

GURPS

Fourth Edition

THAUMATOLOGYTM

Magical Styles



Written by **SEAN PUNCH**

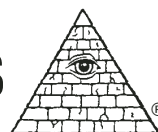
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INTRODUCTION

Fantasy stories often feature rival and specialist wizards who hail from diverse guilds, academies, and secret societies with completely different philosophies – although all of them cast spells and rely on a power that’s recognizably *magic*. This is easy enough to implement in principle: Give each clique only the subset of spells that fits its worldview.

In practice, this is troublesome. If membership in such a group is mandatory, many players will object to the loss of dabblers and generalists – who also play a large role in fantasy, after all – and to being told that their magician PCs *must* limit themselves as if their Magery advantage had a variant of the One College Only limitation. The GM could make wizardly societies purely optional, but then few PCs would join them, because it would be too much like accepting a restriction without getting anything in return.

This is the puzzle that ***GURPS Thaumatology: Magical Styles*** aims to solve. It gives the GM ways to grant academies and guilds a *meaningful* thaumatological role, not just a social purpose, in his campaign world. At the same time, it offers players an incentive to play wizard PCs who specialize in particular realms of magic without penalizing those who prefer dilettantes.

USING THIS SUPPLEMENT

You can use ***GURPS Thaumatology: Magical Styles*** with *just* the magic rules in the ***GURPS Basic Set***. It’s considerably more valuable if you have and are acquainted with ***GURPS Magic*** or ***GURPS Thaumatology***, though. To fully unlock its power, you’ll want *both* books!

Be aware that ***Magical Styles*** *isn’t* a collection of ready-made schools and societies. Rather, Chapter 1 presents a system for creating such things, while Chapter 3 delivers a detailed worked example. This doesn’t mean that ***Magical Styles*** is worthless if the GM has no desire to divide wizards into factions and create styles for them. Readers looking to incorporate new rules or options right away should find the Magic Perks in Chapter 2 suitable for *any* campaign that features magic, even if it uses only the ***Basic Set***. Players who need help choosing skills and spells for magician PCs – and GMs developing character templates for spellcasters – will find that much of Chapter 1 doubles as immediately useful advice, too.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the ***GURPS*** Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every ***GURPS*** product since. He developed, edited, or wrote dozens of ***GURPS Third Edition*** projects between 1995 and 2002. In 2004, he produced the ***GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*** with David Pulver. Since then, he has created ***GURPS Powers*** (with Phil Masters), ***GURPS Martial Arts*** (with Peter Dell’Orto), and the ***GURPS Action, GURPS Dungeon Fantasy, and GURPS Power-Ups*** series . . . and the list keeps growing.

Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, cooking, and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of ***GURPS*** players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: info@sjgames.com. Resources include:

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Bibliographies. Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we’re putting them online – with links to let you buy the resources that interest you! Go to each book’s web page and look for the “Bibliography” link.

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.

CHAPTER ONE

BUILDING MAGICAL STYLES

A *magical style* represents the teachings of one particular magical academy, sorcerous society, thaumatological school, or wizards' guild. In rules terms, it's simplest to picture magical styles as the wizardly analogs of the fighting styles defined in *GURPS Martial Arts*. When your goal is to defeat enemies in battle, you can employ any of hundreds of fighting arts, each

of which rewards its practitioners for focusing on a limited subset of the game's combat skills and rules by teaching special tricks: perks, cinematic skills, and so on. Similarly, a magical style concentrates on a list of standard spells and skills, and rewards dedicated adherents with access to *magical* options that aren't common in the game world at large.

COMPONENTS OF A STYLE

Each magical style is at its heart a collection of *required skills* (below) and *required spells* (pp. 6-12). A wizard who wants to be admitted to the style's ranks and learn its secrets must spend at least one point on each required element. Once he has done so, and bought the style's *Magical School Familiarity* (p. 20) perk, he's entitled to learn the rest of the spells on its *spell list* (pp. 14-17), which might use alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18). Investing in the style's spells grants him access to more and more of its *perks* (pp. 12-14) – a few of which let him learn *secret spells* (p. 14).

REQUIRED SKILLS

Magical styles are rarely *entirely* about practical magic in the form of spells. Anybody born with Magery can peruse old grimoires and learn a few charms and curses. A wizard worth the title, though, knows something about where spells come from and what they're good for. A style's purpose determines the balance between these considerations and the character of its nonmagical teachings. The only thing that all styles have in common is this:

To “know” or “practice” a style, a wizard must spend at least one point on each of its required skills.

Theoretical Styles

Some styles concern themselves mainly with thaumatological philosophy: the origins and principles of magic, the entities that interact with it, and how those things relate to the world, the mind, and spiritual matters. Such styles frequently have a

distinctly academic bent, and are commonly associated with universities.

Typical Skills: Thaumatology is universal. Other skills customarily include a few of Dreaming, Hidden Lore (*especially* Spirit Lore), History, Literature, Meditation, Occultism, Philosophy, Research, Teaching, Theology, and Writing.

Experimental Styles

Experimentalists are concerned with rediscovering lost spells, inventing new ones, or figuring out novel ways to work standard magic. Some are as academic as theoreticians, casting half-baked spells without a thought to safety. Others work in the field, unearthing forgotten secrets without a thought to safety. The skills found in their styles reflect these activities.

Typical Skills: Here, too, Thaumatology is universal. Experimental styles are also likely to include some of Alchemy, Archaeology, Cryptography, Hazardous Materials (Magical), Hidden Lore, History, Literature, Naturalist, Occultism, Research, and Teaching.

Applied Styles

Applied styles concern themselves with actual *casting*, usually to some practical end, and have whatever mishmash of skills suits that goal. Below are a few possibilities.

Elemental Styles

Perhaps the most common spell-slinging styles are those aligned with particular colleges of magic.

“Elemental” is merely a convenient term – an elemental style might emphasize *any* college, not just Air, Earth, Fire, or Water.

Typical Skills: Most skills complement the college or fit the stereotype; e.g., “All necromancers are morticians!” There are exceptions; for instance, where cremation is the norm, *Fire* wizards might be the morticians. Here are a few suggestions for each college (an asterisk indicates an *optional* specialty):

- **Air:** Breath Control, Meteorology, Musical Instrument (any woodwind or horn), and Physics (Aerodynamics)*.
- **Animal:** Animal Handling, Biology (Zoology)*, Falconry, Naturalist, Packing, Riding, Teamster, and Veterinary.
- **Body Control:** Body Language, Breath Control, Physiology, and *possibly* cinematic skills such as Body Control and Power Blow, if the GM wishes.
- **Communication and Empathy:** Detect Lies, Gesture, Interrogation, Linguistics, Mental Strength, Mind Block, Psychology, and Teaching.
- **Earth:** Artist (Pottery or Sculpting), Engineer (Mining), Geology, Jeweler, Masonry, Physics (Geophysics)*, and Prospecting.
- **Enchantment:** Use the suggestions in *Experimental Styles* (p. 4).
- **Fire:** In high-tech settings, Explosives. In low-tech settings, crafts that *use* fire – such as Artist (Pottery) and Smith – are likely. Fire Eating suits either.
- **Food:** Connoisseur (Food or Wine), Cooking, Professional Skill (Bartender), and Survival – and Chemistry, if Food magic sees heaviest use in the lab.
- **Gate:** Area Knowledge (other planes), Body Sense, Engineer (Parachronic or Temporal), and Physics (Parachronic or Temporal)*. The latter two need not be “high-tech”!
- **Healing:** Diagnosis, Esoteric Medicine, First Aid, Pharmacy, Physician, Physiology, and Surgery.
- **Illusion and Creation:** Artist (Illusion) is almost universal. Also consider Camouflage, Disguise, Forgery, Holdout, Sleight of Hand, and Smuggling.
- **Knowledge:** Forensics, Fortune-Telling, History, Intelligence Analysis, Observation, Research, Search, and Thaumatology.
- **Light and Darkness:** Artist (any visual). Also Photography and Physics (Optics)* in high-tech settings, or skills for crafting mirrors and lenses in low-tech ones.
- **Making and Breaking:** Architecture, Artist, Engineer, and many low-tech craft skills (Carpentry, Leatherworking, Masonry, Sewing, Smith, etc.).
- **Meta-Spells:** Use the suggestions in *Theoretical Styles* (p. 4).
- **Mind Control:** Acting, Brainwashing, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Hypnotism, Intimidation, Propaganda, Psychology, and Sex Appeal.
- **Movement:** Aerobatics, Body Sense, Flight, and any other skill that aids use of specific spells.
- **Necromantic:** Expert Skill (Thanatology), Hidden Lore (Demon Lore or Spirit Lore), Occultism, Poisons, and Professional Skill (Mortician).
- **Plant:** Biology (Botany)*, Camouflage, Farming, Gardening, Herb Lore, Naturalist, and Tracking.
- **Protection and Warning:** Criminology, Observation, Strategy, Tactics, and Traps.

- **Sound:** Lip Reading, Mimicry, Musical Instrument, Physics (Acoustics)*, Poetry, Public Speaking, Singing, and Ventriloquism.
- **Technological:** Engineer, Metallurgy, and Weird Science, plus repair skills (Armoury, Electrician, Electronics Repair, Machinist, and Mechanic) and computer skills.
- **Water:** Aquabatics, Expert Skill (Hydrology), and Swimming, and possibly nautical skills – Boating, Fishing, Navigation (Sea), Seamanship, etc.
- **Weather:** Meteorology, Naturalist, and Survival.

Skills Required By Optional Rules

Certain optional rules can influence the selection of required skills:

Alternative Prerequisites (p. 16-18): A style that makes use of these options may need to require a minimum number of skills to remain balanced. When designing a style that you *know* will have nonstandard spell prerequisites, it’s more efficient to choose required skills *after* you’ve worked out the spell list and prerequisites.

Skill-Based Limits (*Thaumatology*, p. 40): If this rule applies campaign-wide, then assigning each style a different limiting skill adds a lot of flavor to the game. This skill should always appear among the style’s required skills.

Skills to Salvage Critical Failures (*Thaumatology*, p. 40): Whether this rule applies campaign-wide or only to mages with the perk Stabilizing Skill (p. 24), the stabilizing skill(s) pertinent to a style’s magic should be included in its required skills.

Folk Styles

Not all styles are rarefied arts practiced by wealthy academies, guilds, and temples. Oral tradition can rival highfalutin philosophy in depth. The associated skills are mainly *practical* – but with enough mumbo jumbo to impress (or eke coin from) the ungifted.

Typical Skills: Esoteric Medicine, Fortune-Telling, Herb Lore, and Occultism. Rural covens often add Naturalist, Veterinary, and Weather Sense; tribal societies, Dancing, Dreaming, Hidden Lore (Spirit Lore), and Singing; and urban miracle-sellers, Merchant, Panhandling, and Urban Survival.

Guild Styles

Ultimately, guilds exist to control a trade and make money. Stylists are thus expected to have business sense – few guilds see the percentage in teaching mages who lack this. Politically influential syndicates may insist on even broader social sophistication.

Typical Skills: Merchant is vital! Common additions are Accounting, Administration, Connoisseur (any, but *especially* Magic Items), Current Affairs (Business), Economics, Finance, Law, Market Analysis, Politics, Propaganda, Public Speaking, and Smuggling.

The Meaning of “Guild”

Magical Styles uses “wizards’ guild” to refer to a trade syndicate that deals in magical spells, items, or services for profit. Accordingly, it recommends that guild styles include business skills and marketable spells. In some fantasy worlds, however, “wizards’ guild” refers to *any* wizardly society, members of which might practice any kind of style – or *no* uniform style! Even in a true trade guild, it may be only the wheelers and dealers who practice the businesslike guild style. “Back office” and “supporting” wizards could learn parallel styles of other types: experimental styles for R&D, martial styles for corporate security, and so on.

Martial Styles

The parallel with fighting styles is at times literal. Martial styles might support armies at war, be assassins’ arts, or be “weaponized” academic, guild, or temple styles taught to magically gifted guards and enforcers. Skills tend to be brutally practical.

Typical Skills: Combat skills (traditionalists prefer Staff) come first. Other options are Armoury, Forward Observer, Hazardous Materials (Magical), Innate Attack, Mental Strength, Soldier, Strategy, Tactics, and Thaumatology (for identifying *enemy* magic!).

Temple Styles

Spellcasting clerics might work an altogether different class of miracles (see *What of Clerics?*, p. 26), but in some worlds, they’re wizards. Priest-wizards learn the same things as their non-mage brethren, along with less-orthodox skills that enhance magic use against opposed supernatural entities.

Typical Skills: Nearly always Religious Ritual and Theology, plus some of Exorcism, Expert Skill (Thanatology), Hidden Lore (Demon Lore or Spirit Lore), Meditation, Mental Strength, Occultism, Philosophy, and Thaumatology.

Other Styles

Like the skill lists under each category above, this classification system is itself only a suggestion. Still, many styles amount to overlaps between these common varieties, and require a skill or two off each of the associated lists. For instance, an ascetic order that serves the Fire God and studies magical theory might practice a style that requires Fire Eating, Religious Ritual, Thaumatology, and Theology. Weirder styles – the sorcerous equivalent of martial arts built around exotic weapons – can also be fun!

REQUIRED SPELLS

The meat of a magical style consists of the spells that it expects *every single adherent* to know. No matter how long the style’s spell list or how many secret spells it has, there will be a few key spells deemed so basic to the art that new students *must* be able to cast them before being accorded journeyman status, tattooed with the Dark One’s sigil, issued a wand, etc.

As with required skills, details vary with the style’s nature, but there are some generalities.

First, required spells should have either no prerequisites or only other required spells as prerequisites. However, the style might use *Alternative Prerequisites* (pp. 16-18). In that case, use the variant prerequisites for its required spells.

Second, a fundamental rule applies to all styles:

To “know” or “practice” a style, a wizard must spend at least one point on each of its required spells.

Basic Spells

The earliest lessons of certain styles impart a broad spectrum of simple spells. This is typical of academic styles (theoretical or experimental), folk styles, guild styles taught to apprentices, and temple styles practiced by priests who provide the church with low-key magical aid. The art’s greater spell list might include dozens of high-powered spells – and its best-known followers may be great professors, archmages, guildmasters, and so on – but the dominant philosophy is to teach basics first.

Such styles thus require practitioners to learn a handful of *basic spells*: spells with no spell prerequisites and no additional requirements beyond possibly literacy, a decent IQ, and Magery (traits that most would-be wizards already enjoy). When using the standard prerequisite structure, there are 45 such spells; the table below sorts these by Magery level. Few styles require more than five to 10 of these.

No Magery*

Climbing	Measurement	Seek Power
Debility	Purify Air	Seek Water
Dull (Sense)	See Radiation	Sense Foes
Foolishness†	Seek Air	Sense Life
Haste	Seek Earth	Simple Illusion‡
Ignite Fire	Seek Fire	Sound
Inspired Creation	Seek Food	Tell Time
Itch	Seek Fuel	Test Food
Keen (Sense)	Seek Machine	Test Fuel
Light	Seek Plant	Touch
	Seek Plastic	

Magery 1

Apportation	Detect Magic	Magelock
Block	Far-Feeling	Scroll§
Counterspell	Final Rest	Scryguard
Death Vision	Find Direction	Ward
	Lend Energy	

Magery 2

Shield

* Most stylists have at least Magery 0, though – if only to qualify for Magic Perks (see Chapter 2).

† Requires IQ 12+.

‡ Requires IQ 11+ and sight.

§ Requires a written language at Accented level or better.

Short Chains

Other styles have just one or two pillars, and aim to instruct novices in some depth in these areas. This is the thinking of

elemental styles built around one college, guild styles intended to produce journeymen who can earn their keep, martial styles that emphasize pure combat effectiveness, and temple styles revealed only to devout priest-wizards who are unlikely to be tempted by magical power.

Styles like this require students to learn one or more *short chains*: series that rarely run longer than five spells, often (but not always) from one college, each with only spells on the same list as prerequisites. If one spell is a common prerequisite for several others, then multiple spells that depend on it may appear as either choices or requirements. Short chains are too numerous to tabulate like basic spells, but some likely examples appear in the college discussions below.

All of the example chains assume the *standard* prerequisite structure. Running spell count appears in parenthesis at each step, for use in styles that include only *part* of the chain. Spells that require Magery are marked with one asterisk per Magery level (e.g., ** means Magery 2). Most lists are five spells long simply because if a style offers two of them – a reasonable grimoire for an apprentice – then new stylists will start with exactly enough points in spells to qualify for one of the style's Magic Perks!

Air

Air would be well-represented in most styles, including elemental ones, by (1) *either* Purify Air or Seek Air; (2) Create Air; (3) Shape Air; (4) *one* of Air Jet, Air Vision, Body of Air, Walk on Air, Wall of Wind, or Windstorm; and (5) another of those spells, or Predict Weather.

Martial styles have different needs, and might instead favor (1) Purify Air; (2) Create Air; (3) Stench; (4) Destroy Air; and (5) Devitalize Air.

Animal

This college has *no* basic spells. Even its shortest chains invoke Communication and Empathy. This makes Animal spells a good candidate for alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18). If using standard ones, then this chain is as basic as it gets: (1) Sense Foes; (2) Sense Emotion; (3) Persuasion; (4) Beast-Soother; and (5) *one* of (Animal) Control, Beast Summoning, or Master.

Body Control

Nonviolent styles often focus on ability boosters: (1) Itch; (2) Spasm; (3) Clumsiness; (4) Grace; and (5) *one* of Ambidexterity, Balance, or Boost Dexterity.

Helpful styles that completely avoid “curses” need either alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) or some Healing magic, like so: (1) Lend Energy*; (2) Lend Vitality; (3) Might; (4) Vigor; and (5) *one* of Boost Health, Boost Strength, Climbing, Hold Breath*, or Stop Spasm.

Martial styles have endless options. Most start with (1) Itch and (2) Spasm, and then add other spells, taking either the Clumsiness route – as with (3) Clumsiness; (4) Hinder; and (5) Rooted Feet – or the Pain route: (3) Pain; (4) Stun; and (5) Sensitize*.

Communication and Empathy

Classic “magical telepathy” starts out with (1) Sense Foes; (2) Sense Emotion; (3) Truthsayer; (4) Mind-Reading; and (5) *one* of Mind-Search, Mind-Sending, or Soul Rider.

A good start for political and mercantile styles is (1) Sense Foes; (2) Sense Emotion; (3) *one* of Hide Emotion, Persuasion, or Vexation; (4) Truthsayer; and (5) *either* Compel Truth** or Hide Thoughts.

Styles for academics target language ability: (1) Sense Foes; (2) Sense Emotion; (3) *one* of Hide Emotion, Persuasion, or Truthsayer; (4) Lend Language; and (5) Borrow Language.

Earth

Elemental and general styles might open with (1) Seek Earth; (2) Shape Earth; (3) Earth to Stone*; (4) Create Earth; and (5) *one* of Earth Vision, Predict Earth Movement, Stone to Earth, or Walk Through Earth.

As with other colleges, martial styles deviate from noncombat arts. They often replace the fifth item above with (5) *one* of Flesh to Stone, Rain of Stones**, Sand Jet, or Stone Missile.

Enchantment

This college lacks basic spells beyond Scroll. All roads lead through Enchant, which has 10 prerequisites. The GM may wish to establish alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) that make Enchantment-based styles suitable for beginners, or he might *want* such capabilities to be costly (see *Enchanting Items*, p. 11).

Fire

For most styles, especially elemental arts, try (1) Ignite Fire; (2) Create Fire; (3) Shape Fire; (4) Heat; and (5) *either* Resist Cold or Warmth.

Styles that teach how to *counteract* flame are an important variant: (1) Ignite Fire; (2) Extinguish Fire; (3) Fireproof; and *either* (4) Shape Fire and (5) Deflect Energy*, or (4) Resist Fire and (5) Slow Fire.

Martial styles demand a different syllabus: (1) Ignite Fire; (2) Create Fire; (3) Shape Fire; (4) *one* of Fireball*, Flame Jet, or Rain of Fire**; and (5) another of those attacks, or Explosive Fireball, if Fireball is on the list.

Food

Food spells typically appear in styles meant for the lab, which will get good use from (1) Seek Food; (2) Test Food; (3) Season; (4) Far-Tasting*; and (5) *either* Know Recipe or Mature, or *both* for a somewhat costlier style practiced by wizard-alchemists.

A genuine culinary art that requires a couple of Fire spells – (1) Ignite Fire and (2) Create Fire – may go on to (3) Seek Food; (4) Test Food; (5) Season; (6) Cook; and (7) Create Food.

Gate

One Movement-based chain technically qualifies: (1) Apportation*; (2) Levitation; (3) Flight**; (4) Hawk Flight; and (5) Teleport. But while Teleport opens doors to learning future magic, it doesn't open *gates*. Pure Gate styles demand alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) to be beginner-friendly – but given the college's power, the GM may prefer lots of required spells (see *Manipulating Time and Space*, p. 11-12).

Healing

Dungeon fantasy styles that focus on straight-up repairs require (1) Lend Energy*; (2) Lend Vitality; (3) Minor Healing; (4) Major Healing*; and (5) Great Healing***.

Healing styles that complement mundane medicine go for broader, cheaper utility: (1) Lend Energy*; (2) Lend Vitality; (3) Awaken; (4) Stop Bleeding; and (5) Body-Reading.

Any style would benefit from the Healing spells that manipulate magical energy: (1) Lend Energy* and (2) *either* Recover Energy* or Share Energy, or *both* if the founders deemed individual and aided casting equally important.

Quick Picks

Summon Demon is easy. It could be the 11th spell you learn!
– Skeevi Tandoori, Goblin Archmage

Advanced spells often call for one or two spells from each of several colleges. When designing a style that follows standard prerequisites, it's simplest to meet this need with basic spells (p. 6). If the style requires further spells, it's strategic to choose basic spells that are prerequisites for these other requirements.

The following table facilitates this procedure. If picking *one* spell per college, use the whole table. For *two* per college, use only the *Two or More Basic Spells* section – or look under *Short Chains* (pp. 6-9) for the spells that follow a college's basic spells.

One Basic Spell

College	Basic Spell
Earth	Seek Earth
Enchantment	Scroll*
Illusion and Creation	Simple Illusion
Light and Darkness	Light
Making and Breaking	Inspired Creation
Plant	Seek Plant
Water	Seek Water

Two or More Basic Spells

College	Basic Spells
Air	Purify Air, Seek Air
Body Control	Climbing, Debility, Itch, Touch
Communication and Empathy	Sense Foes, Sense Life
Fire	Ignite Fire, Seek Fire
Food	Seek Food, Test Food
Healing	Final Rest*, Lend Energy*
Knowledge	Detect Magic*, Far-Feeling*, Find Direction*, Measurement, Tell Time
Meta-Spells	Counterspell*, Scryguard*, Ward*
Mind Control	Dull (Sense), Foolishness, Keen (Sense)
Movement	Apportation*, Haste
Necromantic	Death Vision*, Final Rest*
Protection and Warning	Block*, Magelock*, Shield†
Sound	Keen Hearing, Sound
Technological	See Radiation, Seek Fuel, Seek Machine, Seek Plastic, Seek Power, Test Fuel

* Requires Magery 1.

† Requires Magery 2.

Illusion and Creation

Pure illusionism styles might prescribe (1) Simple Illusion; (2) Sound; (3) Complex Illusion; (4) Perfect Illusion*; and (5) *one* of Control Illusion, Illusion Disguise, Illusion Shell, or Independence.

Creation styles rapidly end up being costly, cross-college endeavors. See *Creation* (p. 10) for what's probably the most balanced approach – but there's fictional precedent for conjurers who can produce matter but *not* phantasms, so alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) could suit some campaigns.

Knowledge

In magical arts for exploring magic itself, consider (1) Detect Magic*; (2) Identify Spell; (3) Analyze Magic; (4) *one* of Aura, Mage Sense, Mage Sight, Seek Magic, or Sense Mana; and (5) another of those five spells.

Styles for *finding* things need (1) *one* of Seek Air, Seek Earth, Seek Fire, Seek Food, Seek Fuel, Seek Machine, Seek Plant, Seek Plastic, Seek Power, or Seek Water; (2) a second "Seek" spell; (3) Seeker*; (4) Trace; and (5) *either* History or Pathfinder*.

Oracular disciplines with Divination spells as basic training will either be expensive (see *Divination*, pp. 10-11) or offer alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18).

Light and Darkness

Light magic frequently implies *white* magic, which can follow many paths: (1) Light; (2) Continual Light; (3) *one* of Colors, Flash, Glow, Light Jet, Remove Shadow, Shape Light, or Wall of Light; (4) a second spell from that list; and (5) a third spell off the list, or Sunlight*, if Colors and Glow are mandated.

By the same token, dark arts might have (1) Light; (2) Continual Light; (3) Darkness; (4) *one* of Blackout, Blur, Gloom, Shade, or Shape Darkness; and (5) another spell from that list, or Hide, if Blur is required.

Making and Breaking

A style for repairs and maintenance might start out: (1) Simple Illusion; (2) Restore; (3) Clean; and (4) Soilproof. Going further demands Find Weakness, in the next chain.

If the style is about blasting things or advanced repairs, its starting spells must be (1) *either* Purify Air or Seek Air; (2) Seek Earth; (3) *either* Ignite Fire or Seek Fire; (4) Seek Water; and (5) Find Weakness.

Due to the large number of cross-college prerequisites, the GM may prefer to use *Alternative Prerequisites* (pp. 16-18).

Meta-Spells

This college of advanced magic isn't ideal for beginners. Spells like Bless, Curse, Dispel Magic, Link, and Remove Curse make a style that retains standard prerequisites quite costly (see *Long Chains*, pp. 10-12) – but altering the prerequisites isn't advised, given the spells' power! Still, Magical School Familiarity (p. 20) makes Counterspell and Ward valuable on their own, so styles may teach basics like (1) Counterspell* and (2) Suspend Spell*; (1) Ward* and (2) *either* Great Ward** or Reflect; or (1) Scryguard* and (2) Scrywall.

Mind Control

Mesmerism styles might favor control, insanity, slumber, or several other effects: (1) Foolishness; (2) Daze; (3) Forgetfulness*; (4) *one* of Command**, Disorient, Fascinate, Madness, Mass Daze, Mental Stun, Mindlessness**, Permanent Forgetfulness**, Sleep, or Weaken Will*; (5) a second spell from that list, or Emotion Control (with Mental Stun), Mass Sleep (with Sleep), or Permanent Madness** (with Madness).

Movement

“Magical telekinesis” practically *defines* “wizard” in some backgrounds, where these basics suit most styles: (1) Apportation*; (2) Locksmith; (3) *either* Dancing Object** or Poltergeist; (4) *one* of Lockmaster, Manipulate, or Undo; and (5) a spell not picked from the previous two lists.

Flight and teleportation are also classic magic tricks that could appear in any style as (1) Apportation*; (2) Levitation; (3) Flight**; (4) Hawk Flight; and (5) Teleport.

Martial styles prefer spells useful on the march and in battle: (1) Haste and (2) *either* Quick March* or Great Haste*, or conceivably both.

Necromantic

For magical arts of death, (1) Death Vision* and (2) Summon Spirit** are a “good” start. Other choices tend to go one way for styles that deal with spirits – (3) Materialize; (4) Solidify; and (5) *one* of Affect Spirits, Animation, Skull-Spirit, or Summon Shade – and another for those that work with corpses: (3) Lend Energy*; (4) Lend Vitality; and (5) Zombie.

An unrelated syllabus is close enough to Healing to avoid censure in some settings, and might end up in any style that burns a lot of energy: (1) Lend Energy*; (2) Lend Vitality; (3) Minor Healing; (4) Steal Energy; and (5) Steal Vitality.

Plant

Folk styles concerned with crops nearly always include (1) Seek Plant; (2) Identify Plant; (3) Heal Plant; (4) Plant Growth; and (5) Bless Plants.

Martial styles for wood-folk look similar at the early stages, but replace Bless Plants with (5) *one* of Blight, Conceal, Forest Warning, Hide Path, or Tangle Growth. Costly styles offer several such options.

Protection and Warning

For a style built around *area* protection and warning – as of a guildhall or a temple – excellent basics are (1) Sense Foes; (2) Sense Danger; (3) *either* Nightingale or Sense Observation; (4) Watchdog; and (5) Mystic Mist*.

Martial styles often teach a few spells from this college: (1) Shield** and (2) *one* of Armor, Bladeturning, or Missile Shield, or possibly two or all three.

An unrelated martial form favored by unarmed fighters with Body Control spells is (1) Itch; (2) Spasm; (3) Pain; (4) Resist Pain**; and (5) Iron Arm.

Finally, it’s *exceedingly* common for the house style of any private wizards’ club to encompass Magelock*.

Sound

Arts for merchants, professors, and other wizards who speak outdoors or in large halls may add (1) Sound; (2) Thunderclap; (3) Voices; (4) Great Voice; and (5) Far-Hearing*.

Stealth is valuable to assassins’ styles, and benefits from (1) Sound; (2) Silence; (3) Wall of Silence; (4) Hush; and (5) Mage-Stealth.

Technological

This college *isn’t* self-contained, which makes low-cost styles focused on each sub-college’s “element” impractical. With standard prerequisites, the sub-colleges demand extensive cross-college study. The GM may want pure tech styles to use alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18).

Energy styles generally focus on power, with the most attractive and remotely self-contained chain still being fairly long: (1) Seek Power; (2) Conduct Power*; (3) Lend Energy*; (4) Lend Vitality; (5) Minor Healing; and (6) Steal Power**.

Fuel spells rely on elemental magic to get past the basics, but *any* lab-science style could use (1) Seek Fuel; (2) Test Fuel; and (3) Preserve Fuel.

As for Machine spells, styles that work with mundane artifacts may offer (1) Seek Machine and (2) Reveal Function, but the good stuff relies on spells from six or seven other colleges.

Styles intended for metal-workers *can* be fairly self-contained, if Earth spells aren’t taboo: (1) Seek Earth (a.k.a. “Seek Metal”); (2) Shape Earth; (3) Identify Metal; (4) Shape Metal*; and (5) *either* Body of Metal** or Metal Vision,

Likewise, arts meant for plastic-workers are feasible, if one accepts the bizarre need for Plant spells: (1) Seek Plant; (2) Identify Plant; (3) Shape Plant; (4) Shape Plastic*; and (5) *either* Body of Plastic** or Plastic Vision.

Radiation spells have the same problem as Fuel spells, but a general lab-science art would benefit from (1) See Radiation and (2) Seek Radiation.

*Style is a magic wand, and
turns everything to gold that
it touches.*

– Logan Pearsall Smith

Water

Water could fit into almost any style, including an elemental one, in the form of (1) Seek Water; (2) Purify Water; (3) Create Water; (4) Shape Water; and (5) *one* of Body of Water, Destroy Water, Fog, Freeze, Umbrella, Walk on Water, Walk Through Water*, Water Jet, Water Vision, or Whirlpool.

As usual, martial styles flow in a different direction. They might replace the fifth item above with (5) *one* of Ice Sphere, Icy Touch*, or Icy Weapon.

Weather

Weather spells are essentially an appendage of Air and Water magic. A standalone weather style requires numerous elemental spells and soon ends up being costly (see *Weather Magic*, p. 12). Still, a folk style would get good use from (1) *either* Purify Air or Seek Air; (2) Create Air; (3) Seek Water; (4) Purify Water; (5) Clouds; and (6) Rain.

Long Chains

A style could require its practitioners to have even deeper knowledge. It might exist expressly to cast an advanced spell, often for profit; e.g., “Every mage of the Enchanters’ Guild shall master Enchant!” It may instead be intended for ascetic monks, elite warrior-wizard commandos, students expected to join the academy for life, or other extremely dedicated people. Or perhaps the style founder simply chose a tough row to hoe!

These styles teach *long chains*: spell sets that involve as many spells and colleges as it takes to include the target spell(s) in the style’s required spells. The difference between a long chain and a short one is “soft” but real. If nothing else, many long chains exclude mages with Magery (One College Only), and offer enough spells that even the minimum point in each qualifies stylists for several Magic Perks!

Long chains are more numerous than short ones, simply because *any* spell with more than four or five prerequisites meets the criteria. However, several classic themes stand out. Once again, these discussions assume standard prerequisites.

Banishing Spirits

The Banish spell is a logical goal for a temple style, or a martial style used by demon-slayers. It’s a necessary tool – and wizards interested in acquiring it tend to be dedicated. Banish needs Magery 1 and a spell from each of 10 colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for a total of 11 required spells.

Blessing and Cursing

Hexes and charms are the traditional province of wise-folk, blessings are part of what priest-wizards do, and curses are expected of necromancers. Styles for such mages might require Bless or Curse. These spells call for Magery 2 and *two* spells from each of 10 colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for 21 required spells – or 22, for Bless *and* Curse.

Any wizard who qualifies for Bless or Curse also satisfies the criteria under *Banishing Spirits* (above) and *Summoning Demons* (p. 12). “Good” temple styles with Bless may therefore append Banish, while dark arts that require Curse are wont to add Summon Demon – and perhaps Banish, too.

Cold and Ice Magic

Cold and ice spells are hidden under Air, Water, Weather, and even Fire magic! The GM might rectify this by creating a style with alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18), defining an “Ice college.” Otherwise, an elemental cold style requires *lots* of spells, starting with both of these chains (for notation, see *Short Chains*, pp. 6-7):

(1) Ignite Fire; (2) Create Fire; (3) Shape Fire; (4) Heat; and (5) Cold.

(1) Seek Water; (2) Purify Water; (3) Create Water; (4) Frost; (5) Shape Water; and (6) Freeze.

Cold, Freeze, and Frost are fitting “basics.” Those three spells and their prerequisites, a total of 11 spells, qualify a cold wizard to learn any of Coolness, Create Ice, Frostbite, Ice Slick, Ice Sphere, Icy Touch*, Icy Weapon, Melt Ice, Resist Cold, or Snow Shoes.

Weather-witching icy arts might go in a slightly different direction, requiring only the *Water* spells above, and then adding (1) Purify Air; (2) Create Air; (3) Clouds; (4) Snow; and (5) Hail. That, too, comes to 11 spells – or 16, if also including the Fire spells.

Creation

Pulling objects out of thin air is a wizardly standby, and could show up as a standard teaching of almost any style. Create Object is the key spell here, and calls for Magery 2 and *two* short chains:

(1) Seek Earth; (2) Shape Earth; (3) Earth to Stone*; and (4) Create Earth.

(1) Simple Illusion; (2) Sound; (3) Complex Illusion; and (4) Perfect Illusion*.

With Create Object, that comes to nine spells. After coming this far, a style might toss in Control Creation to get an even 10 (good for one Magic Perk!).

Creating *beings* – especially ones with initiative – demands yet more spells. If desired as the “basics” of a style, alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) are more straightforward.

Dispel Magic

Almost universal among the thaumatological arts in many worlds is the ability to *end* magical effects. If a style requires at least 12 spells – exclusive of Counterspell – then simply add (1) Counterspell* and (2) Dispel Magic at the end. Otherwise, pad it out to 12 spells first, using basic spells or short chains. Either way, this comes to 14 spells in all.

Divination

The mantic arts are widespread in myth and fiction. Each Divination spell *could* give rise to a unique style, with it and its prerequisites constituting the complete spell list, and diviners qualifying for Magic Perks by spending lots of points on Divination! If the GM favors this over alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18), then these long chains – while not the *only* way to achieve each spell – favor efficiency and Information spells where possible:

Astrology: (1) *One* of Seek Earth, Seek Fire, or Seek Water; (2) Seek Air; (3) Create Air; (4) Shape Air; (5) Air Vision; (6) Predict Weather; (7) Seeker*; (8) Trace; (9) History; and (10) Astrology. Also requires Astronomy at 15+, making this a required skill.

Augury, Cartomancy, Dactylomancy, or Sortilege: (1) Seek Air; (2) Seek Earth; (3) Seek Fire; (4) Seek Water; (5) Seeker*; (6) Trace; (7) History; and (8) whichever of Augury, Cartomancy, Dactylomancy, or Sortilege is applicable.

Crystal-Gazing: (1) Seek Earth; (2) Seek Water; (3) Purify Water; (4) Create Water; (5) Shape Water; (6) Water Vision; (7) Seeker*; (8) Trace; (9) History; and (10) Crystal-Gazing. Water Vision is preferable to Earth Vision because its prerequisites can conjure gazing pools!

Extispicy: (1) Seek Food; (2) Seek Water; (3) Sense Foes; (4) Sense Emotion; (5) Persuasion; (6) Beast-Soother; (7) Beast Summoning; (8) Beast Speech; (9) Beast Seeker; (10) Seeker*; (11) Trace; (12) History; and (13) Extispicy.

Gastromancy: (1) Foolishness; (2) Daze; (3) Sleep; (4) *one* of Seek Air, Seek Earth, Seek Fire, or Seek Water; (5) a second “Seek” spell; (6) Seeker*; (7) Trace; (8) History; and (9) Gastromancy. Also requires Hypnotism at 15+, making this a required skill.

Geomancy: (1) Seek Earth; (2) Seek Pass; (3) Shape Earth; (4) Earth Vision; (5) Seeker*; (6) Trace; (7) History; and (8) Geomancy.

Style Prerequisites

A style's required spells may result in the art being available only to wizards with exceptional IQ, high Magery, or both. Such minima are *style prerequisites*. A would-be student who lacks the necessary brains or talent is unable to meet the style's expectations, and thus *cannot* acquire its Magical School Familiarity perk, unique Magic Perks, or secret spells.

When designing a style, note these minima with the other style components. They're valuable information! Unless the school is entirely secret, anybody who deals with a card-carrying practitioner will have some idea of that person's gifts. On a meta-game level, the stricter the requirements, the more "elite" and rarified the style, and the harder it should be to find its representatives and bases of operation.

Style prerequisites are also useful adventure catalysts. If a PC wants to learn a style – doubtless for its sweet Magic Perks or secret spells – but doesn't have what it takes, the style's custodians might simply turn him away, either at once or after teaching him what he *can* learn. But it's more fun if they give him a quest to improve his condition. This might be a thinly veiled excuse to earn enough points to boost his scores, or it may involve magical enlightenment (the *only* way to raise Magery in some worlds).



Minimum IQ

Consult this list and assess the *highest* IQ demanded by the style's required spells:

IQ 13: Accelerate Time, Lich, Mass Daze, Mass Sleep, Permanent Forgetfulness, Permanent Madness, Slow Time, Teleport (if learned via basic spells), and Wraith.

IQ 12: Create Animal, Create Servant, Foolishness, Great Haste, Pathfinder, and Seeker.

IQ 11: Lend Skill, Restore Memory, and Simple Illusion.

Minimum Magery

Required Spells (pp. 6-12) indicates the Magery level needed for each spell. The *highest* such level for a style's required spells becomes a style prerequisite.

Other Prerequisites

Styles – especially *temple* styles – sometimes demand traits that *aren't* tied to required spells. Masters may require candidates to make sacrifices in the form of disadvantages: oaths (usually Disciplines of Faith or Vows), body modifications (Distinctive Features for tattoos, physical disadvantages for amputations, etc.), or the suggestions under *Disadvantages* (p. 18). They might teach only students who have modified Magery; the Pact limitation is particularly suitable. Anything is possible! Like minimum IQ and Magery, these things don't affect style cost (p. 19) but are nevertheless mandatory.

Lecanomancy: (1) Seek Water; (2) Seek Coastline; (3) Purify Water; (4) Create Water; (5) Seeker*; (6) Trace; (7) History; and (8) Lecanomancy.

Numerology or Symbol-Casting: (1) *One* of Seek Air, Seek Earth, Seek Fire, or Seek Water; (2) a second "Seek" spell; (3) Seeker*; (4) Trace; (5) History; and (6) whichever of Numerology or Symbol-Casting applies. Numerology demands Mathematical Ability, but at the GM's option, Mathematics (Cryptology or Pure) at 15+ will suffice. Symbol-Casting calls for Symbol Drawing at 15+. Either becomes a required skill.

Oneiromancy: (1) *One* of Seek Air, Seek Earth, Seek Fire, or Seek Water; (2) a second "Seek" spell; (3) Sense Foes; (4) Sense Emotion; (5) Truthsayer; (6) Dream Viewing; (7) Seeker*; (8) Trace; (9) History; and (10) Oneiromancy.

Physiognomy: A more logical path to this spell involves four *Healing* spells instead of four *Body Control* spells: (1) *One* of Seek Air, Seek Earth, Seek Fire, or Seek Water; (2) a second "Seek" spell; (3) Lend Energy*; (4) Lend Vitality; (5) Awaken; (6) Body-Reading; (7) Seeker*; (8) Trace; (9) History; and (10) Physiognomy.

Pyromancy: (1) Seek Fuel; (2) Seek Fire; (3) Ignite Fire; (4) Create Fire; (5) Extinguish Fire; (6) Seeker*; (7) Trace; (8) History; and (9) Pyromancy.

Electricity Magic

Lightning-related spells don't get their own college but could reasonably be singled out for an elemental style, a

temple style for the Storm God's servants, or – given all the offensive spells – a martial style. A long chain of spells sets it up, and while these Air spells aren't the only options, they suit the stormy arts: (1) *Either* Purify Air or Seek Air; (2) Create Air; (3) Shape Air; (4) Windstorm; (5) Predict Weather; (6) Wind; (7) Lightning*; and (8) Resist Lightning.

Lightning and Resist Lightning form the core. With these, an electricity wizard could go on to learn *Body of Lightning***, *Explosive Lightning*, *Lightning Stare*, *Lightning Weapon***, *Lightning Whip*, *Shocking Touch*, *Spark Cloud*, *Spark Storm*, or *Wall of Lightning*. Adding two of these to style requirements yields an even 10 spells – handy when seeking Magic Perks.

Enchanting Items

Enchanters' guilds – being mercenary in most settings – aren't interested in wizards who can't *enchant*. Their house styles require the *Enchant* spell, which calls for Magery 2 and a spell from each of 10 colleges *other* than *Enchantment* (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for a total of 11 required spells.

Manipulating Time and Space

Gate magic is extremely advanced when using standard prerequisites. That's for the best in most backgrounds! Nevertheless, fiction adores secretive magical factions who monopolize the mysteries of planes and portals, suggesting magical styles. Such arts are customarily unorthodox; thus for an NPC cabal, alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) work well.

However, if PCs have access to this stuff in a campaign that hews to the standards, it's fairest to hold them to the long, arduous path.

There are three important subcategories:

Gate-Working: Seek Gate is pivotal. It requires Magery 2; (1) Detect Magic* and (2) Seek Magic; and one spell from nine other colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8). That comes to 12 spells. Some styles tinker with existing gates, and go on to call for (1) Scry Gate and (2) Control Gate***; others conjure new ones, and demand (1) Control Gate*** and (2) Create Gate. Either means 14 spells. To make Create Gate useful, a style that requires it might further add (1) Planar Summons* and (2) Plane Shift, and/or (1) Teleport and (2) Timeport***, for 16 or 18 spells.

Planar Travel: Planar Summons is the keystone spell, and requires Magery 1 and a spell from each of 10 colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for a total of 11 required spells. Acquiring it permits Plane Shift and Planar Visit**. Plane Shift, Planar Summons, and Planar Visit all require specialization by plane, so the style's magic – beyond the basics – might consist entirely of dozens of specialties of these spells.

Time Control: Both Accelerate Time and Slow Time are suitable core spells. Either calls for Magery 2 and two spells from each of 10 colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for 21 required spells for one of Accelerate Time or Slow Time – or 22 for both. After that, Accelerate Time allows Time Out***, while Slow Time enables Suspend Time***. Either might be required.

Removing Curses

Lifting hexes fits the styles mentioned under *Blessing and Cursing* (p. 10). Remove Curse requires Magery 2 and one spell from each of 15 colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for a total of 16 required spells. Meeting this requirement also lets a thaumaturge learn Banish, and styles that require one may require the other – especially if the art's area of expertise is “exorcism.”

Summoning Demons

The Summon Demon spell has a disturbing tendency to turn up in all kinds of styles, especially unsavory temple styles, creepy black arts, and necromantic schools. Summon Demon requires Magery 1 and a spell from each of 10 colleges (see *Quick Picks*, p. 8), for a total of 11 required spells. A wizard who meets these requirements can immediately learn Banish, too, so this might be required . . . but not if *demons* founded the art!

Weather Magic

Weather-witching is a magical specialty with a secure place in folklore, and could fairly have its own schools and prerequisites. Under the standard rules, though, Weather spells demand heavy investment in other colleges. Three short chains are needed to learn the core Weather spells:

(1) *Either* Purify Air or Seek Air; (2) Create Air; (3) Shape Air; and (4) Windstorm.

(1) Ignite Fire; (2) Create Fire; (3) Shape Fire; (4) Heat; and (5) Cold.

(1) Seek Water and (2) Purify Water.

That's 11 spells. After that, the “basics” of weather control are Clouds, Cool, Frost, Warm, and Wind, bringing the total to 16 spells. When aiming for an even 20, so that a point in each qualifies a starting student for several Magic Perks, standard additions are Predict Weather, plus (1) Seek Earth; (2) Shape Earth; and (3) Weather Dome.

PERKS

Every style includes a few tricks of the trade that go beyond “yet more spells.” These are known as *Magic Perks* – see Chapter 2 for many examples! Each style should list all the Magic Perks that the GM feels suit it.

Any mage can purchase one Magic Perk per 20 points he has in spells, but his choices must come from among perks that the GM deems “general” – that is, available to every wizard in the setting, regardless of his magical education. Magicians who have spent at least a point on each of a style's required skills and spells, and bought Magical School Familiarity (p. 20) for the style, enjoy two benefits.

First, they may further buy one of the Magic Perks specifically listed for their school per 10 points in that style's spells – be those spells required, on the greater spell list, or even secret. For quick reference, see the *Spells and Perks Table* (below).

Second, their school's Magic Perks might include choices that *aren't* on the “general” list for the campaign. This means that taking up and working hard at a style may be the only path to a desirable ability. In particular, styles often include Secret Spell (p. 30) perks that are necessary to learn their unique spells.

Thus, while Magic Perks are small investments, they're deceptively minor – in a way, they define a style as much as its spells. It's wise not to be stingy when assigning perks to a style. For one thing, the total cost in the form of points in spells is quite high, which keeps wizards who barely qualify for the style from cherry-picking its perks. For another, there must be enough Magic Perks that archmages, guildmasters, and the Dean of Magic have an incentive to stick with their art and invest hundreds of points in its spells.

Particularly appropriate Magic Perks for broad categories of styles are recommended below. Styles don't exist in a vacuum, though! Any style can have *any* perk, if its game-world background justifies it. These notes omit page references for brevity; to look up a perk, consult the index.

Perks for Elemental Styles

Elemental styles, as they normally concentrate on one college, tend to have lots of perks that require specialization by *spell*. These enable a modest spell list to function as if it were larger. Other perks offer resistance to or added control over the element's effects.

Spells and Perks Table

Points in Style's Spells	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Total Magic Perks	1	3	4	6	7	9	10	12	13	15

Suggested Perks: Area Spell Mastery*; Blocking Spell Mastery*; Elixir Resistance (any elixir related to element); Far-Casting*; Improvised Magic; Intuitive Cantrip (as befits element); License; Limited Energy Reserve; Magical Style Adaptation; Melee Spell Mastery*; Missile Spell Mastery*; Permit (for dangerous elements); Reduced Footprint; Rote Alchemy (elixirs related to element); Secret Spell; Spell Bond; Spell Hardiness; Spell Resistance; Spell Variation; and Stabilizing Skill.

* For colleges with many spells of the affected class.

Styles that focus on Enchantment might also have perks suited to experimental or guild styles, while Meta-Spell arts nab a few from the theoretical list. Necromantic schools often complement forbidden spells with creepy perks such as Blood Magic, Covenant of Rest, Frightening Side Effects, Life-Force Burn, Shaman's Trance, and Spirit Contract.

Perks for Experimental Styles

Experimentalists mix new formulations with tricks that are handy around the lab, and are academic enough to absorb a few stuffy staff-and-gown perks. Field-oriented schools sometimes pillage martial styles for perks, while lab-oriented ones ape theoretical styles.

Suggested Perks: Academic Rank; Convenience Casting; Elixir Resistance; Flexible Ritual; Improvised Items; Improvised Magic; Intuitive Cantrip (Kindle or Spark); License; Magical Style Adaptation; No Gestures; No Incantations; Paraphernalia Pro; Permit (for almost anything); Precision Recharger; Rote Alchemy; Sanctum; Scroll-Reading; Secret Material; Secret Spell; Shortcut to Power; Special Exercises (IQ or Magery); Spell Bond; Spell Duelist; Spell Enhancement; Spell Resistance; Staff Attunement; Staff Bond; and Thaumalogical Doublespeak.

Perks for Folk Styles

Folk styles primarily offer perks that help the wizard look wise, or that offer an end run around excessive formality. Perks which enable rules options that emulate real-world beliefs also fit, because in worlds where "magic" means "fireballs," tools such as star charts and True Names need to yield serious bonuses to avoid seeming quaint.

Suggested Perks: Astrological Ceremonies; Attribute Substitution (any); Convenience Casting; Improvised Items; Improvised Magic; Intimidating Curses; Intuitive Cantrip (any); Knowers of Names; Limited Energy Reserve; Magical Lawyer; Magical Style Adaptation; Mundane Magic; Named Possession; Reduced Footprint; Rote Alchemy; Sanctum; Scroll-Reading; Secret Mage; Secret Spell; Shaman's Trance; Special Exercises (Wild Talent); Spell Bond; Spirit Contract; Staff Attunement; Super-Sympathy; Thaumalogical Doublespeak; Willful Casting; and Wizardly Dabbler.

Perks for Guild Styles

Guilds occupy themselves with things they can *sell*: magical merchandise (elixirs and enchanted items), sorcerous services (e.g., mass magic on large subjects, like cities), and mundane goods and services aided by magic. The perks in their styles reflect this. Guild R&D styles might add choices more suited to experimental and theoretical schools.

Suggested Perks: Better Magic Items; Guild Rank; Huge Subjects; Immunity to (Specific Hazard); Improvised Items; Intuitive Cantrip (Boost Enchantment or Spark); License; Magical Lawyer; Magical Style Adaptation; Mass Magician; Mundane Magic; Paraphernalia Pro; Permit (for whatever the guild does); Precision Recharger; Quick and Focused; Rote Alchemy; Sanctum; Secret Spell; Special Exercises (FP can exceed HT by 100%; IQ; or Magery); Speedy Enchantment; Spell Bond; Spell Duelist; Thaumalogical Doublespeak; and Wizardly Garb.



Perks for Martial Styles

Martial styles – like mundane martial arts – raid their rivals for the best bits and keep what's effective. If a perk increases available energy, damage, range, skill, or any other value pertinent to winning a fight *right now*, it fits. Conversely, if it benefits only slow, careful noncombat magic, it's right out.

Suggested Perks: Area Spell Mastery; Attribute Substitution (DX or HT variants); Blocking Spell Mastery; Blood Magic; Brute-Force Spell; Combat Ceremony; Continuous Ritual; Elixir Resistance; Enhanced Spell; Far-Casting; Fast Casting; Flagellant's Blessing; Flexible Ritual; Frightening Side Effects; Huge Subjects; Intuitive Cantrip (Pebbles or Reinforce); License; Life-Force Burn; Limited Energy Reserve; Magical Style Adaptation; Magical Weapon Bond; Melee Spell Mastery; Mighty Spell; Missile Spell Mastery; No Gestures; No Incantations; Permit (for legitimate war magic); Power Casting; Psychic Guidance; Reduced Footprint; Rule of 17; Sacrificial Blocking Spell; Secret Spell; Special Exercises (FP can exceed HT by 100%); Spell Bond; Spell Duelist; Spell Hardiness; Spell Resistance; Staff Attunement; Staff Bond; and Super-Sympathy.

Perks for Temple Styles

Sacred arts vary as much as the powers they serve, but two broad classes of perks are fairly universal: those with a spiritual slant and those that integrate devotional practices (meditation, flagellation, sacrifice . . .). Perks off the elemental list also fit, where the element corresponds closely to the deity's sphere.

Suggested Perks: Astrological Ceremonies; Attribute Substitution (Will or HT variants); Combat Ceremony; Continuous Ritual; Covenant of Rest; Enhanced Spell; Flagellant's Blessing; Intimidating Curses; Intuitive Cantrip (Aid, Corpse Smart, or Mystic Gesture); License; Life-Force Burn; Magical Lawyer; Magical Style Adaptation; Mass Magician; Mystic's Stupor; Named Possession; Permit (for magic off-limits to temporal casters); Sacrificial Blocking Spell; Sanctum; Scroll-Reading; Secret Spell; Secret Words; Shaman's Trance; Special Exercises (IQ or Wild Talent); Spell Bond; Spirit Contract; and Willful Casting.

Perks for Theoretical Styles

As befits theoreticians, their styles could *in theory* offer any perk; such arts deal with the root of magic, after all. In practice, few schools teach rough-and-tumble perks (with the notable exception of those for formal dueling) or decidedly mercenary ones. Some stray into the territory of experimental styles, though.

Suggested Perks: Academic Rank; Astrological Ceremonies; Improvised Magic; Intuitive Cantrip (Gate Experience, Magical Analysis, or Mystic Gesture); Kill Switch; Knower of Names; License; Limited Energy Reserve; Magical Lawyer; Magical Style Adaptation; Mana Compensation; Named Possession; Obscure True Name; Paraphernalia Pro; Permit (for almost anything); Sanctum; Scroll-Reading; Secret Mage; Secret Material; Secret Spell; Secret Words; Shortcut to Power; Special Exercises (any); Spell Bond; Spell Duelist; Spell Enhancement; Spell Resistance; Stabilizing Skill; Staff Attunement; Staff Bond; Thaumalogical Doublespeak; Willful Casting; Wizardly Dabbler; and Wizardly Garb.

SECRET SPELLS

Secret spells – spells *not* on the campaign's general spell list – are the most jealously guarded property of any wizardly fraternity, guild, order, or school. Like perks exclusive to the style, they're rare or unique among magical teachings in the game world. Unlike perks, though, secret spells aren't mere tweaks – they're entirely new magical works.

A secret spell might simply be a standard spell from the **Basic Set** or **Magic** – or one suggested in **Thaumatology** – that the GM doesn't normally permit PC wizards to learn. It could be an arcane specialty of a commonly known spell that comes in many varieties (e.g., Divination or Planar Summons). Or perhaps it's an entirely new spell!

The GM designs *all* new secret spells. Most should be fair and balanced within the spell system – but not all! Styles have membership requirements for many reasons, one of which is to screen out wizards unworthy of great power. The GM must assign all the usual notes and statistics for his spells: class, college, duration, energy cost, time to cast, prerequisites, and notes on items (if any).

Prerequisites are especially important here. They always include the relevant Secret Spell perk (p. 30), which stylists *must* acquire first. All spell prerequisites should appear on the style's spell list. If the style's secret spells have to be learned in a specific order, then simpler secret spells ought to be prerequisites for more complex ones. Secret spells should never be required spells, meaning that their Magery and IQ

prerequisites won't influence overall style prerequisites. It's quite possible to be a qualified practitioner but not learn secret spells – whether because you didn't bother (didn't select the perk) or weren't worthy (insufficient IQ or Magery).

When designing a style, the GM should include one Secret Spell perk per secret spell among the style's perks. He need *not* show players the spell write-ups, though! It's in keeping with the way guilds and brotherhoods do business to require apprentices to learn obscure theory (represented by the perk) before revealing its purpose. Still, secret spells should have *evocative* names to make the perk attractive.

SPELL LIST

A style's spell list is the *complete* catalog of spells that wizards can learn by pursuing the art. Spells in this inventory enjoy four special properties that *don't* hold for any other spells stylists might learn:

- The benefits of Magical School Familiarity (p. 20) – superior counter-magic and easy access to new spells – apply to them.
- Points spent on them count when calculating the number of bonus Magic Perks for which a stylist qualifies (see *Perks*, p. 12).
- Magic Perks that require specialization by style benefit them.
- Any *Alternative Prerequisites* (pp. 16-18) options the style uses apply to them.

Otherwise, the spells work as they always do, although the GM can vary small details to better fit the flavor of a particular outlook without turning the spell into a secret one. For instance, if the Skull-Spirit ritual of the Crematory Rectors summons *flaming* skulls that deal burning damage instead of toxic damage, then add a footnote to the spell list – don't make Rectors waste a Secret Spell perk on it!

Populating the List

Creating a custom spell list for each style is labor-intensive but worth the effort in a long-term campaign. Following these steps can speed things up:

1. Include all of the style's *required* spells.
2. Include all of the style's *secret* spells and their complete prerequisite chains – right back to basic spells. If there's more than one possible chain, include only the one(s) that best suit the style (GM's judgment).
3. If an *entire college* makes sense, include it wholesale, along with its prerequisites – but omit anything that doesn't seem to fit.
4. Tack on any outliers that simply “feel right,” along with their prerequisites.

If the GM intends to hold PC wizards to a style apiece, then the final list should be *at least* the size of two colleges, so that practitioners don't end up suffering the bad effects of One College Only without receiving the discount for that limitation on their Magery. The upper limit past which a style grows unfocused is somewhere around the equivalent of three colleges. A *very* rough bracket, then, is from 70 to 105 spells.

Guild apprentices without Mind Control and/or Communication and Empathy spells don't last long enough to become journeymen.

If the GM plans to let PC wizards “collect” multiple styles, then each style should be *compact*. It might be the size of a college, or roughly 35 spells. It may consist of nothing more than a single long chain, as suggested under *Divination* (p. 10).

Below are further ideas for particular types of styles.

Spells for Elemental Styles

Elemental styles are single-college arts by definition. Mages who learn them often *do* have Magery (One College Only), so it's reasonable simply to make the college spell list the style spell list. Out-of-college prerequisites belong, too, of course, unless remedied through alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18). If alternative prerequisites move a spell *into* the style's college, it will work with the relevant form of limited Magery.

An elemental style should nearly *always* have many secret spells dealing with its core subject – fire, necromancy, etc. In most settings, if *anybody* has hidden knowledge about a magical topic, it's the wizards who specialize in it.

Spells for Experimental Styles

Experimentalists need spells handy for lab work. The most obvious are those that can conjure heat and materials, which means *basic* Air, Earth, Fire, and Water magic. Several Knowledge spells can measure properties, mundane or magical, and are also likely. Food magic (especially Distill, Far-Tasting, Know Recipe, and Mature), Making and Breaking spells (such as Clean), and Technology offerings (like Purify Fuel and See Radiation) are likewise valuable.

Wizards who study ancient writings and artifacts will find Gift of Letters and Analyze Magic vital. They'll also want Scroll and other Enchantment spells suited to fabricating their own items. Thus, Communication and Empathy spells and Enchantment spells are apt to be on the list.

In all cases, entire colleges are *highly* unlikely. Create Fire is worthwhile in the lab; Fireball isn't. Gift of Letters makes short work of old grimoires, but why learn Control Person? Golem is a classic, but Puissance is for arms-dealing guildsmen.

Finally, experimentalists spend lots of time inventing spells. Thus, their secret spells are numerous . . . as are the thaumalogical bugs in those spells!

Spells for Folk Styles

Folk styles are unlikely to incorporate entire colleges. Their magic consists of all the charms and hexes in a specific culture's body of folklore – which can range all over. The total spell count is often comparatively small, and alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) are likely, to avoid including piles of unsuitable spells.

One common thrust here is helping people, crops, and beasts. Some of these spells are fairly simple, like Bless Plants, Body-Reading, Minor Healing, Predict Weather, Protect Animal, Purify Earth, and Seeker. Others are high-powered but entirely in idiom, notably Bless, Create Spring, Dispel Possession, Divination, Rain, and Remove Curse.

Many traditions are fond of curses. While magic like Mystic Mark, Poison Food, and Storm is annoying, it's minor punishment. Nasty and frequently *permanent* hexes are preferred: Age, Arboreal Immurement, Curse, Dry Spring, Lesser Geas, Permanent Forgetfulness, Pestilence, Shapeshift Others, Steal Beauty, Strike Barren, Suspended Animation, etc.

A few arts lean toward shamanism. Banish, Dream Projection, Dream Sending, Sense Spirit, Summon Spirit, Turn Spirit, and so on all fit.

Most folk traditions include a little of all three.

Spells for Guild Styles

Guilds favor spells that give them something to sell. Enchantment spells are best, and guild styles often include much of that college. Efficiency is paramount, however. If *any* alternative prerequisites (or Shortcut to Power perks) exist for this stuff, syndicate mages *will* be expected to adopt them!

Services are also good – better, in settings where no speedy enchantment techniques exist to facilitate item-creation. A guild style might dabble in the colleges of Earth (for erecting buildings), Food (to corner the foodstuffs market), Healing (expensive medical specialists really *earn*), Making and Breaking (simple repairs are a staple), and Weather (rainmaking is *always* salable). These won't be complete colleges if cutting corners is possible.

Finally, guildsmen often employ Mind Control and/or Communication and Empathy spells for internal (and other) politics. No guild archmage would go on the record with it, but such magic insinuates its way into many styles because apprentices without it don't last long enough to become journeymen.

Spells for Martial Styles

Warrior-wizards have straightforward needs. First, most martial styles pick a single college with good physical-damage spells – typically Air (or Weather), Earth, Fire (the most versatile), Making and Breaking, or Water. As much as possible, this means only harmful spells, especially if alternative prerequisites (pp. 16-18) exist to avoid other kinds.

Next, the style chooses either Body Control or Mind Control to provide nasty curses for situations where damage won't do. Body Control is preferable because it offers better “buffs.” Again, the focus is deep and narrow: Learn the combat-effective and discard the rest.

Finally, the art looks to defense, meaning Protection and Warning spells and Healing spells. Slow or noncombat magic is unlikely – Shield and Major Healing work, but not Weather Dome and Restoration. Movement spells are also desirable, with an identical caveat – Glue and Haste fit, but not Lockmaster and Undo.

A band that fights with specific tactics or in particular terrain might trade off some of the above to specialize. Cavalry magicians favor Animal spells, fantasy rangers use Plant spells, and so on.

Spells for Temple Styles

Much of *Spells for Elemental Styles* (p. 15) applies – simply view the divine sphere of the temple's patron deity as a magical college. This correspondence won't always be obvious, though, so judgment is required. For example, based on real-world beliefs, the Goddess of Femininity might expect priests to learn Body Control spells if her aspect is lust, Earth or Plant spells if fertility, Food or Healing spells if nurturing, Illusion and Creation spells if beauty, or Water spells if (as in Taoism) water represents the feminine principle – indeed, her style might dabble in them all!

Certain spells are generically appropriate for *any* mortal representing a god. These include Banish, Bless, Dispel Possession, Final Rest, Monk's Banquet, Remove Curse, Turn Zombie, and Vigil. In high-powered campaigns, Enchantment spells like Lesser Wish, Wish, and even Great Wish – and perhaps Golem – might also qualify.

Dungeon fantasy has associated Healing magic with priests in gamers' minds, but temple styles need not toe this line, as they're for *wizard*-priests. Fantasy clerics should use *Clerical Spell-Magic (Thaumatology, pp. 65-71)* instead. For more on this, see *What of Clerics?* (p. 26).

Spells for Theoretical Styles

Theoretical styles customarily focus on spells from the Knowledge and Meta-Spells colleges that deal directly with magic (and only rarely on those that don't). Especially important are many of Analyze Magic, Counterspell, Delay, Detect Magic, Dispel Magic, Displace Spell, Drain Mana, Great Ward, Hang Spell, Identify Spell, Lend Spell, Link, Magic Resistance, Maintain Spell, Penetrating Spell, Pentagram, Reconstruct Spell, Reflect, Reflex, Restore Mana, Seek Magic, Sense Mana, Spell Shield, Spell Wall, Spellguard, Suspend Magic, Suspend Mana, Suspend Spell, Throw Spell, and Ward.

Such magic is collectively very powerful and requires numerous prerequisites, so the final spell list ends up being considerably longer. These spells also have many possible prerequisite chains. Prerequisite choices help distinguish one otherwise boring, academic style from another: "Every professor knows Analyze Magic, ja, but Ilsa the Inquisitor's school *really* likes Communication and Empathy spells."

Theoreticians, like their experimentalist brethren, enjoy researching new spells. Thus, theoretical schools commonly include many such spells – few of them safe or reliable!

Alternative Prerequisites

All spells but basic ones have spell prerequisites. In the context of magical styles, this can be troublesome.

Sometimes, the issue is with appropriateness. The prerequisites might be a bad fit to a style's "feel." For instance, a school of ice magic *should* have the Cold spell – but Cold's entire prerequisite chain consists of *Fire* spells, which is jarring. Even if the prerequisite itself isn't unsuitable, it might belong to a college that the GM wants to reserve for some other style, or simply not use in the campaign.

In other cases, point cost is the problem: One of the style's logical spells has such a

lengthy prerequisite chain that the style requires a massive investment. As a result, the simplest spell of a completely legitimate magical specialty effectively costs many times as much to learn as the first spell of an equally valid sphere, solely because the rules say so; e.g., Machine Control is pivotal to techno-wizardry but requires 11 spells, while a fire-mage can start torching things with his first spell. Occasionally, an individual outlier that's well-suited to a style – such as Bless in a temple style – is so advanced that what would be a fitting basic ability requires even the style's greenest recruits to be master wizards.

In the context of a structured style where students must buy specific components, like them or not, and select their spells from a limited list, it isn't unreasonable to tackle such problems by altering the irksome prerequisites. The GM need not do this on a campaign-wide basis. It's quite possible to change prerequisites for one school while retaining the standard structure for everybody else, or even to construct a unique prerequisite tree for each style.

Below are some suggestions for how to accomplish these goals. The GM might use any or all in the campaign – or even in one style. Be warned that this can mean a *lot* of work!

Waiving Prerequisites

The easiest solution is also the most obvious: Drop any prerequisite that doesn't fit! If it truly becomes a temple style for Bless to have no prerequisites, or if it makes sense to make Cold, Freeze, and Frost the basic spells of the Icy Arts of the Valkyrie Coven, then the GM is welcome to assume that these schools are party to shortcuts that let them teach advanced spells to rank beginners.

Of course, this runs into game-balance concerns, especially for potent spells such as Bless. Prerequisites don't control spell power to the degree that casting time and energy cost do, but two players creating wizards with the goal of casting the same advanced spell might disagree! Fortunately, there's a workaround.

As noted on p. 67 of *Thaumatology*, a cleric's ability to ignore spell prerequisites can be viewed as a +30% enhancement on Magery. A style that waives prerequisites is, to a limited extent, granting a similar benefit to its adherents. Thus, one could regard 30% of the cost of the style's Magery prerequisite (see *Style Prerequisites*, p. 11) – with Magery 0 as the minimum – as the approximate point value of this benefit. That's 2, 5, 8, or 11 points for Magery 0, 1, 2, or 3, respectively.

Since practitioners *must* spend a point per required skill, the solution is then obvious: Make sure that the style has, at the minimum, required skills equal in number to the point cost calculated above. Of course, this method doesn't respect the number of spells that benefit. For the same points, clerics ignore spell prerequisites for *all* of their spells. Then again, clerics don't get from two to 11 potentially useful skills for those points, so it's a wash. Remember that this is merely a way to visualize and solve a problem; stylists *don't* actually get the No Spell Prerequisites enhancement!



This approach won't always solve the problem of a *costly* style. It nicely removes the problem of inappropriate spells being required for suitable ones, though. In addition, the resulting body of mundane knowledge – in the form of extra skills – serves as a flavorful justification for the school's ability to evade prerequisites.

Shifting Colleges

An alternative technique is to retain a spell's prerequisites but change the college to which it belongs for a style's purposes. This doesn't alter *that spell's* prerequisites, but it does amend the prerequisite tree: When learning spells that require a particular number of unspecified spells from a college, stylists treat the adjusted spell as belonging to the *new* college, not the old one.

This has an extra benefit for elemental styles. Such arts often attract mages who have Magery (One College Only). Now they can learn and use the revised spell as part of their chosen college, provided they adhere to the style. If the GM desires, an elemental style can, as part of its thaumatological underpinning, teach *every* spell on its list as part of the same college. This might be a standard college (Air, Animal, etc.) or an entirely new one defined by the style's spell list (Cold, Lightning, etc.).

Caution is needed where one-college mages are concerned. The GM shouldn't make a college's spell list *too* long, or One College Only will be free points. The average college contains about 35 spells. If the list is larger, the GM can apply logic similar to that under *Waiving Prerequisites* (pp. 16-17): One College Only is -40% while Limited Colleges is from -30% to -10%, so a new college that's the size of two to four standard colleges ought to cost more by having more required skills. Look up this number by cross-referencing the style's list size and Magery prerequisite on this table:

<i>Required Skills Based on Style's Magery Prerequisite</i>				
<i>Spell List</i>	<i>Magery 0</i>	<i>Magery 1</i>	<i>Magery 2</i>	<i>Magery 3</i>
Up to 35 Spells	0	0	0	0
36-70 Spells	1	2	3	4
71-105 Spells	1	3	5	7
106-140 Spells	2	5	8	11

Where the style is effectively a new college, the GM may rule that all adherents must accept the matching One College Only limitation on Magery in order to grasp the style's spells. This means their Magery *won't* benefit standard magic outside the style, which of course involves a collection of completely alien colleges. For a related discussion, see *One-College Magery With Variant Colleges* (*Thaumatology*, p. 42).

None of this affects how *other* wizards who pursue *different* arts – or who opt out of styles altogether – learn spells. A dozen schools could classify the same spells as part of 12 different colleges!

Restructuring Prerequisites

The most complicated option is to rebuild completely the prerequisites of individual spells or entire colleges for the purpose of a style. The general procedure is discussed under *Changing Prerequisites* (*Thaumatology*, pp. 32-33). This is a brute-force method that requires a lot of effort from the GM – especially if he chooses to give each style its own prerequisite

tree. The results are worthwhile in a long-term campaign, though!

The following process can speed things up somewhat:

1. Assemble the style's *entire* spell list, ignoring colleges.
2. Put the spells in order from lowest to highest prerequisite count. For this purpose, the counts on pp. 261-267 of *Thaumatology* are preferable to those on pp. 223-237 of *Magic*, owing to a more compatible methodology.
3. If the lowest prerequisite count is greater than 0, decide whether to "re-zero" the style's spells by declaring its simplest spells to be basic ones. If so, subtract the lowest count from *all* counts, making the lowest one 0, and make sure the style has at least as many required skills as the subtracted count.
4. Using prerequisite count – re-zeroed, if desired – assign each spell a "level":

<i>Prerequisite Count</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2-3</i>	<i>4-7</i>	<i>8-15</i>	<i>16-31</i>	<i>32+</i>
<i>Level</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The GM shouldn't take this as holy writ – flexibility is required. If a level is empty, then after doing the above, renumber the *occupied* levels consecutively. If a level seems a little thin, either promote or demote its spells to adjacent levels and treat it as empty, or move in a few spells from the near edge of adjacent levels to pad it out. Finally, if a spell ends up at the same level as an "advanced" version of itself (e.g., Lesser Geas and Great Geas), then punt the higher-powered spell up a level.

5. Assign lower-level spells as prerequisites for higher-level ones. "Half of all spells at the previous level, round up" is a logical starting point. If a level has fewer than four spells, however, the GM may require stylists to learn them all before acquiring access to spells of the next level. If it has 16+ spells, stopping at eight is probably fair.

Of course, "level" is a boring, overused term. Consider picking another word – like "circle" or "degree" – or replacing numbered grades with something like fancy titles or colored robes.

Example: Alternative Prerequisites

The Lords of Ozone teach only spells to do with electricity, lightning, and storms, and protection from such. The GM decides to apply *Restructuring Prerequisites* (above) first. Looking up prerequisite counts, he gets the following level scheme (prerequisite counts are in parentheses):

Level 1: Seek Power (0).

Level 2: Conduct Power/TL (1), Lend Power (1), Magnetic Vision (1), Radio Hearing (1), Stop Power (1), and Thunderclap (1).

Level 3: Deflect Energy (2).

Level 4: Body of Lightning (7), Explosive Lightning (7), Lightning (6), Lightning Weapon (7), Lightning Whip (7), Planar Visit (Elemental Plane of Lightning) (7), Resist Lightning (6), Shocking Touch (7), Spark Cloud (7), Spark Storm (7), Steal Power (5), and Wall of Lightning (7).

Level 5: Ball of Lightning (8), Control Lightning Elemental (9), Create Lightning Elemental (10), Lightning Armor (12), Lightning Missiles (8), Lightning Stare (8), Plane Shift (Elemental Plane of Lightning) (11), Plane Shift Other (Elemental Plane of Lightning) (12), Storm (10), Summon Lightning Elemental (8), and Weather Dome (8).

Level 6: Draw Power (22).

The Lords require members to know half of a given level's spells before being taught the next level's spells. All Lords needing to learn Seek Power suits the GM, but he dislikes level 3 being so sparse, so he demotes Lightning, Resist Lightning, and Steal Power – which have the lowest counts at level 4 – to level 3. He also notices that Plane Shift and Plane Shift Other are both level 5, and promotes Plane Shift Other to level 6.

This gives one spell at level 1, which must be learned to progress. Level 2 holds six spells, of which three are needed for level 3 spells. Level 3 contains four spells, of which two must be learned for level 4 spells. Level 4 has nine spells, so a Lord requires five to get level 5 spells. Level 5 has 10 spells, of which five are compulsory to attain level 6, which has two spells.

Looking at *Shifting Colleges* (p. 17), the GM decides to shift *all* of these spells into a new Lightning college. Given that they originally hail from five colleges, and that most Lords do have Magery (One College Only, Lightning), extra required skills might be in order. However, the list contains a mere 32 spells, so even if the GM were feeling literal-minded, he could assign three secret spells and still have an average-sized college. Thus, he leaves the skill list alone.

Finally, the GM notices that the Lords' apex spell, Draw Power, has a standard prerequisite count of 22. A Lord hell-bent on learning it could do so after just $1 + 3 + 2 + 5 + 5 = 16$ prerequisites. Thus, it's possible to save six spells (and six points). This isn't the same as *no* prerequisites, so *Waiving Prerequisites* (pp. 16-17) doesn't apply, but the GM tosses in an extra required skill – Electrician – to keep the Lords honest.

Another example of a wholly reworked prerequisite structure appears in *Changing the Colleges* (*Thaumatology*, pp. 41-48).

OPTIONAL TRAITS

Among the components discussed so far, Magic Perks and spells other than required ones are “optional” in the sense that stylists need never learn them. However, a magician who has purchased all of his style's required elements is a certified member of his coven, guild, order, etc. Whether by custom, bureaucratic policy, or an oath to Dark Forces, his mentors are bound to teach him spells to which he knows the prerequisites, together with perks commensurate with that spellcraft. Magical School Familiarity (p. 20) incorporates a Claim to Hospitality to reflect this. Thus, spell and perk *availability* isn't optional.

A style's “optional traits” are optional in *both* senses. They aren't required and might not be available. They're elements often associated with the style, even nigh-universal among its adherents, but not part of its core. Among other things, they're a mix of extra entrance requirements enforced by only particular guildhalls or campuses, teachings of specific masters, and training reserved for hand-picked students.

Attributes and Secondary Characteristics

All wizards benefit from high IQ and FP, but a particular faction may recruit for such gifts, or attempt to improve them through training, and note “Improved IQ” or “Improved FP.” The same is true of high Will or Per, if the style's Magic Perks exploit those scores. Martial styles often value, even require superior ST, DX, HT, HP, Basic Speed, or Basic Move.

Advantages

Most optional advantages are either traits that would help a wizard succeed at the art or learnable advantages (p. B294) taught by it. Less often, they're requirements imposed by exceptionally strict masters, inner circles, etc. Common examples include:

Languages: A style that studies ancient grimoires, as many do, may teach Languages (p. B23). This is particularly likely if the GM uses *Magical Languages* (*Thaumatology*, pp. 87-88). Indeed, the style's incantations might always be chanted in such a tongue!

Magery: As with high IQ, more Magery is always better. It may even be required to learn the style; see *Style Prerequisites* (p. 11). However, styles that recruit only the best – or that possess secret rituals or potions for increasing Magery – might note “Improved Magery.” Magery with enhancements (*Thaumatology*, pp. 28-29) is another possibility.

Magical Abilities: Any advantage that doesn't require Special Exercises (p. 31) in the game world *and* that could reasonably be “magical” might be open to stylists as a learned advantage. Energy Reserve (*Thaumatology*, p. 50) works well, and the GM may permit traits such as modified Magic Resistance (*Thaumatology*, pp. 62-63), Raw Magic Store (*Thaumatology*, p. 228), or even magical advantages (*Thaumatology*, pp. 197-201).

Social Advantages: If a style is the preserve of a specific social class – nobles, priests, etc. – then traits such as Clerical Investment, Status, and Wealth are likely. These may be necessary to be accepted *into* the art, even if they aren't required components of the art. See *Magic in Society* (*Thaumatology*, pp. 217-219) for inspiration.

Disadvantages

Optional disadvantages are a mix of traits that might influence a wizard to choose the style, oaths required of apprentices (self-imposed mental disadvantages; see p. B121), and sorcerous side effects. A given disadvantage can fall into more than one category. For instance, a mage might follow the necromantic Onyx Path (pp. 34-36) because he's Terminally Ill and seeking undeath . . . or end up Terminally Ill after quaffing a flawed Elixir of Lichdom.

Examples:

- Addiction or other mental problems caused by dependency on magic use; see *Magic Addiction* (*Thaumatology*, p. 63).
- Magic Susceptibility, Vulnerability, or Weakness where a particular magical effect is concerned; see *Wizardly Weaknesses* (*Thaumatology*, p. 22).
- Spiritual Distortion (*Thaumatology*, p. 94), for arts that tangle with spirits.
- Supernatural Features, Trademark, or Unnatural Features that manifest full-time or when working magic; see *Visible Magical Gifts* and *Spell Signatures* (*Thaumatology*, p. 25).

Skills

Optional skills fall into three categories:

- Skills that only some masters view as “basic.” If the GM rules that an optional skill has this origin, it's a required skill *for that wizard's apprentices*, adding a point to style cost (p. 19).

- Skills that all students of the style are encouraged to study in order to fully grasp the art. Any skill listed for the right general kind of style under *Required Skills* (pp. 4-6) qualifies.

- Skills reserved for advanced practitioners. These resemble Magic Perks and secret spells. They're never required, but wizards who wish to learn them must meet the style

requirements. Skills that command supernatural power often fit; e.g., Enthrallment skills (pp. 191-192), Musical Influence (p. B210), and "cinematic martial-arts skills" such as Power Blow (p. B215), justified by mana rather than by chi.

The GM decides which niche each optional skill occupies.

STYLE COST

A wizard who wishes to "know" or "practice" a magical style – that is, be able to buy its Magic Perks and secret spells, and use any alternative prerequisites for the spells on its spell list – must purchase all of its required elements at their standard point costs. The minimum total price for this collection of components is the *style cost*, found as follows:

Style cost = 1 point for Magical School Familiarity (p. 20) + 1 point per required skill + 1 point per required spell.

Note this for each style. A magician can always spend more! This cost is a *minimum*.

BUYING STYLES AT CHARACTER CREATION

A newly created wizard PC who's supposed to "know" a style should possess *all* of the traits covered by its style cost. If he does, then he's assumed to have passed whatever screening process applies to would-be students (see *Buying Styles in Play*, below), and can enter play with points in his art's spells and Magic Perks – and even its secret spells, if he takes Secret Spell perks. He may also buy any optional abilities that the GM has set aside for advanced students.

BUYING STYLES IN PLAY

A wizard PC can acquire a new magical style during the course of the game. The first step is to locate a suitable academy, guild, master, or other institution or individual that can teach him. This may be a quest unto itself!

Next, he must pass whatever screening process the style uses. This might be a simple interview; make a reaction roll, with a result of "Neutral" or better ("Good," for exclusive schools) meaning admission. It may be a fee of 4-5% of the setting's starting money (p. B27) *per point of style cost*. Most interestingly, it could be a quest for ancient writings, dragon's blood, or something similar, to demonstrate dedication.

Finally, the wizard must spend character points to acquire required components, in this order:

1. At least one point on each required skill he doesn't already know.
2. At least one point on each required spell he lacks. Spells he *already* knows count regardless of how he learned them or satisfied their prerequisites, but he must learn *new* spells in line with his adopted style's prerequisites.
3. A point on Magical School Familiarity (p. 20).

He only "knows" the style after spending new points equal to style cost. If he already had some or most components, he can improve elements above the one-point level or buy other spells from the style's list to meet this requirement. After that, he can go on to learn the art's other teachings.

Magicians customarily earn points for new styles via study (p. B292), acquiring one point per 200 hours of instruction, but the GM may allow points earned on adventures in an action-oriented campaign.

Buying Multiple Styles

In some backgrounds, each wizardly clique is the social or supernatural rival of every other. Styles might even differ so radically in method that magicians *can't* merge their teachings. Either would make it difficult or impossible to learn more than one art.

In other worlds, though, magicians practically collect knowledge. Perhaps any archmage worth the title learned magic at a Mandrake League university, works for a Success 666 guild, and belongs to a mages' brotherhood equivalent to the Freemasons . . . and knows a "house style" for each. Or maybe wizards pore over old grimoires, each of which expounds a style much as a Book teaches a Path/Book magician new theory. In that case, wizards can have multiple styles.

A PC who *starts* with several styles should buy these as explained in *Buying Styles at Character Creation* (above). He must pay *full* style cost for each, even if there are overlapping requirements; this represents the minimum investment in time and effort to learn the theory. He need not buy duplicate elements multiple times, though. Abilities he already has *can* satisfy his styles' requirements; e.g., if he knows three styles that require Create Fire, he buys Create Fire once, not three times! If this means that the sum of the style costs for his styles exceeds the points he actually needs to meet their collective requirements, he can spend the "excess" on any of those styles' spells.

Similar rules apply to second and later styles learned *in play*. The student doesn't "know" a new style until he spends points equal to its cost, as described in *Buying Styles in Play* (above). If he already knows some of the basics, though, he can use points that would normally go toward these things to buy other spells of the new style.

CHAPTER TWO

NEW PERKS

Two new types of perks are important in *Magical Styles*. Each perk costs a point. For more on perks, see pp. B100-101.

MAGICAL SCHOOL FAMILIARITY

This perk exists only in backgrounds where nearly all wizards study with a particular academy, guild, or master that teaches a small subset of known spells. Paying a point for familiarity with a school gives these benefits:

- You understand the arcane principles that undergird the school's spells, and thus can always use measures such as Counterspell and Ward at full skill against any of its spells, even if you don't know the spell you're trying to defeat.
- You can acquire the school's *public* (not *secret*) spells by spending earned points in play without having to seek instruction or musty tomes.
- You're acquainted with the school's culture. When dealing with another wizard who has the same perk, neither of

you suffers -3 for lack of Cultural Familiarity when making Savoir-Faire rolls, Teaching rolls to pass along the school's spells, and so on.

- You have the equivalent of a Claim to Hospitality (p. B41) with an academy, guild, or archmage. This mostly means that you have somewhere to stay while studying.

MAGIC PERKS

Magic Perks represent ways in which wizards can bend the rules of magic just a little. In principle, any *mage* (someone with at least Magery 0) can learn them. Every 20 points in spells lets a student of magic buy one Magic Perk.

Magicians who study a consistent theory of magic instead of learning spells willy-nilly achieve quicker results, however. Anybody who has Magical School Familiarity for a school *and* at least a point in every skill and spell that school regards as mandatory may *further* buy one of that school's perks per 10 points in the school's spells.

Ex-Stylists

Magical Styles aims to remain generic, so it defines styles in a largely game-mechanical way. A set of character abilities represents the basic theory of each art. Acquiring these in the correct sequence opens the door to additional magic in the form of *other* abilities.

Schools have a strong social element in some settings, however, as touched on under *Optional Traits* (pp. 18-19). In that case, practitioners and their schools will occasionally part ways, unless mages are bizarrely inhuman. This can bring the social and theoretical bases of styles into conflict. While an ex-stylist should lose *social* courtesies, it makes little sense for him to "forget" magical capabilities.

This is easily resolved: Ex-stylists replace Magical School Familiarity with a special perk, Lapsed Practitioner.

Lapsed Practitioner†

You've renounced or been expelled from a magical order. You still receive the benefits of improved counter-magic against the school's spells, as with Magical School Familiarity. If you know secret spells or spells learned through alternative prerequisites, you keep those, too. You also retain all Magic Perks, except for a few noted below.

However, you lose ongoing access to the style's teachings and no longer enjoy a Claim to Hospitality.

You *can* start play with this perk. Use the rules and requirements for a stylist in good standing. At the very end, however, note Lapsed Practitioner where you would have written Magical School Familiarity.

Lapsed Practitioner is incompatible with any Academic or Guild Rank (p. 21), License (p. 27), or Permit (p. 28) perk that represents affiliation with your former school. Ex-stylists generally can't retain Immunity to (Specific Hazard) (p. 25) or Super-Sympathy (p. 33) pertaining to their former academy, guildhall, etc., either, although this isn't true in every setting. If you enter play with Lapsed Practitioner, don't pick these perks. If you acquire it in play, you lose all points in such perks, although the GM may generously let you put them toward a *rival* style.

This perk *doesn't* assume that your old associates hate you! That's an Enemy or a bad Reputation. By itself, it simply means you've lost your study privileges. You might be invited to social functions with alumnae and remain chummy with your ex-master – but if you want access to magic, you'll be treated just like any other wizardly outsider.

You must specialize by *style*.

Example: Helga the Hedge-Witch has no use for guilds or academies. She follows no specific magical theory and has 40 points in spells. This lets her have up to two general Magic Perks.

Master Orcen learned his magic from the Ghastly Brotherhood. He has Magical School Familiarity (Ghastly Brotherhood) and a point in each of the Brotherhood's required skills and spells. He, too, has 40 points in spells, so he may buy up to two general Magic Perks, just like Helga. However, his dogged pursuit of the Brotherhood's methods lets him purchase up to four more Magic Perks that are specific to the Brotherhood.

In some game worlds, it's possible to study the methods of more than one faction (see *Buying Multiple Styles*, p. 19). A wizard with Magical School Familiarity for several styles and at least a point in each of the fundamentals of them all may buy one additional Magic Perk per 10 points in the spells of *any* known style. However, he cannot have more perks from a given style than his points in its spells alone would dictate.

Example: Zephyra has Magical School Familiarity with the Ten Tiger Academy and the Fire-Wizards' Guild; a point in each and every required skill and spell of both styles; and a total of 40 points in their spells. Like any wizard with 40 points in spells, she may buy up to two general Magic Perks. She may also purchase up to four *extra* perks from her styles. She has 27 points in spells common to both. She has another 9 points in spells unique to the Ten Tigers, so she could have Ten Tiger perks commensurate with 36 points in spells, or up to three perks. And she has 4 points in spells exclusive to the Fire Wizards, so she could buy Fire perks appropriate to 31 points in spells – again, three at most. This allows her to pick three perks from one style and one from the other, or two and two, but not four from a single style.

Below, perks marked with a † *require* specialization by spell, college, etc., depending on exactly how they work – read the full description and pick a suitable specialty. Such a perk has *no effect* outside of that one narrow area! If the perk requires specialization by style, its benefits pertain only to spells on that style's canonical list, learned in the style's prescribed manner; thus, the perk is worthless to casters without styles. A style may offer a more restricted version of a perk, but it still costs a point.

Perks marked with a ‡ come in *levels*, exactly like advantages that come in levels. Each level counts as its own perk and costs 1 point, but for compactness' sake, write it just once on your character sheet, along with its level and total point cost; e.g., Secret Words 3 [3].

Academic or Guild Rank†‡

Some wizards' societies have broad social clout – a few even rule! These qualify for Status (p. B28) or Rank (p. B29). Economically important guilds wield Merchant Rank, politically influential factions enjoy Status or Administrative Rank, and quasi-religious institutions possess Religious Rank.

In backgrounds where simply being a wizard *isn't* enough to admit you to the halls of power, there may still be hierarchies within magic-using society. This takes the form of "Academic Rank" or "Guild Rank" that only applies at the academy, guildhall, or other institution of magical erudition.

Such Rank costs a mere 1 point per level, and is in effect a leveled perk. You must specialize by organization.

Academic and Guild Rank follow the guidelines under *Status as a Reaction Modifier* (p. B29) in matters of internal affairs. In Quick Contests of Diplomacy, Politics, and so on to resolve internal conflicts, each wizard adds his Rank to his roll. Finally, every *full* 5 points of Academic or Guild Rank gives +1 to reactions in the "real world" – but only in regions where the faction has significant membership (GM's decision).

This isn't *necessarily* a Magic Perk, but it can be. The more you know about the guild or academy's magical style, the more respect you can command – *if* you play politics. A wizard may have 50 points in spells in order to show off for political gain (qualifying for Academic Rank 5) or because he's a socially inept scholar (making five *thaumatological* Magic Perks more attractive).

What's in a Name?

The names of Magic Perks are a potpourri of the utilitarian, the whimsical, and – for perks adapted from other *GURPS* supplements – the canonical. Go ahead and change them if you favor functional or fanciful names, or would like styles to have distinctive, colorful monikers for their teachings. Provided that the players and GM know the *rules* that go with a perk, what it's called isn't important!

Adjustable Spell†

If wizards can use *Adjustable Spells* (*Thaumatology*, pp. 39-40) to add enhancements to spells, then as explained there, the GM might require them to buy one of three classes of perks:

Enhanced Spell†: You can add one specific enhancement to one particular spell, and raise the modified spell as a spell technique. Enhanced Spell (Fireball/Guided) would let you add the Guided enhancement to Fireball and learn the Fireball/Guided technique.

Spell Enhancement†: You can add one particular enhancement allowed by the GM to *any* spell it suits, and improve the modified spells as spell techniques. For example, Spell Enhancement (Guided) would let you add the Guided enhancement to any Missile spell, and buy up Fireball/Guided, Ice Dagger/Guided, Stone Missile/Guided, etc.

Spell Variation†: You can add any enhancement the GM allows to one specific spell, and learn the modified spells as spell techniques. For instance, Spell Variation (Fireball) would let you add Guided, Increased Range, and other attack enhancements to Fireball, and improve techniques such as Fireball/Guided and Fireball/Increased Range.

It isn't mandatory for a single approach to hold campaign-wide. Styles concerned with thaumatological fundamentals might include Spell Enhancement perks, applying general principles to all spells. Those that teach a narrow spectrum of closely related spells may allow Spell Variation for them all, so that few spells function as many. And Enhanced Spell could show up in structured, non-improvisational styles.

Afflicted Casting†

You use a normally distracting effect to focus your mind for magic. When subject to specific irritating conditions (p. B428) for any reason while casting, *halve* the usual IQ penalty to spell rolls, rounding in your favor, and apply a net *bonus* of equal size to Will rolls to avoid distraction. Other bad effects apply normally. For instance, if your Will is 10 and you're casting a spell at 18, -3 to IQ would lower your spell to just 17 (-3 halves to -1) while raising Will to 11 (-1 becomes +1), but you'd still have -3 to any other IQ-, Will-, or Per-based roll.

You must specialize in a set of *related* afflictions. Examples include:

Flagellant's Blessing: You use pain to focus yourself. Moderate, severe, and terrible pain give only -1, -2, and -3 to cast, and +1, +2, and +3 to Will, respectively. The -1, -2, -3, or -4 for shock in combat becomes 0, -1, -1, or -2 to cast and 0, +1, +1, or +2 to Will.

Mystic's Stupor: You're accustomed to casting in a drug-induced state. When tipsy, drunk, or euphoric, the -1, -2, or -3 to IQ becomes 0, -1, or -1 to cast and 0, +1, or +1 to Will, respectively.

Area Spell Mastery†

As noted in *Area Spells* (p. B239), a wizard can cast an Area spell on just *part* of a circle. With the exception of a few spells, though, he can't alter the affected region afterward. Your control is so great that you *can* do this.

You must specialize in an Area spell with an ongoing effect. This is only *useful* if the spell doesn't already allow changes! By taking a Concentrate maneuver, you can decide what portions of your area are affected. This can't extend the effects beyond the original area, but *within* that area, you have complete control.

Example: Tamar casts *Darkness* and hides inside. She wishes to read a magical scroll. Area Spell Mastery (*Darkness*) lets her Concentrate and open up the area overhead, admitting light to read by and sparing her the need for *Shape Darkness* or *Dark Vision*.

Attribute Substitution†

Some wizards practice arts that enable them to learn variant spells based on attributes other than IQ.

DX-based spells fit martial wizards whose art relies on whirling dances and complex hand or staff motions. This option goes well with *Magical Weapon Bond* (p. 27) and *No Incantations* (p. 28).

HT-based spells suit wizards whose shouted incantations demand excellent breath control, or who direct "inner mana." This often accompanies *Afflicted Casting* (above), *Elixir*

Resistance (p. 24), *No Gestures* (p. 28), and similar "internal" Magic Perks.

Will-based spells are ideal for casters who bend mana like *psis* bend spoons. Mages like this may want *Shaman's Trance* (p. 30) and *Willful Casting* (p. 33), too – and note that the latter remains useful for spells *not* bought with Attribute Substitution.

Per-based spells work well for seers and those who can perceive the ebb and flow of mana – and for *Information* and *Knowledge* spells in general. *Magical Analysis* (p. 26) frequently accompanies such ability.

The GM may allow other variations. He might even wish to explore *Calculated Bases* (*Thaumatology*, p. 30) for particularly bizarre styles of magic.

You must specialize by spell *and* by attribute – it's neither possible nor balanced for a single perk to affect *all* spells. Appropriate examples would be Attribute Substitution (*Aura* based on Per), Attribute Substitution (*Breathe Water* based on HT), Attribute Substitution (*Command* based on Will), and Attribute Substitution (*Deathtouch* based on DX). The GM decides how many Attribute Substitution perks each wizard may have.

This perk changes the spell's controlling attribute for *all* purposes, but not the scores used for ancillary rolls. For instance, Attribute Substitution (*Lightning* based on HT) – quite suitable for mages who invoke Air magic through breath control – gives *Lightning* a HT-based roll to cast, but the roll to avoid disaster when injured is still against Will, and the attack roll is still against DX-based Innate Attack. *Other* perks might modify these rolls, of course.

Better Magic Items†

Your faction's experts, hardware, and secret knowledge give you access to magical gear that's *slightly* better than average. The spells or Alchemy recipes are no different, but the resulting items benefit from mass production or similar efficiency increases. You must specialize by college (e.g., *Better Healing Enchantments*) or subset of the *Enchantment* college (e.g., *Better Magic Weapons* or *Better Powerstones*), or in elixirs (*Better Elixirs*).

Acquire the enchanted item with cash or as *Signature Gear*, as usual. The GM will look at what you bought and improve its *magical* stats to be commensurate with a cost *about* 50% higher than this. Exactly what he improves should suit the story behind the perk.

The GM is free to "round" either way to get a meaningful effect. For instance, \$1,000 buys a *Powerstone* that holds 7 energy points (*Magic*, p. 20), but the GM might say that +50%, or \$1,500, is close enough to \$1,550 to allow a *Powerstone* with 9 energy points. If improving item Power, assume that +2, for +40% to cost, suits any item of any Power.

And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it.

– Roald Dahl

Blocking Spell Mastery†

A drawback of Blocking spells (p. B241) is that a wizard can cast only one per turn. You've learned to overcome this for one particular spell – much as a warrior can dodge repeatedly and, with difficulty, even parry multiple times. Each use after the first is at a cumulative -5 to skill. You must specialize by Blocking spell.

Having multiple versions of this perk lets you cast several *different* Blocking spells per turn. Base the penalty on the total number you've already cast, regardless of details. For instance, with both Blocking Spell Mastery (Iron Arm) and Blocking Spell Mastery (Ward), you could cast Iron Arm vs. a spear thrust, then Ward at -5 against a Foolishness spell, and then another Iron Arm at -10 to stop an axe blow.

Blocking Spell Mastery has one further benefit: It enables you to choose the All-Out Defense (Increased Defense) maneuver (p. B366) for Blocking spells. This gives +2 to any roll against a Blocking spell for which you know this perk. All other rules for All-Out Defense apply normally.

*If we are to have magical bodies,
we must have magical minds.*
– Dr. Wayne Dyer

Combat Ceremony†

Prerequisite: Relevant spell at 15+.

You know a quick ritual for ceremonially casting a specific spell *in combat*. Everyone who wishes to participate must take a Ready maneuver to link up. Each wizard must be within a yard or the reach of a Staff item of at least one other, and the formation must be contiguous. Those using staffs to maintain contact cannot use them for any other purpose (e.g., parrying). To let a new or separated wizard join or rejoin – or if anyone is incapacitated or killed – the whole circle must form up again.

Once the circle is formed, the whole assemblage acts at the same point in the combat sequence as its *slowest* member. On later turns, the wizards may use *Ceremonial Magic* (p. B238) with one benefit and one drawback:

- The spell *doesn't* take 10 times as long to cast! The circle casts it in the usual amount of time, albeit on the slowest magician's turn.
- Only wizards who have this perk for the same spell *and* know that spell at 15+ can contribute energy, denying them the assistance of spectators and less-proficient casters – and use of the Mass Magician perk (p. 24) – when casting this way.

You must specialize by *spell*. Mages with Ceremonial Magery (*Thaumatology*, p. 23) *can* have this perk. The cost to acquire it for any significant number of spells offsets the point savings of the partly circumvented limitation.

Continuous Ritual†

Normally, when you're done concentrating on a spell, you must either cast it or abort it. With this perk, once you've

concentrated for the time necessary to cast the spell, you can opt to *keep* concentrating and cast the spell with a Concentrate maneuver on a later turn. You can continue to take Concentrate maneuvers for as long as you want, until you cast, abort, or are distracted or incapacitated. You cannot cast *another* spell while doing so. You must specialize by spell.

Convenience Casting†

Prerequisite: Relevant spell at 16+.

You know a spell well enough to cast it “in the background” while engaged in basic cleaning, cooking, hygiene, or other mundane tasks, as long as you're neither enchanting nor engaged in risky acts like combat, espionage, or theft. If you *could* cast it using only personal FP (no Energy Reserves, Powerstones, etc.), then it's assumed that you *did* – no roll required and at no risk of backfire – provided that you spent hours equal to the FP cost in peaceful, mundane activities.

You must specialize by spell. The GM should limit spells and levels of effect to *low-key* uses, valuable for maintaining body, home, and gear. If the result looks more like an advantage such as Immunity to Disease or Regeneration, then it's beyond the scope of this perk! The application can't be one that usually suffers a penalty, either. Finally, the spell can't be one that counts as “on,” limiting Convenience Casting to spells that have durable results.

Valid examples include:

Convenience Casting (Continual Light): Up to seven rooms in your residence always have magical light. Minimum FP 4; four hours/day mundane activities.

Convenience Casting (Cook): You'll never need a kitchen, just ingredients. Minimum FP 3; three hours/day mundane activities (about as long as it takes to cook full meals).

Convenience Casting (Copy): You can crank out a copy of your 100-page book each day, provided you have the paper. Minimum FP 8; eight hours/day mundane activities (a standard workday).

Convenience Casting (Create Object): You always have the small tools (up to 5 lbs.) needed for ordinary craft skills. Minimum FP 2; two hours/day mundane activities.

Convenience Casting (Create Water): You have ample clean water for personal use each day. Minimum FP 2; two hours/day mundane activities.

Convenience Casting (Haircut): Your hair and nails are always perfect, which might occasionally grant +1 to reactions. Minimum FP 2; two hours/day mundane activities (about as long as a very fussy toilette).

Convenience Casting (Purify Food): You can be certain that your food *isn't* poisoned. Minimum FP 3; three hours/day mundane activities (again, a lot like cooking).

Covenant of Rest

You've promised a god or a spirit that you'll carry out particular (usually *good*) acts in its name. In return, it has vowed to give you a restful death. When you die, it will be impossible to summon, reanimate, or resurrect you – in body or in spirit – unless your benefactor wills it. Attempts to raise you as undead or possess your corpse will simply fail. High-tech medicine can still resuscitate you, however.

Covenant of Rest comes from **GURPS Power-Ups 2: Perks** and is repeated here to allow wizards to earn it in play as a Magic Perk.

Elixir Resistance†

With rare exceptions (Elixir of Death and Elixir of Sleep), individuals without Magic Resistance can't resist alchemical elixirs. Due to repeated exposure, or control over your inner mana, you *can*.

You must specialize by elixir. If it's one that normally doesn't allow resistance, you may *opt* to roll vs. HT to resist. If it already permits a HT roll, Elixir Resistance lets you add Magery to HT. This perk exists for *all* elixirs, even beneficial ones – a mage who faces -5 to all spell rolls thanks to an Elixir of Magic Resistance won't regard that brew as helpful!

At the GM's option, alchemists can also have this perk (it only requires Magery to be useful in two cases).



Extra Option†

Power-Ups 2: Perks introduces Extra Option perks that extend optional rules to *individuals* in campaigns that don't apply those rules globally. **Thaumatology** offers numerous rules variations that could qualify. Exclusive access to some of these alternatives would make excellent Magic Perks!

If the wizard can invoke his additional option "on the fly" during an ordinary casting, then *each spell* that can benefit requires a separate Extra Option perk. On the other hand, if the option demands significant extra time or effort – which is typical of most kinds of ceremonial magic and enchantment – then the perk applies to all of a style's spells, and might even benefit every spell the wizard knows. The GM has the final word, and should also come up with a more evocative name than "Extra Option."

Examples:

Astrological Ceremonies†: When you work your style's spells *ceremonially*, apply *Astrological Modifiers* (**Thaumatology**, pp. 83-86) – both good and bad – even though these don't influence most magic-working in your setting. This has no impact on non-ceremonial castings. Astrological modifiers can sometimes result in a penalty, but this is still a net perk – you're

never *forced* to use ceremonial magic, so you can avoid penalties by casting normally. You must specialize by *style*.

Blood Magic: Other wizards in your world can only use HP when invoking *Burning HP* (p. B237), but you have access to *Self-Sacrifice* (**Thaumatology**, p. 246), too, which means you can actually increase your effective skill by injuring yourself!

Brute-Force Spell†: Unlike most casters, you can invoke the *Increased Effective Skill* option (**Thaumatology**, p. 39) for one particular spell, allowing you to trade extra energy for skill.

Fast Casting†: Most spellcasters in your world cannot use the *Faster Casting* option (**Thaumatology**, p. 39), but you can – for one specific spell. This enables you to reduce casting times by spending extra energy.

Flexible Ritual†: You can use the *Flexible Rituals* rules (**Thaumatology**, p. 37) for a particular spell in a setting where this uncommon, allowing you to omit specific parts of a ritual by accepting penalties, or to double casting time for +1 to skill.

Intimidating Curses: If you have time to play mind games with the victim of baneful Resisted spells, you can exploit *Announcing Curses* (**Thaumatology**, pp. 226-227), while most wizards in your background cannot. Note that while the bonuses can be significant, this tactic requires considerable effort and can backfire!

Knower of Names: While most wizards in your background can't wield the power of names, you can. Whenever you cast *ceremonially*, you can invoke the bonuses for *Names* (**Thaumatology**, p. 245).

Mass Magician: You have access to the *Mass Magic* rules (**Thaumatology**, p. 51) in a world where these aren't generally available.

Secret Material†: You're aware of a substance that gives spells extra energy or a skill bonus, as described in *Materials for Wizards* (**Thaumatology**, pp. 96-98). Most casters either don't know of this material or can't prepare it properly. It's up to you to obtain the stuff – this perk grants only the secret of preparing it! Each material requires its own perk.

Speedy Enchantment: The GM may let enchanters opt in to a variant enchantment scheme described in *Time and Reliability* (**Thaumatology**, pp. 108-109): applying *Long Tasks* or *Time Spent* (both p. B346) to enchantment, dumping extra energy into the Slow and Sure process, etc.

Stabilizing Skill†: You can use a particular *mundane* skill – set by the GM – to avert critical failures with the spells of one college, as per *Skills to Salvage Critical Failures* (**Thaumatology**, p. 40). Specialties must name both skill and college; e.g., Stabilizing Skill (Meteorology for Weather spells). See *Elemental Styles* (pp. 4-5) for skills suited to each college. Mages who suffer from Radically Unstable Magery (**Thaumatology**, p. 26) cannot have this perk. *Prerequisite:* Relevant skill at 15+.

For additional examples that are somewhat more complex than these, see *Adjustable Spell* (p. 21), *Attribute Substitution* (p. 22), and *Improvised Magic* (p. 25). Don't forget: None of these things are worth a perk if *everybody* can use the cited rules!

Far-Casting††

You're adept at casting one particular spell from afar. You must specialize by *spell* – and this must be either a Regular spell or a spell that, despite belonging to another class, takes the same -1/yard range penalty as a Regular spell.

Each level of Far-Casting erases -1 of the range penalty when you work that spell. This can never give a net bonus.

The GM determines the number of levels available. Far-Casting 1 or 2 is comparable to casting through a Staff item (see *Magic Stuffs*, p. B240) and reasonably balanced – although wizards with staves receive cumulative benefits, while casters without enjoy a major benefit of a staff when wielding something else (rifle, sword, etc.). Each level past two shifts Regular spells further from subtle curses and closer to artillery.

Frightening Side Effects†

Battle mages and necromancers take pride in putting unsettling flourishes on combat spells in order to unnerve enemies: Deathtouch that injures by summoning visible insects under the skin, Sleep that gives the dozing victim a skeletal visage, etc. These are mostly just special effects, but with enough practice, a particular spell can be truly *frightening*.

On any turn during which you incapacitate – daze, knock out, paralyze, petrify, etc. – or kill an enemy with the chosen spell, make an immediate second roll against that spell. Success manifests scary side effects that let you try Intimidation (p. B202) against any witnesses as a free action that turn. You must specialize by *spell*; combat spells are most useful.

Huge Subjects†‡

You're accustomed to casting a particular Regular spell on larger-than-human-sized targets. This perk is common among dragon wizards, giant mages, and so on! You must specialize by *spell*. When casting that spell, subtract one from the target's SM (minimum SM 0) before multiplying cost. You may take this perk twice, to reduce SM by two, but no more.

Immunity to (Specific Hazard)†

You're immune to an *extremely specific*, damaging magical effect. Not "Immunity to Fire Spells" or even "Immunity to Fireball," but something along the lines of "Immunity to Pyromancers' Guild Fire Traps" when the Pyromancers' Guildhall contains numerous flame-spewing gargoyles. This perk mostly exists in hierarchical societies where wizards receive new Immunity perks as they progress through the ranks, each covering some dire threat found closer and closer to the brotherhood's inner sanctum.

Improvised Items‡

This perk comes in levels. Each instance lets you use one Gizmo (p. B57) per game session – but only to reveal a *single-use* magic item containing a spell you know. This can be any of the following, decided when you invoke your perk:

- Scroll for a spell that costs 1 or 2 energy to cast (*Magic*, p. 57). This needn't be an actual document! For instance, you could write magic symbols in steam on a mirror for an ally to read. The reader needs twice the spell's casting time and pays the 1-2 energy himself.

- Spell Stone for a spell that costs a mere 1 energy to cast (*Magic*, pp. 60-61). This can look like any tiny, low-value item that's destroyed during use. It takes a second to invoke, and has no energy cost for the user.

- Any other minor magic item that would cost at most 70 energy points to enchant permanently, but which works only *once*, as explained for Temporary Enchantment (*Magic*, p. 56-57).

You needn't know or cast Scroll, Spell Stone, or Temporary Enchantment, because the item is highly improvised. The downside is that it isn't lasting! You can keep it or give it away – but activated or not, it fades or crumbles a minute after you reveal it. Using it produces the same result.

Improvised Items function at your skill level with the spell (which *can* be less than 15) for *all* purposes.

Improvised Magic†

Your style's spells flow from such a tight body of theory that you can cast them by default. Every unknown spell in your style defaults to every known one of that style at -4, plus a further penalty equal to the unknown spell's standard prerequisite count. However, if the known spell is in the unknown spell's prerequisite chain, add a *bonus* equal to the known spell's standard prerequisite count. If a spell's prerequisites include an advantage (such as a level of Magery) that you lack, you can't cast it at default. Spells cast this way have *double* their usual energy cost and casting time.

You must specialize by style. Improvised Magic switches on *Spell Defaults* (*Thaumatology*, p. 38) on a style-by-style basis, and isn't useful if the GM uses that rule for everyone.

Intuitive Cantrip†

You have a truly *minor* spell-like effect that you produce intuitively. It is associated with a specific magical college – for spellcasters with magical styles, one that their style emphasizes – and is never more impressive than the college's least-powerful spell at the 1-FP level.

Intuitive Cantrips never require concentration or rituals. They only rarely call for FP, and while some involve attribute rolls, these aren't subject to modifiers for mana, spells "on," etc. Like spells, though, these perks don't work if there's *no* mana.

Examples, with the associated college(s):

Aid: You can perform First Aid without a kit, and suffer no skill penalty for doing so. *Healing*.

Avatar: When you send a message via Dream Projection, Mind-Sending, Telepathy, or any similar spell, it's accompanied by a clear mental image of yourself. Likewise, you can always validate your identity to those contacting you with magic. This is impossible to fake, making it a reliable means of identification. *Communication and Empathy*.

Boost Enchantment: Whenever you cast a spell using an enchanted item, add +1 to its effective Power; e.g., a Power 19 item would act as a Power 20 one, and work in a low-mana area. *Enchantment*.

Controlled (Disadvantage)†: You can "curse" yourself with a specific disadvantage, chosen when you buy this perk. Body Control wizards select a physical problem, which requires a HT roll to activate. Mind Control mages get a mental disadvantage, which requires a Will roll. Repeated attempts in the same hour are at a cumulative -1. Berserk and Epilepsy are off-limits because they already include similar mechanics. This perk's benefits are left to smart magicians to discover. *Body Control*; *Mind Control*.

Corpse Smart: You can recognize the undead on sight, barring magical deceptions or illusions. You never mistake undead for corpses or living beings, and can tell them from similar entities such as constructs sewn together from body parts. *Necromantic.*

Eye of the Storm: Whenever you're subject to bad weather, it affects you as if it were a step less severe on the table on p. 194 of *Magic*. Where discrete steps make little sense, you instead get +1 to HT rolls to resist the weather's effects. *Weather.*

Filter: You can remove a limited quantity of *crud* from the air you inhale, granting a trivial version of Protected Smell (p. B78). This gives +1 to HT rolls to resist respiratory agents (e.g., the Stench spell), doubling to +2 if you only have to avoid distraction (e.g., the smell of rotten eggs). *Air.*

Friendly Undergrowth: Your aura of residual magic gives you +1 in *mundane* Quick Contests when someone is seeking your trail or hiding place (such as when you're using Camouflage or someone else is using Tracking) in an overgrown area. It has no effect in arctic, desert, tall forests with little undergrowth, etc. *Plant.*

Gate Experience: You intuitively know when you've teleported, traveled in time, or entered another dimension – even if the physical surroundings are unchanged. You don't know where or when you are, and can't sense gates and teleporters until they affect you, but you'll immediately know when you blunder through a portal or similar trap. *Gate.*

Good with (Animal): You have the Animal Empathy advantage (p. B40) for one specific species – dogs, horses, whatever. *Animal.*

Gut of the Dragon: You can eat almost anything. This is just Reduced Consumption 1 (Cast-Iron Stomach, -50%) [1]. See p. B80. *Food.*

Intuitive Illusionist: Your sixth sense for illusions gives you +1 on all *mundane* Will rolls to disbelieve magical illusions, on illusion-initiated Fright Checks, and on your IQ + Magery roll to sense the magic of permanent illusions. *Illusion and Creation.*

Kindle: You can produce a tiny flame sufficient to light candles, fuses, lanterns, tinder, and other Highly Flammable or Super-Flammable material (p. B433) with a touch. This is equivalent to a 1-FP Ignite Fire spell with no range. If you know that spell, you save 1 FP when you cast it by touch. *Fire.*

Magical Analysis: You get +1 to all *mundane* attribute or skill rolls made to analyze facts or intelligence gathered entirely by any kind of Information spell. *Knowledge.*

Muffle: You can control sound enough to enjoy a lesser version of Protected Hearing (p. B78). You may ignore -1 in Hearing penalties due to noise and get +1 to HT rolls to resist deafening effects (like the Thunderclap spell). *Sound.*

Mystic Gesture: You can gesture at any door, light switch, tap, or similar item in sight and in *your* residence, and pay 1 FP to change it from open to shut or from on to off – or vice versa – from afar. Your residence may be a castle, house, hut, tipi, or even a vehicle like a car or a gypsy caravan, if the GM agrees. *Movement.*

Pebbles: Whenever you need a small stone (e.g., sling ammo), you can just reach into loose soil, sand, or rubble and find one of the size you need. If you have a pile of actual pebbles, you can pull out one that's a specific shape – say, the perfect size to plug a hole. *Earth.*

Reinforce: You can somewhat shield personal possessions from magical destruction. Whenever something you're *wearing* or *holding* must roll vs. HT due to a Disintegrate, Explode, Rive, Ruin, Shatter, or Weaken spell, use the higher of your HT or its HT, and add your Magery as a bonus. *Making and Breaking.*

Rinse: You can moisten the exterior of your body at will, becoming damp enough to negate ongoing damage from Cyclic (pp. B103-104) contact effects. You can extinguish flame if you're on fire, flush away acid or poison, etc. Each use costs 1 FP that you can only recover if you have access to water; see *Dehydration* (p. B426). *Water.*

What of Clerics?

Magical styles are overkill for workers of *Clerical Spell-Magic* (*Thaumatology*, pp. 65-71). They already have an equivalent structure! All clerics require Power Investiture from their deity, and pick their spells from a restricted list with its own special rules for prerequisites (that is, *no* prerequisites). Most also need skills like Religious Ritual and Theology.

Still, many concepts in *Magical Styles* are useful with divine magic. Notably, the guidelines for choosing spells and skills for temple styles can save time when creating character templates and spell lists for clerics; see in particular *Spells for Temple Styles* (p. 16) and the notes there on matching magical colleges to divine spheres. If the GM wants cleric spells to have *some* gradation in power, he may find *Restructuring Prerequisites* (p. 17) interesting, too.

Magic Perks are also appropriate for clerics, although it's most balanced to let wizards have freer access. Tinkering with magic is a wizard's business, while a cleric is expected to accept his gifts as granted; these perks would

work best as rewards for devotion. One Magic Perk per 20 points in divine spells seems fair. Not all Magic Perks *suit* clerics, though: Academic or Guild Rank, License, and Permit are absorbed by the more expensive Clerical Investiture (p. B43) and/or Religious Rank (p. B30); Improvised Magic is unbalanced without prerequisites; it's improbable that anything remotely like Magical Style Adaptation would exist to grant clerics other gods' spells; Secret Mage doesn't suit mortal champions of holiness; and Shortcut to Power is pointless without prerequisites.

When adapting these rules to clerics, assume that Theology takes over most uses of Thaumatology. As well, changes in terminology are necessary for both flavor and rules purposes. For instance, "Magic Perks" would become "Holy Perks"; references to "Magery" and "mana" should point to "Power Investiture" and "sanctity"; "magical" or "wizardly" ought to be "holy," "divine," or "clerical"; and "academy," "guild," "school," and so on would all be "religion" or "temple."

Screen: You can modulate light or create gloom enough to gain a weak version of Protected Vision (p. B78). You may ignore -1 in Vision penalties due to bright light and get +1 to HT rolls to resist dazzling effects (such as Flash spells). *Light and Darkness*.

Spark: Whenever you maintain or repair technological items entirely through magic, add +1 to your *mundane* repair skills. This is cumulative with any bonus specified for a particular spell or skill. *Technological*.

Willful Casting: See p. 33. *Meta-Spells*.

Kill Switch†

Turning off an ongoing spell normally requires you to spend one energy point from your personal FP or HP, regardless of your skill level; see *Canceling Spells* (p. B237). You've learned to cast a spell with an improved meta-magical "kill switch," which lets you shut it down at *no* cost. You must specialize by spell. Only spells with ongoing effects are worthwhile.

License†

Any profession may be subject to external or internal regulation. This might extend to a powerful agency granting a formal license that gives accredited practitioners a de facto or de jure monopoly in return for dues, periodic testing, binding oaths, etc. License is the perk of holding such credentials, as detailed in **Power-Ups 2: Perks**.

If demonstrated competence with spells is required to hold a wizard's license – which might be needed to cast spells for others, for profit, or in public without breaking the law – then the corresponding License perk is a Magic Perk. The GM decides which magical styles are favored (that is, count License among their perks) and which are restricted to pure research, or even outlawed. However, this perk is unnecessary if magic-users must buy Academic or Guild Rank (p. 21), other Rank, or Status to practice. It's for situations where licensing is an all-or-nothing proposition.

License isn't the same as Permit (p. 28). For instance, you could be a licensed wizard but not permitted to go around controlling minds!

Life-Force Burn‡

You're adept at spending life force in lieu of magical energy to power spells. When using *Burning HP* (p. B237), each level of this perk lets you ignore -1 of the penalty for spending HP. For instance, Life-Force Burn 4 [4] would let you spend 1-4 HP as if they were FP (no penalty), give only -1 if you spent 5 HP, and so on.

Note that +1 HP [2] and one level of Life-Force Burn [1] cost as much +1 FP [3], and have comparable but different effects. This perk often occurs with Blood Magic (p. 24).

Limited Energy Reserve†‡

The Energy Reserve (ER) advantage appears on p. 119 of **GURPS Powers**. It costs 3 points/level. Each level is equivalent to 1 FP that you can *only* spend to fuel one class of abilities – magic spells, in the case of wizards. It isn't otherwise possible spend ER as FP; effects that drain FP don't deplete ER; and ER recharges *separately* from FP at 1 point/10 minutes or the rate indicated by Recover Energy, whichever is faster, no matter what you're doing.

Some styles teach rituals for gathering energy before casting. Simulate this as an ER specialized by *style*. Each level is its own Magic Perk and thus costs a mere point – but the energy is only useful for ordinary casting of the style's spells. It's inaccessible to out-of-style magic, and can't be shared or transferred, making it worthless for ceremonial magic, enchanting, and powering magic items.

Magical Style Adaptation†

You practice one style of magic but have also studied the art of another – most often because the two schools share founders or premises, or engage in regular exchanges, but possibly because you take "know thy enemy" to heart. This perk lets you buy the spells, perks, and so on of that style as if they were part of your own. You must specialize by external style.

Magical Weapon Bond†

The Weapon Bond perk in **High-Tech, Martial Arts**, and other **GURPS** supplements assumes a balanced, familiar weapon that grants the owner +1 to effective combat skill; it isn't a supernatural attunement. The GM may allow warrior-wizards to take a variant that *is* supernatural – it's a Magic Perk, has Magery as a prerequisite, and doesn't work without mana. The mage must specialize in a specific Staff item or enchanted weapon, and can have only one Magical Weapon Bond at a time. However, he may freely shift the bond to another suitable item with a day of meditation, which makes replacing lost items easier to manage.

Mana Compensation†

Your style teaches how to use mana more efficiently to work magic. You cannot cast spells where there's *no* mana, but as long as there's any mana at all, the total penalty you suffer for lower-than-normal mana and for negative aspects is -1 less severe for you. For instance, casting a Fire spell in low mana (normally -5), in a Water-aspected area that gives -1 to Fire spells, would be at -6 for most wizards but only -5 for you. You must specialize by style.

This is cheaper than the 10 points per +1 for partial Mana Enhancer (**Thaumatology**, p. 60) for two reasons. First, it's of no benefit if there's no mana. Second, it doesn't give a net bonus in normal or better mana.

Melee Spell Mastery†

A wizard with a Melee spell "charged" cannot work further magic until he gets rid of his spell. You've learned a way around this limitation for one specific spell; you must specialize by Melee spell. This lets you cast other spells without losing the magical charge of your Melee spell, although you do so at -3, as if you were concentrating (see p. B238).

Mighty Spell†

You can use extra effort with a Melee or Missile spell! You must specialize by spell, which must be one that inflicts injury. At the instant you attack (*not* cast), you may opt to use Mighty Blows (p. B357). This costs 1 FP, which is purely physical and comes from your own FP – you can't pay it from Energy Reserves, Powerstones, etc. High skill has no effect. This gives +2 damage or +1 damage per die, whichever is better.

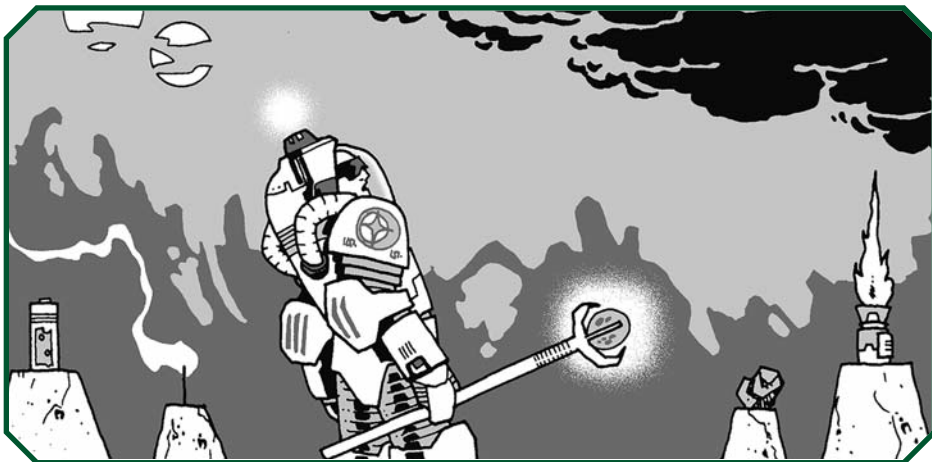
Missile Spell Mastery†

Normally, a mage with a Missile spell in hand cannot cast another spell until he gets rid of his missile. You've perfected the art of holding such a spell at the ready; you must specialize by Missile spell. This lets you cast other spells while retaining the projectile that your spell conjures, although you do so at -3, as if you were concentrating (see p. B238). You can even pass it from hand to hand; this takes a Ready maneuver.

There's one drawback: Critical failure at casting a spell while holding a Missile spell means your own missile affects you! This works exactly as if you failed the Will roll to control a Missile spell after being injured; see p. B240.

Mundane Magic†

You've practiced making minute adjustments in a spell's effects and subtly directing its magic in order to emulate a particular mundane, noncombat skill. Each spell-for-skill substitution is its own specialty: Mundane Magic (Apportation as Pickpocket), Mundane Magic (Voices as Public Speaking), etc. The GM should only allow adaptations that he feels are plausible. To use this perk, you must cast the spell as usual and maintain it for at least as long as it takes to use the skill for which it stands in.



Named Possession†

You own a ritually named possession, often a staff or other piece of wizardly regalia. This perk grants that article the potential to gain magical properties. It earns character points at the same rate as you *when you perform deeds of thaumatological significance*. Each point can be exchanged for 25 energy points' worth of enchantments chosen by the GM (optionally increasing the possession's value as Signature Gear). Use the standard rules for magical enchantment to determine what's possible. You can have multiple Named Possession perks, but then the items evenly split the points they earn.

Named Possession exists in more general form in **Power-Ups 2: Perks**. This version is specifically one that mages can acquire in play as a Magic Perk.

No Gestures†

You've learned to cast a particular spell without magical gestures. Regardless of skill level, you never have to have hands

or feet free to cast. This doesn't affect effective skill level, FP cost, or casting time. You must specialize by *spell*.

Once you know the chosen spell at level 15+ (20+ in low mana), gestures are optional anyway (see p. B237). At that stage, your concentration is so profound that you get +3 to the Will-3 roll to avoid distraction while casting the spell.

Mages with the limitation Extravagant Rituals (*Thaumatology*, p. 24) can never take this perk.

No Incantations†

You know how to cast one specific spell without magical words. Regardless of skill level, you need not speak to cast it. This doesn't affect effective skill level, FP cost, or casting time. You must specialize by *spell*.

Once you know your spell at level 15+ (20+ in low mana), words are optional in any event (see p. B237). By then your concentration is so deep that you're at +3 on the Will-3 roll to avoid distraction while casting the spell – or at +6 if you also have No Gestures (above).

No Incantations is mutually exclusive with Secret Words (p. 30) – choose which perk you're using before you start casting. Mages with Extravagant Rituals (*Thaumatology*, p. 24) cannot acquire No Incantations.

Obscure True Name

In settings where the bonuses under *Names* (*Thaumatology*, p. 245) apply in general or are available to wizards who have the Knower of Names perk (p. 24), an obscure True Name is a small-but-valuable advantage. As noted in those rules, such a name is a valid perk. If wizards can learn to change or obscure their True Name, then they can acquire this perk later in life, as a Magic Perk.

Permit†

Some magic is so foul or so dangerous that powerful temporal, religious, or wizardly authorities suffer only proven magicians – e.g., members in good standing of respected thaumatological orders – to cast it. Until you've demonstrated such magical scholarship by passing some sort of test, working such magic marks you as a criminal! The magical knowledge requirement in this instance converts the standard Permit perk from **Power-Ups 2: Perks** into a Magic Perk.

Each class of forbidden spells requires its own Permit. Depending on the background, possibilities include Permit (Mind Control), Permit (Necromancy), or even something as specific as Permit (Wishes), if society disapproves of wizards tinkering with probability. The GM creates the list of spells that each Permit covers.

Permit isn't the same as License (p. 27). Society might let casters whose backgrounds check out work hazardous magic in self-defense or during religious observances *without* authorizing them to hang out a shingle and peddle magical goods and services.

Power Casting†‡

You can transcend your normal limits with one specific spell that has variable levels of effect. You must specialize by *spell*. When casting it, add your Power Casting level to your Magery level for the sole purpose of determining the maximum energy expenditures described in *Magery and Effect* (p. B237) and *Missile Spells* (p. B240). For example, Power Casting 4 (Fireball) and Magery 1 would let you cast Fireball as if you had Magery 5, spending up to 5 energy points per second for each of three seconds.

The GM decides how many levels to allow. One way to do this is to set the maximum dice of Missile spell damage desired, divide by three, and subtract the campaign limit on Magery. For instance, if the GM wants spells capped at 12d – consistent with Magery 4 – and the campaign allows up to Magery 3, he might permit only Power Casting 1.

Psychic Guidance†

You're capable of controlling a Missile spell with your mind instead of hurling it like a bolt or a grenade. Use your effective skill with the spell *instead* of the Innate Attack skill to attack as well as to cast. Ranged combat modifiers apply as usual. You must specialize by Missile spell.

Quick and Focused†

You're adept at fast, *reliable* enchantment. Each level of this perk (to an upper limit set by the GM) allows you to ignore -1 in penalties for using assistants and having non-assistants within 10 yards during a Quick and Dirty enchantment (p. B481).

Note: If every enchanter in an influential guild has this perk, their faction will have a near-monopoly on low-cost enchantments. If it's common across an entire setting, magic items will be cheaper and more plentiful. Handle with care!

Reduced Footprint†‡

This perk comes in levels and requires specialization by spell. Each level allows you to ignore an instance of the chosen spell for the sole purpose of counting spells "on." For example, Reduced Footprint 1 (Shield) would let you disregard one casting of Shield when figuring your penalty for spells "on," Reduced Footprint 2 would permit you to ignore two instances, and so on. This doesn't reduce the *cost* to maintain your spells!

Even a single level of this perk lets a wizard who can maintain a spell for free do so with few consequences, enabling the magic to work much like an advantage. The GM may therefore wish to limit casters to one or two points of Reduced Footprint in total, for *all* spells.

Rote Alchemy†

You can brew one specific elixir *without* knowing Alchemy. This calls for the usual time, equipment, and ingredients, and obeys the standard rules; only the skill roll differs. No matter how many Rote Alchemy perks you have, you cannot use any of Alchemy's *other* applications or recipes.

To concoct the elixir, roll against a spell capable of producing the same results, *if you know one*. If a spell is very similar but not

identical, the GM's word is final. Otherwise, roll against IQ. Both alkahest (*Magic*, p. 220) and paut (*Thaumatology*, p. 52) are valid elixirs, and use IQ – not a spell – as effective skill. The Elixir of Lichdom uses the Lich spell. In *all* cases, the recipe's Alchemy skill penalty modifies the score used.

Example: Amaranda-44 is a sorceress with IQ 14. She wants to brew Elixirs of Luck, Magic Resistance, and Speed without studying Alchemy. Luck calls for Alchemy-3; no spell produces its effects, so Rote Alchemy (Luck) lets Amaranda brew the elixir at IQ-3, or 11. Magic Resistance is also at Alchemy-3; the Magic Resistance *spell* can emulate it but Amaranda doesn't know that spell, so Rote Alchemy (Magic Resistance) gives her an 11 there, too. Speed is at Alchemy-1; the Haste spell is identical and Amaranda has that spell at 18, so Rote Alchemy (Speed) gives her a 17! Amaranda can't brew elixirs other than those three, *analyze* elixirs (even those three!), or otherwise use the Alchemy skill.

Rote Alchemy is typically acquired as part of a magical style that includes spells that have elixir equivalents. At the GM's option, it may exist for *other* spells – if he's willing to set costs, durations, skill penalties, and so on for oddities such as the dreaded Elixir of Decapitation.

Rule of 17†‡

You're exceptionally good at overcoming your target's resistance with one particular Resisted spell. *The Rule of 16* (p. B349) kicks in a level later for you, becoming the Rule of 17. You must specialize by *spell*.

The GM may allow multiple levels of this perk (Rule of 18 [2], Rule of 19 [3], etc.), imposing whatever cap he considers balanced. This is fairly self-limiting. For instance, to *benefit* from Rule of 20 [4], a wizard first needs his spell at 20 – and it's debatable whether 4 points in this perk are as useful as 4 points in other perks or the spell itself.

At the GM's option, mages who suffer from Easily Resisted Magery (*Thaumatology*, p. 24) cannot have this perk.

Rules Exemption†

This works much like Extra Option (p. 24), except that instead of granting access to a specific, *beneficial* optional rule that *isn't* used campaign-wide, it extends an exemption from a particular, *detrimental* optional rule that *does* apply to everybody else. As with Extra Option, perks that facilitate ordinary, "tactical" casting require specialization by spell, while those that aid processes that are costly in terms of money, time, or personal health affect all spells – or at least all spells of a style.

Examples:

Armored Casting†: If the GM uses *The Unarmored Wizard* (*Thaumatology*, p. 28) to give spellcasters penalties while wearing armor, the ability ignore these penalties for one specific spell is a Magic Perk.

Fearless Magic†: If the GM uses *Fearsome Magic* (*Thaumatology*, p. 32) to make *learning* magic scary, an exemption for all spells of a style is a single perk. If he requires a Fright Check when *casting*, bypassing this calls for a separate Magic Perk per spell.

No Magic Ingredients†: If the GM uses *Magic Ingredients* (*Magic*, p. 8) for all spells, then the ability to cast a particular spell without any ingredients at all is a Magic Perk.

Many examples of exemptions from *standard* (not optional) rules are already Magic Perks; e.g., Area Spell Mastery (p. 22), Blocking Spell Mastery (p. 23), Continuous Ritual (p. 23), Melee Spell Mastery (p. 27), Missile Spell Mastery (p. 28), No Gestures (p. 28), and No Incantations (p. 28). In all cases, remember that it's never worth a perk to be exempt from a rule that the GM doesn't use in the first place!

Sacrificial Blocking Spell†

You can use a Blocking spell to shield an ally. You must specialize by Blocking spell, which must be one that counts as or works with a *block* or a *parry*, such as Catch Missile or Iron Arm. For spells that act as dodges (e.g., Blink) or resist magic (e.g., Ward), learn a suitable spell (e.g., Blink Other or Great Ward). The protected ally cannot be more than a yard away, and defending him counts as your personal use of a Blocking spell that turn.

Sanctum‡

The personal residence that your cost of living (p. B265) maintains, as determined by your Status (use the chart on p. B266, or your campaign's equivalent), isn't just a home. Whether it's a tipi or a massive stone tower, it's a place of magical power. You have +1 in all Quick Contests of spells with foes working magic against you or your spells in your lair, and +1 with spells worked *on* the structure (e.g., Shape Earth to shore up walls) or in defense of it (e.g., Magelock or Mystic Mist cast within its confines). This benefit *doesn't* extend to your apprentices, golem gatekeepers, pet monsters, etc.

A wizard can have only one Sanctum. The GM may wish to allow multiple levels of this perk for that place, though. If so, be aware that something like Sanctum 5 [5] would make even a mediocre mage nearly unassailable on home ground!

Scroll-Reading (Language)†

Comprehension of a non-native language has a significant point cost (see *Language*, pp. B23-25) because it assumes two-way understanding – reading and writing, speaking and understanding, and possibly both – and assesses equal odds of grasping the technical terms for any concept. Many wizards practice *reading* and *speaking* a tongue's *magical* words. They can't express themselves originally at all, converse, or read common texts; they can only recognize magical symbols and make the right sounds to activate a scroll (*Magic*, p. 57).

Scroll-Reading requires specialization by *language*. It allows you to read a scroll in that tongue. Read aloud, this casts the spell. Scanned silently, this deduces the scroll's contents *if* you can make a Thaumatology roll at -6 for Broken comprehension turned to artistic purposes.

At the GM's option, even non-mages can have this perk.

Secret Mage

You're trained at minimizing your magical emanations. For the purpose of the Aura spell (p. B249), your Magery and associated magical advantages and perks are "secret" traits, comparable to lycanthropy, vampirism, etc. Thus, your magical gifts only show up on a *critical* success – or when you use them visibly. This also affects Detect advantages that can sense mages.

Note: This isn't absolute like the +40% level of Subtle Aura (*Thaumatology*, p. 29) and is *different* from the +20% level. The GM decides whether one or both of Secret Mage and Subtle Aura exist. In worlds where aura detection is a rare talent, the perk is fairer.

Secret Spell†

This perk-level Unusual Background lets you learn a spell that *isn't* on your world's standard spell list. It might be a guild's trade secret, magic that elder wizards keep under wraps, or some outside-the-box spell that classic thaumatology regards as "impossible." Each spell requires a separate Secret Spell perk. Without the perk, you simply can't learn the spell – even if it's part of your style.

For more inspiration, see *Secret and Lost Spells* (*Thaumatology*, p. 31). As well, the GM may allow alchemist-wizards and wizards with Rote Alchemy (p. 29) to learn Secret Recipe perks for generally unknown elixirs!

Secret Words‡

You can make just about any spell more effective by shouting out minor Words of Power when you cast. These Words may be unique to your style, if you have one, but aren't explicitly part of its spells. Casting with Secret Words is always audible.

Each Secret Word you use gives +1 to skill for that casting, for *all* purposes. There are two limits on how high this bonus can go. First, you can only use Secret Words you know, at one per Secret Word perk (and having many Secret Word perks leaves less room for *other* Magic Perks). Second, you can only use each Secret Word once per day. Secret Words cannot aid Enchantment spells or ceremonial castings.

Critical failure when using Secret Words is *bad*. The GM should roll as usual on the *Critical Spell Failure Table* (p. B236), but subtract the number of Secret Words spoken from rolls of 10 or less or add it to rolls of 11 or more. Results outside the 3-18 range are catastrophic!

Shaman's Trance

Mages can acquire this Autotrance (p. B101) variant as a Magic Perk. It still requires a minute of concentration, a Will roll at -1 per repeated attempt per hour, and a Will roll to *break* the trance (with failure allowing a retry every five minutes). The difference is that it gives +2 to all spells that deal with spirits . . . and -2 to resist their powers and spells!

Note: This potent ability, equivalent to +2 to Magery for many kinds of shamans and necromancers, is balanced because of its significant built-in drawback. The GM should forbid it outside settings where *any* interaction with spirits could mean possession or a curse.

Shortcut to Power†

The *raison d'être* of many magical styles is to unlock occult secrets *quickly* by cutting corners or ignoring anything that distracts from the goal. A Shortcut to Power represents such a secret: It waives the spell prerequisites (only) for a particular spell. The wizard replaces the usual requirements with an investment in his style's spells – that is, he pays 10 points for spells learned as usual, buys this Magic Perk, and can immediately spend points on an advanced spell that wouldn't otherwise be in reach.

A style might have several Shortcuts to Power that are learned in a prescribed order, effectively making them prerequisites for one another. Otherwise, spells learned via such perks can't count as prerequisites until the wizard actually learns *their* prerequisites – the previously circumvented theory is required to build on the secret! If the magician learns prerequisites that render his Shortcut to Power redundant, he may use the point for a new Shortcut to Power or for any spell in the prerequisite chain that obviated his old perk.

Example: The Onyx Path (pp. 34-36) includes Shortcut to Power (Soul Jar) and Shortcut to Power (Lich), always learned in that order. Ruinas the Usurper puts 10 points into low-level spells of the Onyx Path, qualifies for a Magic Perk, selects Shortcut to Power (Soul Jar), and puts a point in Soul Jar. This saves him from having to spend many points on spells that he might not find useful in his present circumstances. Years later, Ruinas knows the proper prerequisites for Soul Jar. He could delete Shortcut to Power (Soul Jar) and invest the point in one of those prerequisites, but opts instead for Shortcut to Power (Lich). Ruinas can thus learn Lich immediately . . .

Most Magic Perks are balanced even for non-stylists, and fairly “safe” for players to customize, but Shortcut to Power is easily abused in a game world where most wizards must buy prerequisites. The GM is advised to restrict it to styles of his design.

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

Special Exercises†

Through secret rituals, elixirs of power, or meditation, you have access to an attribute level or an advantage that's normally off-limits. This is a general perk in many settings (see **Martial Arts** and **Power-Ups 2: Perks**), but magical styles sometimes offer specific varieties as Magic Perks:

Special Exercises (FP can exceed HT by 100%): Normally, your FP cannot be more than 30% higher than HT (p. B16). This elevates the limit to 100%.

Special Exercises (IQ)‡: Each level lets you exceed your racial maximum IQ – 20, for humans – by one.

Special Exercises (Magery)‡: In some game worlds, the maximum Magery level is a hard cap. In others, the limit isn't absolute but you need a costly Unusual Background to circumvent it; e.g., in **GURPS Banestorm**, mages must pay 10 points per Magery level to go past Magery 3. The GM may wish to be even less strict, while limiting high Magery to practitioners of

organized styles to give styles more weight; in that case, each level of this Magic Perk lets you exceed the usual Magery ceiling by a level.

Special Exercises (Mana Enhancer): In a high-powered campaign, the GM may have magical styles that offer this perk, permitting wizards to buy Mana Enhancer 1 [50]; see p. B68. The advantage raises mana level a step when the caster works magic on *himself*.

Special Exercises (Wild Talent)‡: The GM may restrict Wild Talent (p. B99) to mages with this perk, each level of which allows one level of Wild Talent (Focused, Magical, -20%) [16/level] or Wild Talent (Focused, Magical, -20%; Retention, +25%) [21/level].

The GM may even wish to permit some of the suggestions under *Magical Advantages (Thaumatology*, pp. 197-201), with each perk enabling a single advantage, or allow only mages with a suitable perk to use *Familiars* (p. B38). In all cases, Special Exercises just lets the wizard purchase an unusual capability. The trait itself has its usual point cost.

Spell Bond†

You've undergone a ritual that bonds a spell to you for good. You may only have one Spell Bond and the GM need not allow a ritual to change this – choose wisely! This perk gives you +1 with that spell, exactly as if you had raised it normally.

There's a catch, however: The spell leaves your “magical signature” anyplace you cast it, *and* on its subject, *and* anywhere the target goes while affected – and forensic magic to divine your identity or presence is at +5 when cast on those people, places, or things! Thus, a wizardly assassin *could* get a cheap +1 to Invisibility, but he'd leave sorcerous fingerprints on every crime scene, so he might be better off with Spell Bond (Major Healing) for use after botched missions.

Spell Duelist†

Your school teaches magical dueling. Whenever you cast Counterspell, Dispel Magic, Ward, or similar counter-magic against a spell listed for your style – even against a target spell cast by a practitioner of a different style – you get +1 in the Quick Contest to knock down that spell. You must specialize by *style*.

Spell Hardiness‡‡

Through ritual dueling, hazing, or sadistic teaching practices, you've been exposed to a harmful spell so often that your magical aura has become hardened against it, affording you limited protection. You must specialize in a particular *damaging* spell. Each level of Spell Hardiness gives you DR 1 against that one spell only.

This is just Damage Resistance (Limited, One Spell, -80%) [1/level].

Spell Resistance†

As with Spell Hardiness (above), you've developed a tolerance for an offensive spell. In this case, you must specialize by Resisted spell, and enjoy +3 to your resistance rolls against it. You receive no benefit against other spells or against magical elixirs, however similar their effects.

This is just the lowest level of Resistant (p. B80) against a “Rare” item. It *isn't* the same as Magic Resistance (p. B67), which also affects the enemy caster’s skill – but it doesn’t interfere with your own spellcasting ability, either. You *can* have both Spell Hardiness and Spell Resistance against a damaging Resisted spell.

Spirit Contract†

Rules for spirit-assisted spellcasting appear on pp. 90-94 of ***Thaumatology***. As noted there, each contract with a suitable spirit counts as a perk.

Staff Attunement

When you pick up any item that *could* carry the Staff spell, it works as if it *did* bear that spell while you have it ready. It isn’t actually enchanted, and it immediately loses its power when you let go.

Note: This is simply an Accessory perk (p. B100) with the downside of being outside the mage’s body balanced against the upside of being transferable to new artifacts. If the GM modifies Accessory, he may wish to modify Staff Attunement, too.

Staff Bond†

You own a magical Staff item that acts as a concentration aid. You must acquire this with cash or as Signature Gear. When you have it ready in hand, you may ignore -1 of your

current total penalty for spells “on,” provided that at least one of those spells was cast through the bonded item.

This perk reflects a magical attachment to one specific artifact. If you lose that particular item, you lose the perk. You can acquire a new Staff Bond in play, however.

Standard Operating Procedure†

A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) exempts you from having to tell the GM that your PC is doing something that’s second-nature for him. You always get the benefit of the doubt. Anybody – mage or otherwise – can have an SOP, but a few are primarily for spellcasters. Magicians may select these as Magic Perks.

Magical Lawyer: You always use airtight wording for the questions you ask via spells like Mind-Search and Divination, the terms of demonic contracts, magical wishes, and so on. If the GM feels that you, the *player*, have used ambiguous wording, he’ll err in your favor, allowing you to roleplay a meticulous genius!

Paraphernalia Pro: You own loads of ancient tomes, Powerstones, rare ingredients, scrolls, and so on, but you always keep them sorted and handy. When the GM assesses a ready time longer than a second – such as the times on p. B383 – for a magical gewgaw in your pocket (1d sec.), pack (2d sec.), or lab (1 min.), *halve* this, rounding down.

Precision Recharger: You always park Powerstones far enough apart to allow them to recharge, and intuitively know the optimal arrangement for the available space. If there’s any doubt whether you did this, there is no doubt – you did.

Other Magic Systems

Magical Styles works best with wizardly spell-magic, but it’s possible to adapt aspects of it to other systems from ***Thaumatology***. Several suggestions appear below; see also *What of Clerics?* (p. 26). In all cases, the GM should alter Magic Perks to suit the specific system and consider inventing some *original* perks that interact with that system’s unique features.

Ritual Magic (***Thaumatology***, pp. 72-76): Magic Perks would work fine; just read “spell” as “technique” and remove anything to do with prerequisites. Ritual magic’s crowning feature – flexible wizardry – is somewhat at odds with styles’ specialist slant, though. The GM could nevertheless build styles around the core skill and a few college skills, offering techniques and not spells, or even create several styles that offer *all* college skills, each with a different core skill and perks.

Threshold-Limited Magic (***Thaumatology***, pp. 76-82): This is merely spell-magic with an unusual energy source. Almost everything in ***Magical Styles*** is compatible – although references to FP need rephrasing in terms of power tally.

Assisting Spirits (***Thaumatology***, pp. 90-94): For wizards, this could be bolted onto a style as a risky alternative

to Shortcut to Power perks. Access might call for an Extra Option perk or be free. For non-wizards, each spirit already has its own rules that fill the same dramatic role as a style, rendering styles redundant. Magic Perks are fine, though; one per 20 points in suitable *skills* (Hidden Lore, Occultism, etc.) is about right.

Paths and Books (***Thaumatology***, pp. 121-165): Follow the general advice given for ritual magic, but build styles around Ritual Magic and Path/Book skills. This approach fits better here, since each tradition of magic teaches a subset of Paths already. Magic Perks would often need *heavy* adaptation to the specifics of the system, but aren’t inherently unsuitable.

Flexible Magic (***Thaumatology***, pp. 166-195): The freedom of flexible magic-working would be lost if the GM started subdividing lexicons or forcing magicians to adopt styles with only *some* verbs and nouns, or *some* Realms – but the GM may want that. Magic Perks definitely suit the freewheeling nature of this magic!

Powers (***Thaumatology***, pp. 202-208): Powers are *already* akin to styles. All the Magic Perks that suit a power’s users – “as is” or with minor adaptation – could be listed as that power’s “Power Perks,” available at the rate of one perk per 20 points in the power.

Super-Sympathy†

You're so attuned to an area or an inanimate object – the perk must specify *what* or *where* – that you can cast spells on it with ease. Whenever that subject is involved, you may ignore up to -5 in total penalties for distance (the -1/yard for Regular spells, long-distance modifiers, or special modifiers for spells like Teleport), being unable to see or touch the subject, and general unfamiliarity. This can't give a net bonus unless *no* such penalties apply, in which case you get a flat +1 to effective skill.

Common adventuring uses are things like Super-Sympathy (Staff) to get +1 on spells that enhance your staff when it's in hand, to levitate it to your hand with ease even when blindfolded by captors, and to avoid -5 in distance penalties to cast Seeker on it if it's stolen. Every professor at a magic school might have Super-Sympathy (Meeting Room) to waive -5 in penalties when using Teleport to attend a faculty gathering in person or Telepathy to do so remotely. You cannot have Super-Sympathy for a subject that isn't your *personal* property or ritually designated as "friendly" to every member of your guild or school (such as that meeting room).

Thaumalogical Doublespeak

Prerequisites: Magery and Thaumatology at 12+.

You speak like your old supervisor at the academy pretty much full-time – and when you do, there's just enough real magic in the words to make your eyes glint or your beard smolder, and perhaps to stir up a light breeze or stand others' hair on end. In any social situation where *being a wizard* would be reason enough for others to accord you respect, you may use your Thaumatology skill as if it were Fast-Talk or Intimidation. In effect, it becomes a specialized Influence skill (p. B359).

While other Magic Perks often *could* work for non-mage wizards, this one requires Magery. It invokes minor-but-real magical power!

Willful Casting

Prerequisite: Will greater than IQ.

You're very strong-willed, and while you're no better at casting spells than any other wizard, you're good at keeping your magic from being dispelled. Whenever one of your ongoing spells is attacked with Counterspell, Dispel Magic, etc. (but *not* when someone else uses a Blocking spell such as Ward against your magic!), you may substitute a Will-based spell roll to resist.

Example: Vinz has IQ 13 and Will 18. He knows Force Dome at 15 and casts it with two spells "on," at effective skill 13. Thus, he rolls against 13 to cast the spell, but once it's up, Dispel Magic cast to remove it would have to beat his Will-based effective skill of 18!

Wizardly Dabbler†

You know just enough to get yourself into trouble with a set of *basic* spells (for a list, see *Basic Spells*, p. 6) but don't have even a point in any of them. Pick eight Hard (but *not* Very Hard) spells that you can cast at IQ-6. You can trade two choices for one at IQ-5, or four choices for one at IQ-4. Magery gives its usual bonus, and is *required* if any of your selections call for it.

Example: Mickey the Apprentice can cast Ignite Fire and Light at IQ-6; that's two choices. He trades in two more choices for Detect Magic at IQ-5. He uses his last four choices to have Apportation at IQ-4. Apportation and Detect Magic require Magery 1, which he has, making his final levels IQ-5 with Ignite Fire and Light, IQ-4 with Detect Magic, and IQ-3 with Apportation.

You don't truly *know* these spells! You can't teach them, count them as prerequisites for advanced spells, or default other spells to them using Improvised Magic (p. 25). They always work as if known at "skill 9 or less" when determining rituals, energy costs, and casting times – even if your IQ and Magery give you a higher skill level for casting.



Wizardly Garb

Your magic accounts for your usual ritual trappings – capuchon (pointy hat) and robe, Masonic paraphernalia, whatever. Your spells won't damage this garb, even on a critical failure, and if your body changes size or form, so does your outfit. This perk only affects *nonmagical* clothing weighing up to 6 lbs. in total; heavy or magical gear is beyond such simple tricks. Thus, Wizardly Garb is mostly cosmetic, but still valuable to court wizards and others who can't afford to look sloppy.

CHAPTER THREE

SAMPLE STYLE

Below is an example that shows how magical styles work and suggests a format for presenting them to players. The Onyx Path is aimed at necromancer NPCs. Adventuring PCs may find it attractive as well, though – it offers several potent combat spells, magic for combating undead and demons, and an exceptionally long list of perks.

THE ONYX PATH

12 points

Style Prerequisite: Magery 1 (not One College Only).

Legend has it that the Onyx Path *wasn't* founded – it always was and always will be, and reveals itself to the worthy. At least, that's what public practitioners of the Art tell outsiders. The Brethren, as they're known, have cause to be circumspect: The Art's top goal is to turn the Brother into a lich, and most of its subsidiary magic either calls down curses or calls up unholy monsters.

Only magically talented candidates – ones whom the revered Immortals of the Sixth Circle believe would make excellent servants – are admitted to the Art's First Circle and taught the truth. These *Neophytes* study ancient texts on death, spirits, and the theory of magic, and receive training in corpse preservation (including mummification). When the novice's magical aptitude is clearly attuned to these concepts, magic lessons begin.

Early magic consists of trivial curses, plus important basics like the Final Death spell. On mastering these, the student joins the Second Circle as a *Gravekeeper*, and studies magic for such basic tasks as spooking outsiders away from rituals and screening visiting vampires from the sun. *Shadowkeepers* of the Third Circle supervise Gravekeepers (and often “borrow” their magical energy). These first three Circles are considered junior.

The Fourth Circle, the *Reanimators*, learn rituals for raising and commanding lesser undead, *deadly* curses that can create raw materials for zombies, and spells for reading lost languages. *Summoners* – the Fifth Circle – are so named for being entitled to learn Summon Demon, but most focus on even nastier curses and sewing together freakish constructs from corpse parts. The Sixth Circle is that of the masters, the *Immortals*, most of them liches. There's talk of a Seventh Circle . . . but if it exists, its initiates are expert at staying hidden.

Most Brethren learn Intuitive Cantrip (Corpse Smart) as their first Magic Perk. They go on to learn *many* tricks of the Art: activating scrolls in forgotten alphabets, affecting spirits with magic, increasing magic's power through self-sacrifice, making curses even more terrifying, preparing and building up resistance to magic potions, reanimating huge monsters,

resisting curses, etc. A few master rituals that let them edge closer to being a lich on the installment plan, or other shortcuts to lichdom. Some of the Onyx Path's more public masters demonstrate the Art's utility by sending off foul undead or brewing useful elixirs – even going so far as to present their magic as “harmless” – and receive the legal right to practice!

Like all styles, the Onyx Path has its mysteries. These consist of *at least* three unique spells (all horrid) and a secret technique for converting ectoplasm into a magical energy source. There are almost certainly others – possibly in the skeletal claws of the elusive Seventh Circle.

Unlike most non-martial styles, the Onyx Path encourages physical fitness among its adherents. There's a good reason for this: Surviving the transition to lichdom calls for a strong body. Many of the Art's less-extreme methods work best for those with high HT, too, notably Elixir Resistance and weathering the effects of Blood Magic and Life-Force Burn.

Required Skills: Expert Skill (Thanatology); Hidden Lore (Demon Lore or Spirit Lore); Literature; Professional Skill (Mortician); Thaumatology.

Required Spells: Death Vision; Debility; Fear; Final Rest; Sense Life; Ward.

Perks: Blood Magic; Elixir Resistance (Aging, Death, Eternal Rest*, Fear, or Love); Frightening Side Effects (any offensive spell on list); Huge Subjects 1 or 2 (Zombie); Improvised Magic (Onyx Path); Intimidating Curses; Intuitive Cantrip (Corpse Smart); Life-Force Burn 1-5; Limited Energy Reserve 1-5 (Onyx Path); Magical Lawyer; Magical Style Adaptation (any Necromantic); Permit (Necromancy); Rote Alchemy (Aging, Death, Eternal Rest, Lichdom, Long Slumber, Reanimation, Resurrection, or Youth); Sanctum 1 or 2; Scroll-Reading (any); Secret Material (Ectoplasmic Essence); Secret Spell (Annihilation, Glimpse of Hell, or Rift to Hell); Shaman's Trance; Shortcut to Power (Soul Jar or Lich†); Special Exercises (advantages on lich template, one per perk; see *Magic*, p. 160); Special Exercises (Extra Life 1); Spell Enhancement (Affects Insubstantial); Spell Hardiness 1-6 (any damaging spell on list); Spell Resistance (any Resisted spell on list).

Secret Spells: Annihilation; Glimpse of Hell; Rift to Hell.

* Elixir Resistance (Eternal Rest) lets the Brother's *corpse* resist using his HT in life.

† Knowing Soul Jar, thus relinquishing Shortcut to Power (Soul Jar), is a prerequisite for Shortcut to Power (Lich).

Optional Traits

Attributes: Improved IQ and HT.

Advantages: Allies (undead horde); Languages (ancient or lost); improved Magery; Night Vision; Resistant to Disease or Poison.

Disadvantages: Bad Smell; Divine Curse; Enemy (do-gooders); Frightens Animals; Lifebane; Megalomania; Reputation (evil necromancer); Supernatural Features (those customarily found on undead); Terminally Ill.

Skills: Alchemy; Archaeology; Cryptography; Hazardous Materials (Magical); Hidden Lore (any other); History; Occultism; Poisons; Research; Teaching.

Spell List

Brethren must know a minimum number of spells from their current Circle before being admitted to the one above it.

First Circle (Neophyte)

Six spells are considered basic. A new recruit is *required* to learn them all.

Death Vision	Fear	Sense Life
Debility	Final Rest	Ward

Second Circle (Gravekeeper)

A Neophyte becomes a Gravekeeper upon learning all six First Circle spells. This entitles him to learn any of these eight spells.

Decay	Recover Energy	Summon Spirit
Night Vision	Sense Spirit	Terror
Poltergeist	Shade	

Third Circle (Shadowkeeper)

A Gravekeeper is promoted to Shadowkeeper upon learning four Second Circle spells (a total of 10 spells, with First Circle spells), allowing him to study these 13 spells.

Dark Vision	Materialize	Solidify
Darkness	Poison Food	Steal Energy
Devitalize Air	Resist Disease	Summon Shade
Gloom	Resist Poison	Turn Spirit
	Shape Darkness	

Fourth Circle (Reanimator)

A Shadowkeeper graduates to Reanimator upon learning at least seven Third Circle spells (a total of 17 spells, with lower-Circle spells), giving him access to 33 more spells.

Affect Spirits	Evisceration	Soul Rider
Age	Foul Water	Steal Attribute
Astral Vision	Gift of Letters	Steal Vitality
Blight	History	Strike Barren
Cold	Icy Touch	Suspended Animation
Command Spirit	Nightmare	Turn Zombie
Control Zombie	Pestilence	Weaken Blood
Deathtouch	Possession	Wither Limb
Dehydrate	Projection	Wither Plant
Dry Spring	Skull-Spirit	Zombie
Ethereal Body	Slow Healing	Zombie Summoning

Fifth Circle (Summoner)

A Reanimator earns the title of Summoner upon learning at least eight Fourth Circle spells (a total of 25 spells, with lower-Circle spells), and can then go on to study any of these 23 options.

Ancient History	Golem	Ruin
Animate Shadow	Homunculus	Soul Jar*
Banish	Malefice	Steal Beauty
Bind Spirit	Mass Zombie	Steal Skill
Entrap Spirit	Pentagram	Steal Youth
Gauntiness	Permanent Possession	Stop Healing
Ghost Weapon	Repel Spirits	Summon Demon
Glimpse of Hell	Rotting Death	

* Brethren with Shortcut to Power (Soul Jar) may learn Soul Jar at *any* time.

Sixth Circle (Immortal)

A Summoner is deemed an Immortal upon learning at least eight Fifth Circle spells (a total of 33 spells, with lower-Circle spells), and has access to the final eight.

Annihilation	Exchange Bodies	Soul Stone
Astral Block	Lich*	Wraith
Curse	Rift to Hell	

* Brethren with Shortcut to Power (Lich) may learn Lich at *any* time.

Secret Material: Ectoplasmic Essence

Prepared correctly, the slimy residuum left by a ghost or other undead spirit becomes a potent one-off magical energy source. Transformation calls for a Thaumatology-3 roll by a Brother with the Secret Material (Ectoplasmic Essence) perk. Any success produces a dust containing bound energy points equal to margin of success, to a maximum of the ghost's Will. Failure wastes the ectoplasm. Critical failure produces a poison. The GM rolls in secret – failures are obvious, but it's impossible to tell success from backfire!

To use the essence, the wizard snorts it (yes, up the nose). If preparation succeeded, the bound energy counts toward the *next* Necromantic spell he casts, before any other energy. If preparation critically failed, the wizard suffers HP of injury equal to the Will of the ghostly source.

Ectoplasm is free from ghosts. To be *useful*, the ghost must be a “natural” specter, not a summoned spirit or other entity raised by spells. A ghost leaves behind ectoplasm only if it materializes (tossing things and moaning don't count), one dose per materialization.



There's no market for ectoplasmic essence, but Brethren customarily trade favors for it: access to old books, spare zombies, etc.

Secret Spell: Annihilation (VH)

Regular; Resisted by HT

This spell instantly and irrevocably disintegrates a living being. If the subject fails to resist, the caster rolls 1d to 4d – depending on the energy in the spell – and compares the total to the *larger* of the victim's HT or HP.

If the roll equals or exceeds the target score, the target is destroyed outright. Anything he's carrying falls to the ground. His *soul* is untouched – this curse annihilates the body.

Otherwise, the victim suffers injury equal to the roll of the dice, exactly as if he had been hit with a Deathtouch spell.

Critical failure with this spell costs the *caster* 1 HT permanently!

Duration: The spell lasts an instant; annihilation is permanent.

Cost: 6, plus 2 per die of effect, to a maximum of four dice.

Time to cast: 3 seconds.

Prerequisites: Magery 3, Secret Spell (Annihilation), and eight Fifth Circle spells.

Secret Spell: Glimpse of Hell

Regular; Resisted by Will-2

The subject is treated to a momentary glimpse of the unfathomable horror and evil of Hell. For an instant, the sum of all pain, suffering, and sorrow of every lost soul is visited upon him. This is taxing for any sane being!

If the subject fails to resist, he must roll an immediate Fright Check at -5, without the benefit of *any* advantages (Combat Reflexes, Fearlessness, Unfazeable, etc.) or for being in combat. The usual results apply on a failure, but lasting mental problems acquired this way inevitably have a Hellish bent, and Flashbacks are common.

Duration: An instant.

Cost: 4.

Time to Cast: 2 seconds.

Prerequisites: Secret Spell (Glimpse of Hell) and eight Fourth Circle spells.

Secret Spell: Rift to Hell (VH)

Regular; Resisted by Will

A flaming interplanar crack opens up beneath the subject – who *must* be standing on a solid surface (ground, floor, etc.) – whereupon he must resist else be dragged bodily into Hell, accompanied by much smoke and noise! Anything he's carrying travels with him. The Rift opens and closes much too quickly for anyone to follow, and leaves behind only a patch of blasted ground.

This spell resembles Plane Shift Other, but is faster and cheaper, as it's intended for combat. Unlike with that spell, the caster cannot control where the subject ends up in Hell, and Remove Curse cast at the site of the rift can restore the victim to his own plane of existence (unless this is done *quickly*, though, his mental and physical health are likely to suffer).

Rift to Hell *can* affect demons. It's less work than Banish but a phenomenally bad idea.

Duration: Permanent, barring Remove Curse or the subject somehow fleeing Hell.

Cost: 12.

Design Notes: The Onyx Path

The Onyx Path falls somewhere between an experimental style (practitioners raid ancient ruins for lost texts, experiment on corpses, and brew unpleasant potions) and an elemental one specializing in Necromantic spells. This makes both *Experimental Styles* (p. 4) and *Elemental Styles* (pp. 4-5) potential sources of required skills. Expert Skill (Thanatology) replaces a general experimentalist's Archaeology, History, Occultism, etc. in the style's area of interest: death. Other recommendations become optional skills, with the exception of Naturalist – there's little natural about the Art!

The Art is hierarchical and new recruits learn only basics. Thus, required spells come from *Basic Spells* (p. 6), with the exception of Fear. The short chains under *Necromantic* (p. 9) *aren't* used, because the Onyx Path employs alternative prerequisites.

The style requires five skills and six spells. With the point for Magical School Familiarity, this makes style cost $5 + 6 + 1 = 12$ points.

Perks are inspired by both *Perks for Elemental Styles* (pp. 12-13) and *Perks for Experimental Styles* (p. 13),

with special attention to those noted as suitable for necromancers.

Following the instructions under *Spell List* (pp. 14-18), the spell list includes all of the Art's required spells and secret spells, most Necromantic spells, and a few other spells that reflect the Onyx Path's obsession with cold, dark, decay, and fear – and with messing with ancient tombs and books. None of the spells enjoy a free pass on prerequisites, and all remain in their original colleges, but the Onyx Path uses *Restructuring Prerequisites* (p. 17) with a few shifts (to make Mass Zombie harder than Zombie, Permanent Possession harder than Possession, etc.). The spells aren't "re-zeroed," so there's no need to require extra skills.

In the optional traits, improved HT appears because the process of becoming a lich turns on a single HT roll! The advantages and disadvantages adhere to the rigorous standard of "creepy stuff suitable for necromancers."

Applying *Style Prerequisites* (p. 11) yields Magery 1, for the required spells Death Vision, Final Rest, and Ward. Students who wish to learn Lich need IQ 13 and Magery 3, whence the notes on improved IQ and Magery in the optional traits.

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