

Magic

How Magic Works

In our LARP world, magic is performed by using magical energy (*mana*) to do the kinds of things that physical energy can do in the material world. In order to cast a spell, the spellcaster must either learn or invent it, either through being taught by someone who knows the spell or by doing spell research. (Both of these are done during out-of-game time.) Casting a spell costs an amount of mana that is proportional to how powerful the spell is.

The maximum amount of mana that a character can have is represented by a maximum number of spell packets that they can have in their possession at one time.

Use of mana is represented by [spell packets](#) (bean bags). To cast a spell, say the *spell descriptor* word or phrase (a single word or phrase that identifies the spell) and either throw the spell packet at the target or touch them with it.

The ultimate source of mana is the Earth itself. Absorbing mana from the Earth is represented in game by picking up spell packets. Absorbing mana from the Earth takes concentration, which means it cannot be done during a battle. (I.e., spell packets that get used during a battle cannot be retrieved until after the battle.)

Spell Books

Every spellcaster has a spell book, containing the spells that they know. Your field (traveling) spell book is represented by a pack of index cards. Each page (card) has the name of one spell and information about it (descriptor, effects, duration, etc.) When you learn a new spell, you write its information on an index card and add it to your book.

Spell books can be damaged by fire or acid. If this happens, you are unable to allocate mana to any of the affected spells until you have a chance (in game) to make fresh copies. (It is assumed that you have a copy of your spell book safely at home.)

Acquiring Spells

New spells can be acquired in the following ways:

1. A spellcaster who knows a spell can teach any of their spells except for their highest spell level to another spellcaster. For a spell of level n , it takes n days of focused teaching to learn the spell (which occupies both the teacher and the student), and then it takes the student n^2 additional days of focused practice to master it. (Think of learning a spell like a musician learns a piece of music. Low-level spells are like easy pieces that can be learned in one lesson and a few days of practice.)

Higher level spells take multiple sessions and weeks of practice.)

2. If you find a scroll for a spell that you don't know, you can record it in your spell book provided that you can cast spells of that level. (This uses up the scroll.) Once the spell is recorded, you still need to practice it to master it.
3. A spellcaster can invent a new spell that is a maximum of two spell levels below their highest spell level. These need to be discussed with a GM to ensure balance with the rest of the magic system. It takes n^2 weeks of focused out-of-game time to invent a level n spell. (Think of creating a new spell like a scientist developing a new procedure in a lab.)

Types of Spells

Damage & Healing

Our LARP does not use a hit point/total health system. Instead, damage to a limb renders that limb useless until it is healed. Therefore, damage from spells also affects one or more limbs. Spell damage may or may not be stopped by armor, depending on the spell.

In general, offensive spells are either from thrown spell packets or by touch from a wand or staff. The descriptor for the spell is the type of damage and the number of hits. For example, "LIGHTNING 2" would represent a lightning spell that does the equivalent of two hits to the appendage that the spell packet strikes. Lightning might go through metal armor but be stopped by leather, whereas acid might dissolve leather armor but be stopped by metal.

Effects

Most spells are a specific spell effect, such as "FREEZE," "SLEEP," "FEAR," etc. These spells require the victim to roleplay the effects in a certain prescribed way.

See the [spell list](#) for detailed descriptions of each spell.

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