Spell Caster** for more details on the mechanics of casting spells.





Rhodomancy

The Nature of Rhodomancy



Rhodomancy is the name given to the art of summoning the spirits of the Otherworld and bargaining with them for power or favour.

The peoples of the Archipelago have known for undocumented centuries that joined to this world and yet separate from it is the spirit world, or Otherworld, as it is sometimes known. This realm has a magical power all of its own which can be channelled into the mortal world with the right knowledge and the application of will. Learning this art is difficult and knowledge of it is guarded by the denizens of the spirit world. To be able to manipulate its magic without threat of retribution Rhodomancers must communicate with the inhabitants of the spirit world and convince them to permit them access to its power and to teach them its secrets.

The residents of the other world are strange yet powerful creatures that seem fascinated with the mortal world but impotent to manipulate it to any great degree on their own. These creatures have their own hierarchies and alliances and band

together into groups of similar nature to which Rhodomancers have given the name Spirit Families. The first and only spell a Rhodomancer learns from his / her mortal tutor is to summon a creature from the Otherworld. One of the Spirit Families will answer that call and from that point on will become the Rhodomancers **Patron Family**. Henceforth members of the patron family carry out all of the Rhodomancers tuition. In exchange for this the patron family will ask for services from the Rhodomancer.

The first request is always that the Rhodomancer never appeals for aid or makes bargains with a member of another Spirit Family. This is usually sufficient for tuition in the first circle and knowledge of a few spells. The second request is always that the Rhodomancer undertakes a rite where by his spirit is promised to his patron family after death, this is usually sufficient for initiation into the second circle and knowledge of some more powerful spells. From then on requests made by the Spirit Families to their sponsored mages vary wildly but are seldom too odious for the Rhodomancer in question, the pact is one of mutual benefit and the Spirit Families are generally keen to keep their Rhodomancers alive and happy.

The magic granted by the Spirit Families differs widely from one Family to another but a few guidelines seem to hold true across all the Families gifted spells. The powers of Rhodomancy can be extremely destructive in nature (even more so than Astral Magic) but seems to work more through the creation of violent mundane forces (like fire) than through raw magical energy. Consequently it is rare that offensive Rhodomancy inflicts runic damage upon its victims. Many Rhodomancy spells involve investing objects or items with temporary magical effects or abilities. It is possible for Rhodomancy to invest a target individual with knowledge or skills they would not normally possess where those skills are appealing to the patron family. Rhodomancy may affect the mortal mind, like Astral Magic, or the mortal physique like Philosophy but generally does so in a less controlled way and sometimes with unwanted side effects.

The most powerful Rhodomancers in the Empire are said to be amongst the Whisperers. In the darkness of the caves it is said that some Whisperer Rhodomancers have delved deep into the Otherworld and struck bargains with creatures so potent that they rival the powers of the Gods.

Playing a Rhodomancer

If you decide to play a Rhodomancer your first decision will be to determine what Spirit Family will be your patron. There are two ways to do this, the first is to choose one from the list of common Spirit Families below. These Spirit Families are the ones most often adopted by Rhodomancers as they are generally thought to be the best understood and therefore easiest to deal with. The second option is to allow the event organisers to choose for you. If you take the second option then you'll get a Spirit Family chosen by the organisers which is likely not to be one of the ones listed below but another less well known (but no less powerful) family. This will be detailed in your character sheet. If you take the second option the organisers recommend giving some kind of idea of the kind of magic you'd like your character to be interested in.

If you've taken one circle of Rhodomancy then it is assumed that you've agreed to the first request made by the Family as detailed in the section above. If you've bought two circles of Rhodomancy then it is assumed you've agreed to the second pact and taken place in the rite where your patron takes your characters spirit after death. In exchange for these two pacts you will have received your training and the spells you know at the start of the game.





Common Spirit Families

Mabden The commonest of the Spirit Families and the ones that first broke through into the real world, the Mabden are forest creatures, existing as guardians of and symbolic with nature. The common folk of the villages and farms of the Imperium generally tip a nod to the Mabden for aid in their work, or at least for the right to go about it without let or hindrance. The Mabden can be mischievous spirits, and some of the older more powerful ones can be actively cruel. Their magic, like themselves, can be harmful to both body and mind of those that fall foul of them and protective of those that pay them the proper respect.

Elemental The motives of The Lords of the Elements (Earth, Air, Fire, Water) can be hard for the mortal mind to comprehend so dealing with these powerful creatures can often be a difficult experience. However the magic of the elemental can be extremely potent; something for which Elementalists (Rhabdomancers having this family as their patron) are willing to endure long often drawn out and confusing negotiations with their summoned patrons.

Ceptuo The Ceptuo are fascinated by new things, new inventions, new ideas and concepts. They tend to offer favours to researchers and inventors and delight in the acquisition of novel or interesting information. Their magic tends to involve creation and revealing hidden knowledge or secrets. They are often adopted by Rhabdomancers with leanings towards artifice; they are also the adopted Spirit Patron of the Imperial Heralds.

Esolat One of the more sinister families the Esolat seem to delight in destruction and chaos. Their Rhabdomancers are often shunned by other practitioners of the art as anarchists and madmen. However the violent power of the Esolats magic is doubted by no one. The Imperial Sea Guard once attempted to incorporate Rhabdomancers of Esolat amongst their ranks but the nature of such people did not work well with military authority.

Advancing as a Rhabdomancer

Rhabdomancers may learn spells from each other or via scrolls in the way described in **Spell Lists and Learning New Spells** above. However this is greatly discouraged by the Spirit Families who have been known to punish severely Rhabdomancers who learn new spells in these ways. Instead the Spirit Families insist that Rhabdomancers learn spells only from them by summoning one of the Spirit Family who will act as a tutor.

When a Rhabdomancer wants to advance to the next circle of magic as well as having the required number of experience points he / she must find a tutor prepared to train them. Again the Spirit Families are insistent that this tutor be one of their own number summoned by the Rhabdomancer and taught usually at a price. Seeking tuition from other Rhabdomancers has led to extreme, some times fatal punishments being handed out by the patron family.

Carrying out a Summoning

Summoning and bargaining with a member of the patron family can be carried out during an event via the **Summon Patron's Servitor** spell (which is known to all Rhabdomancers) or in downtime by the same means.

Casting Rhabdomancy

Rhabdomancy spells simply require the caster to know the spell, say the appropriate vocals and expend the will required to cast it. They do not need to store their spells in advance like Astral Mages or to expend Health Levels like Natural Philosophers. In many ways this makes Rhabdomancy the most versatile of the three schools.

Common Rhabdomantic Spells

The following spells are commonly known to belong to the school of Rhabdomancy, although the exact powers available to any Rhabdomancer vary greatly from one family to the next.

Name: **Spirit Bolt**

Circle: **1**

Duration: **Instant**

Range: **Vocal**

Allows the caster to call forth a bolt of energy created by their chosen patron. Although this destructive blast is magically created the damage inflicted is entirely physical and cannot harm creatures that are normally able to resist mundane damage. The caster must clearly indicate a single target within vocal range and make the call "*Double to the*" followed by a location on the target, for example "*Double to the head*".

Name: **Comprehend The Common Tongue Written**

Circle: **1** Duration: **5 minutes**

Range: **Self**

Concentration required

Allows the caster to comprehend any written language that the caster has heard spoken (at any time in their life). For five minutes the caster may comprehend any text written in one such language. The spell obviously cannot be used to understand languages that have no spoken component. A referee must be present to cast this spell.





Name: **Searing Blade of Power**

Circle: **2**

Duration: **1 minute**

Range: **Touch**

Allows the caster to enchant a one handed sword to inflict "*Double*" with every blow struck with it. The blade may be used by any individual and will last for one minute.

Name: **Shield of Spiritual Protection**

Circle: **2**

Duration: **Dusk/Dawn**

Range: **Touch**

Enchants a shield such that it will protect the wielder from some mental and magical attacks. The bearer of the shield must call "*resist*" against the next call of the following type directed at them "*Sleep*", "*Fear*", "*Freeze*". Once a single call has been resisted the spell comes to an end, the spell also ends at dusk / dawn if it has not expired before hand. Only one Shield of Spiritual Protection may be active on any one shield at a time.

Astral Magic

The Nature of Astral Magic

Magicians of the Astral school draw their power from the heavenly objects that can be seen in the sky above the Archipelago. The stars and to a lesser degree the sun and the moon are called upon by the various magics available to the Astral Mage. What exactly the power of these heavenly objects is and why it can be manipulated are questions for debate. It is certain however that calling upon them can lend power to those schooled in the art and that the objects themselves can influence life in the archipelago simply by their position in the sky.

When channelled into spells Astral Magic can be destructive in nature and can easily penetrate protections against mundane weaponry and effects. When properly controlled it can also be used to shield its wielders from harm or to have strong effects on mortal minds, be it to increase understanding or to manipulate in favourable ways. Astral Magic is most popular amongst the ranks of the Battle Mages of the Imperial Sea Guard.

As well as casting spells Astral Mages are often called upon by their patrons to determine appropriate days for important events to occur. Each star visible in the night sky has associations with aspects of life, emotions and significant figures. Often an Astral Mage will be called upon to determine when the most favourable heavenly alignment will occur for a particularly difficult or crucial undertaking. Such heavenly alignments are also believed to be greatly influential in ritual magic, past ritual disasters have been attributed to unfavourable heavenly aspects at the time of casting.

Of all the practitioners of Astral Magic the Seers of Moon Mirror are held in the greatest esteem. It is well known that the Children of the Moon have a natural gift for Astral Magic and the Seers of Moon mirror have for centuries studied the stars in their great observatories. Many believe that the Seers have unlocked hidden methods of Astral Magic they are not sharing with anyone else.

Star Alignments

Every Astral Mage has knowledge of the movements of a few stars and what those stars are associated with. During the progress of an Astral Mage's career he / she may spend time in periods of observation learning the movements and properties of unknown stars or examining the recorded works of others on the topic.

Each character who has attained circles of Astral Magic will be given information about a number of stars with their character sheet. This will include details of what those stars represent. Details will also be given of how long a star appears for, and on what kind of cycle it comes and goes from the night sky. From this information it will be possible for players of Astral Mages to forecast when a star they have studied will appear in the sky. When a star is present in the sky major undertakings (particularly magical ones) that involve things represented by that star will be said to be more likely to succeed or progress smoothly.

Please note that for the sake of simplicity our in-game stars sadly do not correspond to real stars visible in the normal world.

Casting Astral Magic and the Ephemeris

Casting Astral Magic is a long drawn out and time consuming process typically taking several hours to cast a single spell. To allow themselves to function in a more versatile way Astral Magi cast their spells into a magical item known as an Ephemeris. The Ephemeris can take the form of any small man-made object but is usually a piece of jewellery or item of clothing. A ribbon for the Ephemeris will be supplied along the character sheet and should be attached to an appropriate phys rep. The Ephemeris is created by the Astral Mage during their apprenticeship but is refined during the mages continued advancement. As long as the Ephemeris is on the casters person Spells cast into it may be triggered at any time by the utterance of key words or phrases left out of the spells during their weaving, thus completing the spell and activating them. **Activating the spells stored in the Ephemeris does not deplete the casters Will score.**





In play an Astral Mage will rarely spend any Will as casting Astral Spells that have not been stored is such a difficult affair. Instead they will be restricted by what spells have been stored in their Ephemeris prior to the event. **The mage may store spells requiring up to two and a half times their current maximum will in their Ephemeris at any one time with any fractions rounded up. The player of an Astral Mage must decide what spells are stored in their Ephemeris in advance of commencing play and must declare those spells in a written list to a referee when booking in. It is assumed that Astral Mage characters will have taken the time to prepare their Ephemeris in this way in the weeks leading up to attending an event. When activating spells in their Ephemeris Astral Mages must abide by the same restrictions on spell vocals as other spell casters. These vocals are considered to be the activation phrases that trigger the stored spells.**

Common Astral Spells

The following spells are commonly known to belong to the Astral School.

Name: **Solar Bolt**

Circle: **1**

Duration: **Instant**

Range: **Vocal**

This spell allows the caster to channel an amount of astral power into a fiery bolt of energy to harm their opponents. Upon speaking the activation phrase the caster must clearly indicate a target within vocal range and make the call *"Rune hit to the"* followed by a location on the target, for example *"Rune hit to the chest"*.

Name: **Lore of the Heavenly Smith**

Circle: **1**

Duration: **Instant**

Range: **Special**

Concentration required

Allows the caster to determine some knowledge of a magical item or effect. Typically the type of magic employed in the effect's creation is revealed (Astral, Natural, Rhabdomancy, Divine) along with an approximate estimate of the circle of power within which it lies (if appropriate). The duration of the effect or quantity of charges held by an item are also commonly determined. The caster must extend an open palm and hold it within 10 centimeters of the item / effect for 1 minute for the spell to be successful. The presence of a referee is usually required to cast this spell.

Name: **Hural's Hammer Strike**

Circle: **2**

Duration: **Instant**

Range: **Vocal**

This spell allows the caster to channel an amount of astral power into a bolt of energy to smash their opponents. Upon speaking the activation phrase the caster must clearly indicate a target within vocal range and make the call *"Mighty-Strike"*. Victims take one hit to every location and are struck to the floor.

Name: **The Astral Blade**

Circle: **2**

Duration: **1 minute**

Range: **Touch**

Temporarily imbues a single sword (be it a Sword or Great Sword) with Astral energy. The blade will then strike for *"rune"* for the next minute regardless of whom it is wielded by.

Summary of Astral Magic

An Astral Mage must select in advance which spells they will have available to them at an event. They may not change which spells they have once they have gone Time In.

An Astral Mage may select spells worth two and a half times (rounding up) their maximum Will to last them the entire event (regardless of its length).

Example of Storing Spells in an Ephemeris

Jodri, an Astral Mage of the Second Circle, has five points of will. Before attending an event Jodri's player works out what spells will be stored in Jodri's Ephemeris and hence will be available to him at the event.

Jodri may store two and a half times his own Will, that's 13 total points ($2.5 \times 5 = 12.5$ rounding up = 13) of spells. He needs to choose which spells he'll store carefully as these will be all that will be available to him over the three days of the event and he can't swap them around during it. Jodri knows the four spells listed above. He decides to store the following spells:

Solar Bolt x3

(at 1 Will each for a total of 3 points)

Lore of the Heavenly Smith x1

(at 1 Will each for a total of 1 point)

Hurals Hammer Strike x3

(at 2 Will each for a total of 6 points)

The Astral Blade x1

(at 2 Will each for a total of 2 points)



Jodri's player writes these down and will hand them in at the ref desk when he arrives at the event.



Natural Philosophy

The Nature of Natural Philosophy



The Natural Philosopher concerns himself or herself with the way the world works. Many Natural Philosophers have long sought to answer the mysteries of world such as why life exists, what happens beyond death and how the world came into being. The magic of Natural Philosophy (sometimes called Natural Magic) has been discovered during the many and varied researches into these and other related topics. A mage who wields the power of Natural Philosophy manipulates the magic of the living world about him and understands the precarious balance between life and death. It is through tipping this balance that Natural Philosophers display their greatest powers.

Natural Philosophy is excellent at manipulating the living or once living substances of the natural world such as wood, leather, flesh and plant matter. It is also capable of drawing the very life out of living creatures and using that power to heal or to create undead.

Lesser undead are animated creatures brought back to the semblance of life by the channelling of life energy into a corpse. Lesser undead are generally vulnerable to the effects of herb bundles that can be created by Priests of most faiths throughout the archipelago. Greater undead are generally the sprits of dead creatures brought back into the living world again by channelling life energy to a recently departed spirit. Greater undead are sometimes vulnerable to the effects of binding thorns that can be created by particularly pious Priests of most faiths throughout the archipelago. Some undead retain a notion of the person they were before death, others do not. Natural Philosophy allows the creation and control of such creatures, this particular branch of the art is also known as Necromancy. Attitudes towards the undead vary within the Empire, but few believe that they or the act of creating them are entirely evil.

Of all the Natural Philosophers in existence it is said that the Lich Lords of the Dread City of Isopolis have the greatest grasp of the art. Great Philosophers within the Empire have long claimed that the Lich Lords' understanding of Natural Magic is flawed but these voices have gone strangely silent in recent times.

Casting Natural Philosophy and the Phylactery

Some Natural Philosophy spells simply require the caster to know the spell and expend the will required to cast it; but many also require the expenditure of life. In the early days of the development of Natural Philosophy Mages expended portions of their own life whilst casting spells, sustaining horrible wounds whilst doing so. As the art evolved Natural Philosophers discovered the remarkable material known as Red Quicksilver. This metal was found to be able to store life essence within its matrix. All Natural Philosophers now create a tiny device of Red Quicksilver during their apprenticeship that they call their **Phylactery**. The Phylactery is used as a store for life thus enabling the Natural Philosopher to draw the life from their enemies and store it to use in their spell casting when required. The natural mage will continue to refine the Phylactery as his / her understanding of natural magic grows, allowing more life energy to be stored. The Phylactery can take the form of any small red object but is usually a piece of jewellery. A blue ribbon for the Phylactery will be supplied along the character sheet and should be attached to an appropriate phys rep.

Any character that has purchased circles of Natural Philosophy will have a Phylactery. The Phylactery can be used to store Health Levels (HL) that can be stolen from others by use of natural spells such as **Minor and Major Life Drain**. When spells are cast that require the expenditure of Health Levels such as healing spells or those that create undead the caster may chose to use those stored in the Phylactery or those from his / her own person (wounding themselves in the process).

The number of Health Levels that may be stored in the Philosopher's Phylactery depends on number of circles of Natural Philosophy they have attained as show below.

Circle	Max Health Levels stored in Phylactery
First Circle	3 HL
Second Circle	6 HL
Third Circle	12 HL

As with Will points we recommend that players use some sort of counting mechanism for keeping track of how many HL are currently stored in their Phylactery.





Creating Undead

All spells that create undead are **concentration required**. As such they cannot be cast in a melee situation. Also the process of creating an undead is not as simple as just saying a few spell vocals.

Players are encouraged to be elaborate in their spell casting when creating undead creatures, the body should be prepared in some way and a degree of ceremony and theatre employed. Also Necromancy has been far from mastered and some times the raising of undead simply fails due to the body being too mutilated / decayed or due to other external factors.

Sadly we are unlikely to be able to provide every Natural Philosopher with monsters to play an undead army. As such undead creation may or may not work (as stated above) simply dictated by the OOC resources available to the event organisers at a given time. Also the duration that an undead creature will last is entirely random and cannot be predicted by IC means, this is simply because monsters used to play the undead servants of players may become unavoidably required elsewhere. The organisers will however attempt to make sure that OOC restraints on these IC factors are applied as fairly as possible. While this may seem frustrating we would ask players to try and keep in mind that they are allowed to create undead in this game whereas in many others it is simply not permitted at all.

Common Philosophy Spells

The following spells are commonly known to belong to the school of Natural Philosophy.

Name: **Minor Life Drain**

Circle: **1**

Duration: **Instant**

Range: **Touch**

The caster can suck the very life out of a living creature rendering useless any armour they are wearing in the process. The caster must make the call "*Through*" to the next living sentient target they touch with an open hand. Providing the target does not "*resist*", "*block*" or "*dodge*" then the caster gains one Health Level which he may store in his Phylactery providing there is space or which may be used to heal a single Health Level to any location on the caster. If the target calls "*resist*" or "*block*" then the Spell is wasted, if the target calls "*dodge*" then the Spell remains in effect until the caster succeeds in touching someone.

Name: **Minor Life Transference**

Circle: **1**

Duration: **Instant**

Range: **Touch**

The caster can transfer Health Levels from themselves or stored in his / her Phylactery to a living target healing them in the process. The caster must touch the person to be healed who gains one lost Health Level to the location touched instantly. If the caster chooses to transfer Health Levels from his own person then the caster loses one Health Level from any location not currently on zero HL. If this reduces the casters chosen location to zero HL then it will start to bleed in the normal manner.

Name: **Animate Skeleton**

Circle: **2**

Duration: **Special**

Range: **Touch**

Concentration required.

Using this spell the caster may animate a skeletal form of undead from the corpse of a human. No restriction is placed upon how long the corpse may have been dead for as long as its skeleton is complete. When the spell is cast any flesh remaining on the corpse instantly rots away leaving only the animated skeleton behind.

The animated creature will obey the caster's commands to the best of its ability. It has simple human like level of intelligence but cannot communicate in any form of spoken or written manner. If ordered to fight it will do so to the death. Skeletons are proficient with all types of weapons including bows and missile weapons, they may also use shields or fight with a weapon in each hand. A skeleton may wear any form of armour. The skeleton has a number of hits per location equal to the number of Health Levels that the caster sacrifices in its creation. Sacrificed Health Levels may come directly from the caster or from their Phylactery as per Minor Life Transference. The skeleton is destroyed as soon as its head or chest are reduced to zero Health Levels.

Name: **Major Life Drain**

Circle: **2**

Duration: **Special**

Range: **Touch**

Concentration required.

Allows the caster to suck all of the remaining Health Levels out of a prone opponent and use them to heal Health Levels lost by the caster, or store in their Phylactery. The whole process takes a period of time dependant on the amount of life to be transferred and the caster must remain in contact with the target throughout whilst repeating appropriate spell vocals. After thirty seconds the victim must inform the caster how many Health Levels he / she has remaining on each of their locations. The caster may then steal these in any order desired at the rate of one every ten seconds by calling "*through*" to the location required. The Health Level is successfully stolen as long as this call is not resisted or blocked. If the victim dies during the process, the caster loses contact or stops repeating the spell vocals then the spell ends. Once all remaining Health Levels have been taken the victim dies immediately.





Magical Items and Enchantments

The Mages of the Archipelago have long sought to master the creation of magical artefacts and enchantments. However the production of such is a difficult and time consuming process and consequently magical items and enchantments are rare and valuable.

A magical artefact is an object (be it natural or man-made) that has been imbued with an amount of magical power via investment or ritual.

A magical enchantment is a magical effect which has been placed upon an individual or area, thus empowering them / it with magical abilities or properties via a ritual.

There are two known methods for the creation of magical artefacts used within the Empire. These are **Investment** and **Ritual**. Magical enchantments may only be produced via Ritual.

Investment

Investment is the process by which a Mage imbues an appropriate item with stored spells, it is impossible to invest an item with a spell that requires concentration. The spells stored are activated by the speaking of command phrases determined during the investment at which point they behave just as if the wielder had cast the spell themselves. Invested items typically have a number of charges that once used require further investment to restore. Some particularly well-invested items can recharge the spells contained within them of their own accord thus removing the need for further investment.

There are some restrictions on what items may have spells invested within them. Man-made objects must be master crafted before they can be invested. Naturally occurring objects must be extremely appropriate to the spell to be stored within them for the investment to work.

In order to carry out an investment a character must have the item to be invested, knowledge of the spell (or spells) to be invested and the **Create Invested Item** magical skill. The amount of time taken to invest the item and the success of the results depends on many and various factors. Players are encouraged to experiment to try and achieve the best results. It is not uncommon for Mages wanting to create powerful investments to take several seasons or even years in the process. Investments may only take place in downtime and players should specify exactly what spells they are attempting to invest into what items, how long they intend to spend doing so and what the command words for activating the item are. Successfully invested items will have ribbons and special powers laminates supplied by the organisers but will require appropriate phys reps supplied by the creator.

Ritual

The art of the Ritual is arguably the most powerful form of magic known within the Archipelago. Great rituals can involve years of planning by a collection of mages from all of the schools of magic and the results can affect the entire Empire. Lesser rituals can produce magical items of great potency that exceed the limits of what is normally possible through cast magic.

Step One: Planning the Ritual

Planning a ritual can take a long time and requires expert knowledge. During the planning process great texts are produced describing in tiny detail the exact steps and processes to be undertaken during the ritual. The texts of a successful ritual are kept as treasures for having them means that the ritual can be replicated without enduring the lengthy planning process again.

To plan a ritual a character must have the magical skill **Ritual Architect**. Ritual planning is always carried out in downtime due to the length of time required. The planner must declare what effect the ritual is desired to have and how long he / she wishes to take in planning it. The desired effects can literally be anything the planner would care to dream; however past histories of dramatic failures of over-ambitious ritual plans have taught ritual architects the dangers of overreaching themselves. Most often any given ritual will produce a single or a few magically enchanted items or effects. There is no reason why these items or effects should not be permanent but enchantments that fade over time are considerably easier to produce.

Successful ritual plans always take several months to create; years can be required for exceptionally powerful effects. When the length of time declared has elapsed the plans are completed can be examined to see how successful the created **Ritual Text** is. In the worst case the plans will be a complete failure or may be flawed. Flawed texts are exceptionally dangerous as they can seem to be successful at first but when actually carried out can bring about disastrous consequences.





If the text has not failed then it will receive one of the following ratings describing its potency: *Adequate, Good, Superior, Masterful, Exceptional, Flawless*. A lore code sticker and laminated card will be produced by the organisers which can be collected by the player at the next event they attend. This should be attached to an appropriate phys rep. Phys reps do not need to be actual scripts for a ritual performance (see later) but should look like “arcane literature”.

It is not usually possible for members of the Giant race to carry out the planning of a ritual due to their lack of literacy. Exceptional Giants (those who have taken the **Architectural Memory** virtue) may commit the details of rituals they have planned to memory. The plans are memorised as they are created. Thus at the end of the planning phase a Giant ritual architect with an architectural memory will have a ritual text stored in their own heads to recall whenever required. The details of the text can be related to the Head Ritualist during the performance (see below) if character is not to perform the ritual themselves.

We leave it to players to discover the best way to produce ritual texts but generally speaking the more skilled the Ritual Architect and the longer taken the planning time the better the results.

Step Two: Finding a Site and Date.

Rituals may only be conducted at **ritual sites**. These naturally occurring places brim with raw magical energy. Some have distinct leanings towards one or other of the schools but most contain a good mix of all types of magic. How these places come into being is largely a mystery but they are rare and greatly treasured by the Lords of the Realms in which they exist. Many ritual sites fluctuate in power throughout the year and there is often great competition amongst groups to mages to be allowed access to any given ritual site at the height of its power. Temporary ritual sites are also a known phenomenon, sometimes spontaneously coming into existence and radically changing the surrounding area for a period of a few years or seasons. Discovering such a site can be an enormous boon for a lucky group of mages who may be fortunate enough to have exclusive access for its short life span.

There are five known locations of seemingly permanent ritual sites within the Empire. These are:

Name - Mir Lak

Realm - Moon Mirror

A calm and tranquil lake atop the mountainous peaks of Moon Mirror. Mir Lak is the private ritual site of the Realm Lords of Moon Mirror. Few non-Children of the Moon have ever seen it. Believed to be the location from which the terrible Earthshaker was cast.

Name - The Judgement Circle

Realm - Tarin

A seemingly naturally occurring circular amphitheatre close to Tarin city. Used only with the permission of the Prince - Bishop.

Name - The Emperors Needle

Realm - Imperial Hegemony

A tall basalt obelisk with a fortress built around it, located at the very heart of the Imperial Capital Saran-Gasai. Generally only used by the approval of the Chancellor or Synod.

Name - The Others Gateway

Realm - Bastopole

A seemingly unremarkable wooded glade in a more rural region of the archipelago recently acquired by the city state of Bastopole. The trees of The Others Gateway are said to glow with an unnatural light after sunset. The circle is rumoured to be strong in the magic of the spirit world, which is presumably how it acquired its name.

Name - The Eye of Abbast

Realm - Kelea

A rough circle of stones carved with patterns similar to those used in the Giantish traditions of cave painting. The circle is said in legend to have been created by the Goddess Abbast.

Natural Mages are generally sought to discover the properties of a potential ritual site such as how long it will last and when it will come to the peak of its power. Various Philosophical spells allow the caster to communicate with his environs thus making the determination of such things possible.

The date upon which the ritual is to be carried out is also very important. Obviously a time when the chosen ritual site is strong in power is favourable but this is not the only factor to be considered. The Astral Alignment, that is which stars are present in the sky at the date of the ritual performance, is also known to have a strong effect on a rituals outcome. Thus the advice of an Astral Mage should always be sought before conducting the ritual.





Step Three: Performing The Ritual.

Once a ritual text has been obtained, a site is available and the date is agreed the ritual may actually be performed. The performance can always be undertaken by as many mages as are willing to take part from any of the schools. One mage is always selected as the Head Ritualist and is responsible for instructing the other mages and ensuring that the instructions in the ritual text are carried out. It is advisable that the Head Ritualist is a skilled ritual architect to ensure that the text is interpreted properly.

Rituals may not be undertaken at an event without the presence of a referee. Ideally the organisers should be notified several hours in advance. The ritual performance should be a theatrical piece of magic; the more convincing and impressive the display the more successful the ritual will be. Even though the characters are working to a ritual text this needs have no bearing on the actual performance. The details contained in the text are deemed to be instructions to the Head Ritualist for the weaving of the magical energies summoned during the ritual. Thus the same ritual performed equally well but undertaken by two different performers may seem completely different to the layman but a skilled Ritual Architect would realise that they are in fact magically identical.

When the ritual is complete the Referee will calculate what the final effect will be, based on all of the contributing factors. The effect may not reach the full extents of those laid down in the ritual text if the ritual was not adequate. It is possible (but extremely rare) that the effects originally set out can be exceeded if the entire ritual has been a great success. Ritual magics often take time to settle down and come into full effect; thus a ritual may appear to have had little or no effect only for the results to become evident several hours later. At this point (assuming a success has occurred) a referee will give to the Head Ritualist any laminated cards detailing special powers and or ribbons that may be required to attach to enchanted items.

