

MAGICAL COMPOUNDS

Transforming monstrous matter into magical ingredients!

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In *Adventurer Conqueror King System*, the creation of magic items consumes magical compounds made up of monster parts. While this has the admirable advantage of encouraging adventures to secure rare parts, and explains why wizards maintain menageries of monsters in their dungeons, it can lead to crippling difficulties for the would-be enchanter who wonders where, exactly, he is going to ever find the required number of mummy wrappings or ooze droppings. These rules describe a means by which magic-users can discover how to create and use **magical compounds** that offer more flexibility than mere monster parts.

INTRODUCTION TO MAGICAL COMPOUNDS

A **magical compound** is a crafting material derived from one or more types of monster parts, which can be used in the construction of magic items based on one or more spells. The appropriate **magical compound(s)** can be substituted on a gp-for-gp basis for any monster part or parts normally needed for the spell in question.

Like spells, **magical compounds** are rated by level. The level of a magical compound indicates how broadly useful the compound is. A 1st level magical compound can be created from only one kind of monster and can be used in the creation of magic items based on just one spell. For every additional monster that can be used to create the magical compound, and for every additional spell that the magical compound can be to enchant into an item, its level increases by one.

Example #1: *Shimmering essence* is distilled from the glands of troglodytes and is used in the creation of items related to the spell **chameleon**. Since it is created from one type of creature to enchant items with just one spell, *shimmering essence* is a 1st level magical compound.

Example 2: *Beguiling powder* is made by processing the parts of hags, harpies, or nymphs (two additional creatures). It can then be used to make magic items related to both **sleep** and **charm person** (one additional spell). Since it can be made with two additional monsters to enchant items with one additional spell, *beguiling powder* is therefore a (1 + 2 + 1) 4th level magical compound.

MAKING MAGICAL COMPOUNDS

Magical compounds can be made from the monster parts of any monster included in the magical compound's formula. A character with the proficiency necessary for harvesting a particular monster part may, if he possesses a formula, convert the monster part into the appropriate magical compound. The GP value of the monster parts become an equivalent amount GP of the magical compound. The process of conversion takes the same rate of time as the rates of harvesting listed in *Lairs & Encounters* (p. 136). At the Judge's discretion, a character who possesses the appropriate formula for a magical compound may harvest the magical compound directly from a matching dead monster without having to convert it later.

Example: Meiros, an elven enchanter, stands triumphant over a slain harpy (65xp). He possesses the formula for *beguiling powder* and one of his henchman has the Animal Husbandry proficiency. The judge permits Meiros and his henchman to directly extract 65gp worth of *Beguiling Powder* from the harpy's corpse.

MAGICAL COMPOUND FORMULAS

Since the creation of magical compounds from monster parts requires the character possess the compound's formula, magical compound formulas are highly valuable to all characters intent on magic research.

The Judge should include magical compound formulas in the treasure hoards of evil wizards and other magic users, treating it as special treasure in lieu of coin. Magical compound formulas are worth 100gp or more each (see below). Alternatively, adventurers may research their own magical compound formulas catered to their repertoire and the local monster population.

RESEARCHING MAGICAL COMPOUND FORMULAS

Researching magical compound formula is a process similar to researching spells in that the character will need a sufficiently valuable **library** in order to perform the research, will have to meet the cost and time requirements, and perform a magical research throw. However, unlike spell research, researching formula is an iterative process, requiring that the character build off of previous research. Rather than creating new high level magical compound formulas from scratch, characters must start by creating a 1st level formula with research, then performing another research project to improve the formula from 1st level to 2nd level, and so on.

LIBRARY VALUE

The magic-user's library must be large enough to research a 1st level spell in order to research a 1st level magical compound formula (so 4,000gp + 2,000gp for the 1st level, or 6,000gp). In order to improve a 1st level magical compound formula to a 2nd level magical compound formula requires a library valuable enough to research a 2nd level spell, and each step up to a particular level of formula will require a library valuable enough to research a spell of that level.

COST, TIME, AND DIFFICULTY

Each level of research of a magical compound formula has an associated cost equal to that of researching a spell of that level, e.g. 1,000gp/level. Each level of research will also take the same amount of time, 1 week/level.

Once the base cost and time requirements have been met, the same vein, the character should make a magical research throw. Increase the target value of throw by +1 for every level of the formula. Apply any bonuses from proficiencies that would normally apply to spell research. At the Judge's discretion, he may permit the character to increase their throw by the character's ranks in Alchemy.

SELECTING MONSTERS AND SPELLS FOR THE MAGICAL COMPOUND

When a character decides to attempt to research a 1st level formula, he should specify either a particular monster or a particular spell from his repertoire. The Judge then determines the other half of the formula: If the character has specified a particular monster for the formula to use, the Judge chooses the spell that the formula will relate to; if the character has specified a particular spell for the formula to relate to, the Judge chooses the monster that the formula will require.

When a character attempts to improve the formula beyond 1st level, the Judge secretly either picks a spell not already related to the magical compound, or a monster not already usable as an ingredient in the special formula. If the character succeeds on his magical research throw, he discovers the Judge's selection and adds that monster or spell to the magical compound formula he knows.

BENEFITS OF SUCCESS

In addition to having access to a versatile magical compound, a character gains several other benefits from successful research. First, as with all magical research, the character gains campaign XP equal to the cost of the research minus their XP threshold

Example: Anciel, a 5th level Nobiran wonderworker, has an XP threshold of 650XP. He researches *shimmering essence*, a Level 1 magical compound formula. Since the research costs 1000gp and his threshold is 650XP, he gains 350xp if the research succeeds.

In addition, each successful research project produces materials equal to 10% of the value of the research. These materials may be added to the value of the library. The improvement in the value of the library represents the value added to the formula. When describing a complete formula, the judge should total up the value of each step. So 1st level formulae are worth 100gp (10% of 1,000gp), 2nd level are worth 300gp (10% of 1,000gp + 10% of 2,000gp), 3rd level are worth 600gp, etc.

Example: Meiros, an Elven Enchanter, sets about slowly improving his new magical compound, *beguiling powder*, into a 5th level magical compound. Starting with a 1st level magical component, he undertakes four magical research projects costing 2000gp, 3000gp, 4000gp, and 5000gp respectively. Each time he succeeds, he improves his formula for *beguiling powder*, enabling its production from new monsters and its use on new spells. The research also increases the value of his library. the 2nd through 5th *beguiling powder* research also increase the value of his library by 10% of the research cost – 200gp, 300gp, 400gp, and 500gp. Meiros decides that this value takes the form of short academic papers he writes - “The Art of Beguilement” worth 200gp, “Stories my Dryad Told Me” worth 300gp, “Advanced Delves Into the Realm of Slumber” worth 400gp, and “Don’t Flirt With Hags” worth 500gp. The formula for *beguiling powder* is now worth 1,500gp.

LIMITS OF FORMULA LEVELS

Characters capable of casting arcane spells and scribing scrolls/brewing potions may research magical compound formulas up to 6th level. If they are also capable of casting ritual spells, they may research up to 9th level magical compound formulas.

Characters capable of casting divine spells and scribing scrolls/brewing potions may research magical compounds up to 5th level, and the ability to cast ritual spells allows them to research 6th and 7th level magical compound formulae.

USING MAGICAL COMPOUND FORMULAS

Regardless of their ability to research them, anyone who possesses a magical compound formula may use it to convert the appropriate monster parts into the magical compound.

Possession of a magical compound’s formula is not necessary to use the magical compound as a component in magic item creation. However, if magical compounds are found without their formula, the characters will not necessarily know what the magical compound can be used for. At the Judge’s discretion, a successful Alchemy, Collegiate Wizardry, Magical Engineering, or other relevant proficiency throw can identify a magical compound’s use. Otherwise, characters may pay a sage to study the compounds or have the compounds identified as a magic item by a 9th level spellcaster.

TRANSMUTATION OF MAGICAL COMPOUNDS

If a magic-user still finds himself flummoxed by the lack of availability of a particular magical compound or overburdened with “useless” monster parts, he has yet one more avenue of recourse: a **transmutation Formula**. A transmutation formula allows a character to perform magical research to convert one magical compound to another, similar to how the medieval alchemists allegedly converted lead into gold.

REQUIREMENTS, COST, AND DIFFICULTY OF THE TRANSMUTATION FORMULA

In order to research a transmutation formula, a magic user must have two magical compound formulae that share at least one monster part or one spell. The level of the transmutation formula will be equal to the highest level of the magical compound formulae involved. Much like the magical compound formulae themselves, the transmutation formula will require a library of sufficient value to research a spell of the same level.

Research a transmutation formula costs 1000gp and 1 week per level and requires a successful magical research throw. The target value of the throw is increased by +1 per level of the formula. The Judge should allow any bonuses they allow for magical compound formulas to affect the research of transmutation formulas.

BENEFITS OF SUCCESS

If his research succeeds, the character creates a transmutation formula which, in addition to being usable to perform transmutations, is worth 10% of the cost of the research and may be added to the magic user’s library. The research also provides campaign XP, working identically to researching spells or magical compound formula

PERFORMING TRANSMUTATIONS

Once a formula is had, the character may use it to perform transmutations. Performing transmutations has a base cost equal to crafting a single-use magic item of the same level (that is, 500gp/level). The process also requires 500gp/level worth of one of the formula’s magical compounds. The character must make a successful magic research throw to complete the transmutation. The target value of the throw is increased by +1 per level of the transmutation formula. The character should apply any modifiers he would apply when brewing a potion.

If the transmutation is successful, the character creates an amount of the other type of magical compound equal to the amount invested. Note that transmutation formulae do not specify a direction, and so a single formula can be used to convert either magical compound into the other. At the Judge’s discretion, this process may be worth XP the first few times a particular transmutation is successfully performed.

MAGICAL EXPERIMENTATION

At the Judge’s discretion, characters may be permitted to perform magical experimentation when researching magical compound formulas or transmutation formulas in order to achieve breakthroughs. If so, use the guidelines below to determine the benefits and risks.

MAGICAL COMPOUND FORMULAS

If a minor breakthrough is achieved, the Judge and the character should decide some way that the spell or monster being added to the compound could be generalized (broadened). For example, if a magic compound formula was intended to become creatable using bugbear parts, the Judge might allow the formula to be created from parts of any beastman of 3 HD or more. If a magic compound formula was intended to now be useable with **burning hands**, the Judge might permit it to now be useable with any 1st level spell which can do fire damage. The Judge should take care that the generalization preserves at least some kind of cohesive flavor.

If a major breakthrough is made, the character may either generalize the element being added (as above), or retroactively generalize a monster or spell that is already part of the magical compound formula.

If a revolutionary breakthrough is made, the character may both generalize the spell or monster being added to the formula, and generalize an existing spell or monster related to the formula. In addition, if the player can offer a flavorful justification, the Judge may permit them to further generalize a spell or monster that had already previously been broadened. For example, the Judge may permit **burning hands**, already generalized to all 1st level damaging fire spells, to be broadened to any spell related to fire.

In the case of a failure, use the same failure table as researching a spell.

TRANSMUTATION FORMULA

When breakthroughs are achieved with a transmutation formula, the magic user may either choose A) to lower the GP cost of the process by 5, 10, or 15% for minor/major/revolutionary breakthroughs or B) provide a bonus to the magic research roll when using the formula of +1, +2, or +3.

In the case of failure, use the same failure table as researching spells.

PERFORMING TRANSMUTATION

When breakthroughs are achieved while performing transmutation, the magic user will find they have generated an additional 5%, 10%, or 15% of the final product for minor/major/revolutionary breakthroughs respectively.

Judges concerned that a magic user will simply convert back and forth between compounds trying to turn more “useless” gold into their precious magical compounds need only remind themselves that a 1-3 is always a failure, so such a foolish spellcaster is ultimately sealing their own fate. In the case of failure, use the same failure table as brewing potions.