

6b. Arcane Magic

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Arcane Magic is the ability to manipulate reality with knowledge of the supernatural. It uses processes called magic spells, pre-set ways in which an Arcane magic user can cause a non-natural effect. Casting a spell is a synonym for activating a power, and an Arcane power user is often referred to as a spellcaster, magician, or wizard.

Arcane Spells are Traits associated to the Concentration skill. Spellcasters may learn any amount of new spells, though they require a teacher, a book, or other knowledge source to learn them. Given the need to learn many spells and their associate Traits, a magician usually chooses to Dedicate to the skill of Concentration.

Prerequisite

Before being able to learn arcane spells and Manipulation Traits, a character must have the Arcane or Magic Knowledge trait.

Attributes of Arcane Magic

Magic spells are manipulated with Traits. Most schools of magic teach all available Manipulation Traits.

Attribute	Default rating	Manipulation via Trait
Combine	-	Yes
Might	1	Yes
Range	Touch (0)	Yes
Targets	1	Yes

Channelling

Channelling for Arcane Magic is calculated with the standard method of 10% of a character's raw Concentration skill, rounded up. However, this is just the base value for Channelling for magicians, which can be subject to modifications during play. Record the current, adjusted value for Channelling on your character sheet.

In addition to its standard function of limiting pre-activation of powers, the Channelling score also limits the total number of Manipulation points a magician can apply to a single spell. The limit is the total Channelling score, regardless of any Channelling points occupied by extended duration spells. There is no maximum for each single Manipulation, just a cap to the total manipulation points added.

For example, a young magician with a Channelling of 6 might want to cast Heal 6 (Might manipulation of +5) on one target (no Target manipulation, as the default value is 1) that he is touching (no Range manipulation). This adds up to a total Manipulation of 5, so the casting would be possible as the total is within the Channelling limit. Should the magician try to cast Protection 6 with a +2 to Range to affect a friend at Short range, that would add up to a total Manipulation score of 7, which would exceed his Channelling of 6 and makes casting impossible. To reach the desired Range, the magician would be forced to resort to a weaker spell, for instance Protection 5 with Range S.

Using Arcane Magic

For each Manipulation Trait applied when casting Arcane Magic in Advanced Combat, the caster must spend one Concentration action and one Life Point, with a minimum of one for non-manipulated spells. The number of Manipulation points applied to the various Traits is not important Only the total number of Manipulations used is counted.

Arcane Magic allows all extension for the duration of powers. Thus a wizard can either pre-activate a power, or use it with an extended duration, and in both cases this will use up Channelling points. Improving powers with Rituals and enchanting items with permanent power effects and specific powers that can only function as enchantments is also possible, and does not use up Channelling points.

Focusing Magic

Casting spells require that the magician concentrate on a specific implement connected to the arcane world. Such implements are called magic focuses, and the caster must be in a psychic resonance with his or her focus to use it in spellcasting. The magician must have created this focus, or become intimately familiar with it through an attuning Ritual. A magician without an available focus suffers a reduction of his or her Channelling by one point for the purpose of determining the maximum total Manipulation points applicable to spells.

A spellcaster should have his or her hands free when casting magic, which prevents most magicians from wielding weapons in combat. However, wielding items used to focus magic counts as having your hands free when casting magic.

A focus does not have a Value but a Might score. Enchanting a magic focus requires a Conflict of Will against the item's desired Might, without any modifications for duration. The procedure for creating a focus is included in the basic knowledge of Arcane Magic, so it does not require a specific Trait, although the Enchantment Trait will clearly increase your chance of success as the lack of a specific Trait would force you to roll on your raw Concentration skill otherwise. Attuning a focus that you have found also requires a Conflict against the item's existing Might, but the magician can also attempt it in Narrative Time to obtain temporary control of the item.

A magician must devote one point of Channelling to each focus he or she has, as though having pre-cast one single-Manipulation spell. This point cannot be freed to use for other purpose, unless the focus is destroyed, un-attuned, or permanently replaced with another focus.

A familiar, if the magician has one, counts as a focus for casting magic if present, or if the magician remotely casts the spell through its senses. The Might of the familiar represents its Might as a focus. A familiar is the fastest way to create an external focus for a magician who lacks the Enchant Trait, as the Create Familiar spell Trait itself can be used in the familiar creation process. However, the Narrator may require the expenditure of a Concentration Slot per familiar a magician has, according to the rule presented in Chapter 2. This is in addition to the Channelling point requirement for all focuses.

A magician uses a focus Might to replace and enhance his or her Channelling rating in two different ways: by using it to “hold” pre-activated spells; and by using it to improve his or her own Channelling score.

When a wizard pre-casts magic through a focus, he or she can choose to “occupy” points of Might taken from the focus instead of points of his or her own Channelling. Unlike personal Channelling points, these points are not just occupied, but actually subtracted from the focus Might until the spell ends, making the focus less effective in powering spells cast on the spot (see below). It is not possible to split the required points among different repositories; a maintained spell must be entirely contained in either a focus or the magician's own Channelling. If a magician loses control of a focus item or contact with a familiar, all spells held in the focus Might expire.

If casting magic through a Focus with non-occupied Might greater than his or her own Channelling, the magician can Manipulate spells as though his or her Channelling was one point higher. This effect does not apply to pre-cast or extended duration spells, although it applies to Rituals.

A spellcaster can have as many focus items and familiars as he or she wishes, provided a Channelling point is devoted to each of them. You might wish to impose limitations in your game to fine tune the power of magic users in your setting (see notes).

Arcane Spells

Arcane spell list: Absorb [energy], Astral Projection, Confusion, Damage Boost, Detect Substances, Detect [power], Diminish [characteristic], Dominate [species], Enhance [characteristic], Fly, Form [substance], Glue, Grant [trait], Haste, Heal, Hinder, Illusion, Light, Neutralise [power], Palsy, Project [energy], Project Senses, Protection, Reflect [power], Resist [power], Restore, Second Sight, Shapechange to [species], Shimmer, Skin of Life, Shimmer, Telekinesis, Telepathy, Teleport, Web.

Arcane Ritual list: Create Familiar, Create Scroll, Create Spell Matrix, Summon [entity].