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Fourth Edition

DUNGEON FANTASY™ 18

POWER ITEMS™



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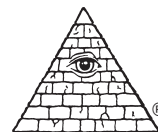
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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3	Other Power Items	8
Publication History	3	Endurance Items	8
About the Author	3	Multiple Items of Different Kinds	8
About GURPS	3	USING POWER ITEMS	9
MORE POWER TO YOU!	4	Spending Energy	9
DETERMINING POWER ITEM VALUE	4	Recharging	10
What Counts	4	<i>Supercharging?</i>	10
What Doesn't Count	4	Replacements and Upgrades	10
Special Cases	4	POWER ITEM POWER-UPS	11
<i>What Can Be a Power Item</i>	5	Extra Power Items	11
<i>Changes in Value</i>	6	Power Item Perks	12
Power Items Table	6	Recharger	12
Optional Rule: Detailed Costs	7	POWER ITEM CONTROL	12
TYPES OF POWER ITEMS	7	<i>Power Items . . . of Power</i>	13
Caster Power Items	7	INDEX	14
Psionic Power Items	7		



INTRODUCTION

*In dungeon fantasy, any spellcaster may designate **one** thing he owns – holy symbol, staff, etc. – as his “power item.”*

– **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers**

The main limit on how much magic a spellcaster can hurl around – and on how often psionics, the Power Blow skill, and many other special abilities can be used – is *energy*. Time and skill level matter, too – but except in the most desperate of situations, cunning delvers can win a few seconds to finish casting or make a repeated attempt. Running out of fuel, by contrast, means going to Plan B.

Fortunately, heroes have options when Fatigue Points run low. They can guzzle paut, ask associates to cast Lend Energy or Share Energy, and in some cases burn Hit Points. The GM might even let them rest! Such gambits mean accepting tactical or financial inconvenience, however: diverting an ally from fighting, weakening oneself in combat, or paying the steep cash cost of paut (almost seven times as much per FP as a power item recharge) or greedy “friends.” And monsters don’t respect time-outs. An Energy Reserve is a convenient alternative, but that requires precious character points.

The beauty of power items is that they store energy that’s accessible without delay or inconvenience, and every caster and psi enjoys one *for free* – there’s no cash or point cost beyond that for equipment the delver would buy anyway. While a poor hero might not benefit much, most starting adventurers have a weapon or a piece of armor valuable enough to hold 5-8 FP, and trading quirk points for Signature Gear can net a \$2,500 item that stores 13 FP. Seasoned looters can have *dozens* of FP salted away in a single bauble.

Yet insatiable adventurers are always questing for *more*. **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 18: Power Items** delivers useful

interpretations and new options for squeezing the most out of this important resource, but be warned: Great power brings great responsibility. More than many other **Dungeon Fantasy** supplements, this one leaves much to the GM, who should decide what’s allowed *before* turning the players loose!

PUBLICATION HISTORY

This is the first edition of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 18: Power Items**. It builds on rules for power items found in earlier **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** volumes – particularly **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers** – and occasionally summarizes to minimize page-flipping, but is for the most part new work.

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), **GURPS Zombies**, and the **GURPS Action, GURPS Dungeon Fantasy**, and **GURPS Power-Ups** series . . . among many other things. Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His big non-gaming interests are mixology and Argentine tango. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie, and their cat, Zephrya.

ABOUT GURPS

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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.

MORE POWER TO YOU!

As *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, p. 28 explains, any spellcaster may designate *one* material possession as his “power item.” This object holds a store of FP the owner can use to meet the energy costs of spells, powers, and similar superhuman capabilities. The reserve’s size depends

on the article’s value as *mundane* gear; see the *Power Items Table* (p. 6). Replenishing this energy involves visiting town and paying \$5 per FP.

There are exceptions to almost everything in the previous paragraph, however. Read on . . .

DETERMINING POWER ITEM VALUE

Normally, only an item’s *physical* features contribute to the value used on the *Power Items Table*. Figuring out what counts can get confusing – and there are exceptions! – so here’s the lowdown.

*Nowadays people know
the price of everything and
the value of nothing.*

– Oscar Wilde, *The Picture
of Dorian Gray*

WHAT COUNTS

The following facets of an article’s price tag *always* count toward its value on the table:

- Base item value. *Example:* \$40 for a large knife.
- Modifiers for materials, including those for being made of such extraordinary stuff as dragonbone, dragonhide, orichalcum, poison metal, poisonwood, silver, spider silk, or tempered glass. Meteoric iron goods can’t be *caster* power items, but their higher value counts for other kinds; see *Types of Power Items* (pp. 7-9). *Example:* \$800 for a *silver* large knife.
- Modifiers for mundane craftsmanship such as being balanced, dwarven, elven, fine or very fine, highly articulated, mirrored, ornate, psiphilic, or spiked. Psiphobic articles can’t be *psionic* power items (p. 7), but otherwise their higher value counts. *Example:* \$400 for an *ornate* large knife that grants +3 to buyer reactions.
- Value explicitly added by permanently attaching gems and similar pricey ornaments; see *Adding Value* (p. 6).

If several features pertain, first apply multiplicative modifiers – anything with a CF – and then add the value of gems and the like. For instance, if a large knife were silver (+19 CF) and ornate (+9 CF), it would count as a \$1,160 item: 9 FP. If its owner stole a \$1,000 diamond and set that in the hilt, the knife would be worth \$2,160 and hold 12 FP.

WHAT DOESN’T COUNT

Supernatural properties do not generally enhance an object’s capacity as a power item unless they can be explained by materials or skilled-but-mundane craftsmanship. Ignore value added by magical enchantments (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, p. 30 and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables*, pp. 44-49) or any comparable spell-like effect stemming from the *alchemical*, *divine*, *druidic*, *emotion*, *magical*, *moral force*, *psionic*, *spirit*, or *will* origin described on p. 50 of *Treasure Tables*.

This doesn’t rule out equipment merely *related* to occult pursuits, such as backpack alchemy labs (*Adventurers*, p. 26) and spellbooks (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages*, pp. 13-14). Such objects are considered mundane tools and count at full value.

SPECIAL CASES

The GM may make exceptions for certain extraordinary properties:

Blessed Equipment: A few items, particularly holy symbols (*Adventurers*, p. 26), are deemed sacred despite lacking divine or cosmic “enchantments.” Such articles are almost invariably glitzy gewgaws. While \$1,000 high holy symbols ostensibly bear more potent supernatural blessings than \$50 symbols, temple gift shops won’t sell many if they don’t look the part! Most such objects owe what power they have to the wielder’s willingness to tie up net worth in a show of faith.

The feverish devotion of the cultists who craft such things, or the High Hierophant's blessing on the sweatshop, might also help. Where such gear's innate benefit is subtle rather than spell-like – e.g., a bonus comparable to that for high-quality tools – count its *full* value on the *Power Items Table*.

Cosmic Artifacts*: Anything created by a bona fide deity (not merely blessed by mortal holy folk or enchanted using clerical magic) can have whatever properties that god – i.e., the GM – likes. The GM is free to add any fraction of value attributed to cosmic effects to material value for *Power Items Table* lookups.

Elder Weirdness: The psi-enhancing abilities of az amplifiers, fhtagn focusers, and pyramid hats (**GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 14: Psi**, pp. 26-27) originate from a confluence of otherworldly materials and inhuman craft. They're weird technology, with a "psychic matrix" that relies on madness-inducing geometry, not supernatural imbuelement. Use the *full* value of such things on the *Power Items Table*.

Extraordinary Craftsmanship*: Enchantment-like effects explained by the *artistic*, *chi*, *materials*, or *racial* origin on p. 50 of **Treasure Tables** might result from transcendent aesthetics, feng shui, the natural properties of substances rarer than silver or orichalcum, or sufficiently advanced craftsmanship. If so, the GM may opt to let some percentage of "enchantment" value count on the *Power Items Table*.

* Such "enchantments" can rack up extraordinarily high \$ values, so be wary of extreme power items. It may seem reasonable to have chi explain the equivalent of Accuracy +2, but

*Better a diamond
with a flaw than
a pebble without.*

– Confucius

that's a \$20,000 enchantment, and boosting a \$600 sword to a \$20,600 item means it holds 35 FP instead of 6 FP! Consider limiting value added by spell-like properties to the price of the underlying mundane item; e.g., that sword could claim just +\$600 from chi, and even a very fine sword (+19 CF) would get only +\$12,000. This caps FP increases more and more as the price tag goes up.

Priceless Artifacts

For extraordinarily rare artifacts, the details of materials, craftsmanship, and perhaps even the underlying item ("Is this a mace that resembles a holy symbol or a holy symbol chunky enough for braining enemies?") may be unknown or *unknowable*, which makes assessing a fair \$ value challenging. These curios often have supernatural properties that blur into their physical nature, further confusing matters. Such objects are best *assigned* FP capacities.

In the case of treasures found in **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 6: 40 Artifacts**, **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 7: Clerics**, and other supplements, this is a simple matter of looking at the "Power Item" stat. For original creations, the GM must do the assigning. One way is to use published examples as guidelines. Another is to set a modest "sell value" using the detailed rules in *The Problem of Price* (**40 Artifacts**, p. 20). Yet another is to place a fiat limit on how many \$ the delvers can gross if they sell *everything* they lug home from the adventure, subtract the worth of all loot with an unambiguous price tag, and use the difference to evaluate odd artifacts. Low figures here don't imply that shops *sell* similar goods cheaply – merchants inevitably try to peddle ultra-rare or unique merchandise at piratical prices, but market forces don't establish intrinsic worth (see *Changes in Value*, p. 6).

WHAT CAN BE A POWER ITEM

Any *discrete, unliving object* can be a power item. This rules out uncontained powders, liquids, and gases; energies and force fields; and abstract concepts. It also forbids pets and mounts (a familiar can provide an Energy Reserve instead; see **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies**), plants, and dark one living armor. Yet there's much this *doesn't* prohibit:

Sets: The owner of a suit of armor, pair of boots, or similar matching kit of related gear made by the same craftsman has a choice. He can designate the *set* as a power item and use its full value – but if a piece goes missing, he can't use his power item. Alternatively, he can avoid this risk by using *one piece* – but then only its partial value counts, although this leaves other bits free to be power items. For instance, a \$3,000 pair of orichalcum gauntlets could be a collective power item that holds 14 FP when both are worn, or the left glove alone (\$1,500) could be a caster power item that stores 10 FP, leaving the right one to serve as a heroic power item, a friend's power item, etc. that also holds 10 FP.

Consumables: Food, drink, oil, and so on are acceptable while contained, but lose all value if consumed or

poured out! A \$1,000 dose of bladeblack stores 8 FP – but once used, the \$5 crystal vial holds no FP (or a paltry 1 FP if bonded with). The high price tag of potions is deceptive, as alchemical items don't count (*What Doesn't Count*, p. 4). Ammunition presents a similar risk of loss: a gem makes a great power item, but you won't have it for long if you sling it at a foe.

Insubstantial Items: These are suitable provided that they're distinct objects in their native realm or dimension. However, the owner can draw energy from or charge such items only while he can hold, carry, touch, or (for altars, castles, standing stones, etc.) stand in/on them. They're inaccessible while intangible to him, even if they're supernaturally bonded to him or follow him around in their ghostly state.

Specific types of power items have stricter requirements; see *Types of Power Items* (pp. 7-9). For instance, caster power items can't be made of meteoric iron, while heroic power items must be martial in character. The GM may enforce further restrictions; see *Restricted Item Types* (pp. 12-13).

CHANGES IN VALUE

In their quest for ever-larger power items, adventurers will want to tweak their gear's value. Below are rules covering this. These aren't *realistic*, just *balanced* for *Dungeon Fantasy*. That remark applies equally to economics – power item capacity tracks fixed intrinsic worth and never fluctuates with the market!

Adding Value

New equipment can be bought with features like silver coating, gems, or a mirror finish to boost its value as a power item. If it makes sense to add such adornments later, go ahead! There are two options:

Commissioned Work: Go to town, find a suitable crafts-man (in a new place, the GM may require an Area Knowledge roll), and pay the cost difference plus a 10% commission. Work takes 2d days. If you provide necessary materials (e.g., gems or silver), subtract their value from the cost difference – but you must still pay 10% of the *full* difference for labor. For instance, adding \$1,000 in gems costs \$100 plus whatever fraction of the \$1,000 you don't supply as gems.

DIY: If you have the right skill (e.g., Jeweler to set gems or Smith to plate metal) *and* the associated tool kit (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, p. 24) or a universal one (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages*, p. 12), you can do your own work. Cost is that of the upgrade, which you must meet by buying materials or supplying them; e.g., to add \$1,000 in gems, pay whatever fraction of the \$1,000 you can't supply as gems. You avoid the 10% commission but must roll against skill. Any success does the job while failure allows a repeated attempt – but critical failure either destroys the item or ruins the materials (roll 1d even-odd). Each attempt takes one week – this is rarely done in the field – and you can use *Time Spent* (p. B346) to save time or get a bonus.

Once all work is done, refigure maximum FP from the new value. The item doesn't actually contain extra FP yet – you must charge it up first (*Recharging*, p. 10). For

instance, if \$1,000 in gems raises the value of your \$100 warhammer (2 FP) to \$1,100 (8 FP), you'll have to pay \$30 or wait six days for a recharge, depending on the kind of power item.

Swaps and Losses

Removing adornments is sometimes possible – at least with gems and similar discrete add-ons. To do so without losing value, apply the *Adding Value* rules to one decoration at a time, with two changes: Reduce time to one day per attempt per ornament, and labor costs to 2% of *combined* item value.

Sacrificing one part to free up the other requires no appreciable time, cost, or skill, but automatically reduces the value of the sacrificed part by $(1d+4) \times 10\%$.

Either approach leaves the underlying item and whatever was extracted from it available for later use with *Adding Value*.

Example: A bejeweled crown is worth \$10,000. Skillfully extracting the biggest diamond, worth \$5,000 on its own, requires a day and either \$200 (2% of the full \$10,000) or a skill roll (with the usual risks); this results in a \$5,000 crown and a \$5,000 stone. Just sacrificing the gem would be free and easy, but would result in a \$5,000 crown and a damaged diamond worth \$0 to \$2,500. Once separated, the crown can receive a new gem while the old one can be set in another item; these are separate tasks.

If a power item explicitly loses value – by deliberate removal or bad luck (e.g., giant slug acid dissolving its silver coating) – its maximum FP capacity instantly plummets to match. Stored FP in excess of the lower limit are lost.

Example: A wizard uses that \$10,000 crown as a power item storing 25 FP. If she skillfully removes the \$5,000 diamond to pay The Devil, the crown is worth only \$5,000 and can hold 18 FP. If it currently contains 19-25 FP, the excess 1-7 FP are lost.

POWER ITEMS TABLE

After determining an object's effective power item value – omitting any part of cost that doesn't contribute – find that price tag that in the "Value" column and read over to the "FP" column to learn the article's capacity as a power item. For intermediate values, use the next-highest FP; e.g., even a \$10 quarterstaff holds 1 FP, while a \$1,000 high holy symbol stores 8 FP.

Value	FP	Value	FP
\$50	1	\$670	6
\$120	2	\$880	7
\$220	3	\$1,100	8
\$340	4	\$1,400	9
\$490	5	\$1,700	10

Value	FP	Value	FP
\$2,000	11	\$69,000	50
\$2,400	12	\$91,000	55
\$2,800	13	\$120,000	60
\$3,300	14	\$150,000	65
\$3,800	15	\$190,000	70
\$4,300	16	\$240,000	75
\$4,900	17	\$300,000	80
\$5,500	18	\$370,000	85
\$6,200	19	\$450,000	90
\$7,000	20	\$560,000	95
\$12,000	25	\$670,000	100
\$18,000	30	\$810,000	105
\$26,000	35	\$980,000	110
\$37,000	40	\$1,200,000	115
\$51,000	45	\$1,400,000	120

OPTIONAL RULE: DETAILED COSTS

Complicated math doesn't suit *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*, but brave gamers may opt to confront this monster. A power item's value is the *materials* cost (only!) for a Powerstone of equal capacity. The sole reason for this is to maintain balance if the GM permits both sorts of batteries. Per *GURPS Magic*, p. 20, the formula for capacity P is:

$$\text{Value} = (\$10 \times P^2 + \$40 \times P) \times (54/53)^P$$

The power items rules make further assumptions:

1. *Values are rounded to the nearest two figures.* For example, 4 FP and 5 FP call for \$344.84 and \$494.08 items, treated

as \$340 and \$490; 45 FP and 50 FP need \$51,134.46 and \$68,747.72 objects, rounded to \$51,000 and \$69,000. This consideration is aesthetic; groups comfortable with funky price tags needn't round.

2. *Values are treated as ceilings instead of floors.* For example, \$340 isn't the *minimum* value for a 4-FP item, but the *maximum* – anything larger, up to \$490, is a 5-FP item. This ruling serves to give starting adventurers a small boost. It's easily overturned; see *Ceiling to Floor* (p. 13).

3. *Past 20 FP, thresholds climb in 5 FP chunks.* For example, \$51,000 is the maximum value for a 45-FP item, and anything larger, up to \$69,000, is a 50-FP item. Bickering over a few FP seems petty if you have tens of them, but gamers are free to split hairs; e.g., 46 FP and 47 FP give \$54,343.90 and \$57,704.39, and the GM can opt to use those figures or round ones (\$54,000 and \$58,000), as ceilings or as floors.

TYPES OF POWER ITEMS

Nearly all wielders of supernatural powers have power items, but certain details of these batteries vary with the *kind* of power involved. There are several distinct types, split up according to the “enabling advantage” behind the owner's capabilities; e.g., a wizard's enabling advantage is Magery, while a cleric or shaman's is Power Investiture.

CASTER POWER ITEMS

Anyone who can cast spells using Bardic Talent, Deathliness, Demonic Attunement, Elemental Influence, Magery, Power Investiture, or any similar enabling advantage – for a discussion, see *Magical Talents, Spells, and Powers (GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 9: Summoners*, p. 13) – may designate a “caster power item.” This can be made of any material but meteoric iron. Caster power items are subject to three conditions:

1. Their FP are restricted to energizing spells, abilities, and items (such as scrolls) associated with the enabling advantage, plus general *caster* power-ups like those on pp. 13-16 of *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*. The energy *cannot* be used to meet mundane fatigue costs (e.g., for extra effort) or to fuel general power-ups unrelated to being a spellcaster.

2. They require *Active Recharging* (p. 10), which costs money and is usually possible only in town.

3. They cannot be drawn upon *or* recharged in an area where the owner's magic won't work (e.g., a no-mana zone for a wizard or a no-sanctity area for a cleric).

There are several subtypes of caster items:

Demonological Power Items: Used only by *demonologists*. Demonologist spells and power-ups, and Demonological abilities, draw on extradimensional energies. Such forces give rise to mana or dark sanctity where they impinge on the material world, and that's what demonologists most often rely on – but their power items store a little bit of Hell directly.

Magical Power Items: Used by *bards*, *elementalists*, and *wizards*. All such casters require mana, which their power items store in an accessible form. Power items for this group

aren't distinct – a delver who combines two or more of these professions (most often through lenses like those in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*) uses the same power item with all associated spells, powers, and power-ups. For example, a wizard-bard would be able to designate only one magical power item, and would use it for wizardly spells, Bard-Song abilities, and special bardic skills such as Enthrallment.

Necromantic Power Items: Used only by *necromancers*. While mana and sanctity can influence these casters' abilities, neither is required. Deathly spells, necromancer power-ups, and Necromantic abilities rely on the residual life force in corpses, the spiritual charge of ghosts, and sacrificing personal vitality. Necromantic power items store such energies.

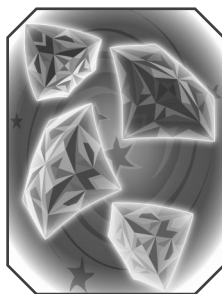
Sacred Power Items: Used by *clerics*, *druids*, and *shamans*. These three kinds of holy folk differ in important ways, but all ultimately rely on faith. In dungeon fantasy, this is a resource that can work miracles and be banked for times when it runs low. A delver who combines the abilities of two or more religious professions (either explicitly through a cross-profession lens or implicitly via the New Realm power-up from *Power-Ups*) uses the same power item with all associated spells, powers, and power-ups.

PSIONIC POWER ITEMS

Anybody with Unusual Background (Psionic) – see *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*, p. 40 or *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 14: Psi*, p. 14 – may designate a “psionic power item.” The only objects off-limits for this are psiphobic gear. Psionic power items are subject to two conditions:

1. Their FP can be spent only to activate psi abilities and power-ups. They *cannot* be used to cover mundane fatigue costs, such as those for extra effort. Notably, the options in *Grimace and Glare (Psi*, p. 33) are deemed extra effort: psionic power items can fuel the underlying ability, but they cannot pay the additional FP costs for pushing the limits.

2. They use *Passive Recharging* (p. 10), which is free but very slow.



OTHER POWER ITEMS

If the GM feels it's unfair to give spellcasters and mentalists a "free" edge over other professions who must pay points for expensive advantages and then spend FP to use the associated special abilities, it's easy to correct the inequity! Below are two examples, both subject to the following conditions:

1. Stored FP are useful only for skills and power-ups linked directly to the enabling advantage(s), plus specific – but not *all* – mundane fatigue costs.
2. They use *Passive Recharging* (p. 10).

Heroic Power Items

Used by anybody with at least one of Heroic Archer, Trained by a Master, or Weapon Master. While these power items are most valuable to martial artists and swashbucklers, knights, ninja, and scouts can have them, too. A delver can designate *one* heroic power item, no matter how many relevant advantages he has or how many professions he combines. It comes with a unique restriction and a special benefit:

- The power item must be a *weapon, shield, or piece of armor*. Close contact with that gear leaves residual chi or emotional charge that's stored as FP.
- The FP can be spent on not only skills and power-ups enabled by one of the listed advantages (particularly Botte Segrete, Breaking Blow, Chandelier Leap, Flying Leap, Hand of Death, Kiai, and Power Blow), but also *Extra Effort in Combat* (p. B357).

Scholarly Power Items

Used only by scholars, these items store cosmic energy that's generally worthless to mortals but which the enlightened can occasionally figure out how to exploit. They, too, have an additional downside and upside:

- The power item must be identifiably scholarly in nature. A partial list: alchemist's garb, backpack alchemy lab, corrective spectacles, etching kit, portable scribe, scientific instruments (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables*, p. 16), scribe's kit, scroll belt, scroll case, shield lectern, and wax tablet, plus any kind of book (the best of which are *very* costly) and any knowledge-themed artifact. Stored FP represent a psychic patina similar to that of a psionic power item but imparted by pondering and scribbling.
- The FP are useful for *any* spell or special skill enabled by Book-Learned Wisdom or Wild Talent (No Advantage Requirements), whatever its origin! They can also be burned to cast from scrolls and in place of personal FP if the GM assesses costs for long periods of study.

ENDURANCE ITEMS

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables, p. 38 defines "endurance items" that serve as batteries for extra effort and other non-supernatural applications of FP. Like all power items, these have conditions attached:

1. They're useful for paying *mundane* FP costs – that is, not for spells, special skills (e.g., Power Blow), or the abilities of powers. A handy guideline is to allow a proposed

expenditure only if it *isn't* to energize a trait that requires Magery, Trained by a Master, Unusual Background (Psionic), or a similar extraordinary enabling advantage. Examples are fueling extra effort (in or out of combat), athletics, and repeated attempts at physical tasks, as well as absorbing FP losses to exertion, sleep deprivation, starvation, and so on.

2. They require *Active Recharging* (p. 10).

An adventurer can't just designate a random piece of gear as an endurance item – this appears to be a property of specially imbued objects. At the GM's option, though, it may be possible to add this capacity to any article of equipment . . . for a price.

Find the FP reserve of an endurance item by looking up the underlying object's price on the *Power Items Table* (p. 6), using *Determining Power Item Value* (pp. 4-7) to assess what elements of cost count. When buying or selling such an article, though, add \$1,000 to its value. This surcharge reflect the process of turning it into an endurance item, and in effect replaces the need for an enabling advantage. Do not count this premium when evaluating the gear as any kind of power item. For instance, an \$80 pair of boots could store 2 FP as a power item; made into an endurance item, they would be worth \$1,080 but still hold 2 FP, not 8 FP.

Endurance items may be commonplace, but the GM could declare them a trade secret of particular towns, monasteries, dwarven strongholds, etc. In that case, learning of these places uses *Finding a Quest* (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, p. 4), while getting there is an adventure. Once the delvers locate a source of endurance items, they can buy whatever is for sale (remember the \$1,000 surcharge!) or dish out \$1,000 to enhance an existing possession, which takes 2d days.

Always be wary of any helpful item that weighs less than its operating manual.

– Terry Pratchett,
Jingo

MULTIPLE ITEMS OF DIFFERENT KINDS

Racial traits, expensive cross-training, professional lenses, quest rewards, and many other possibilities can add up to give a delver command of several *unrelated* classes of abilities. For instance, an elf with racial Magery might start out as a scholar, pay to learn a few wizardly spells, find religion as a scholar-druid, and gain psi from a blow to head. The result would be someone who can cast druidic and wizardly spells, invoke scholarly Wild Talent to use countless *other* spells and special skills, and wield the Druidic Arts and Psionics powers. And anyone might loot or buy an endurance item.

Any self-respecting munchkin in such a situation would ask, “Can I have a power item for each set of abilities? How about an endurance item while we’re at it?” The answer in both cases is “yes” – with caveats.

An individual can designate *one* of *each* of the following, provided that the noted conditions are met:

Demonological Power Item (p. 7): Requires Demonic Attunement 1+.

Endurance Item (p. 8): Requires a \$1,000 fee and GM’s permission.

Heroic Power Item (p. 8): Requires Heroic Archer, Trained by a Master, or Weapon Master, plus GM’s permission.

Magical Power Item (p. 7): Requires Bardic Magery, Bardic Talent, Elemental Influence (any), or Magery at level 1+.

Necromantic Power Item (p. 7): Requires Deathliness 1+.

Psionic Power Item (p. 7): Requires Unusual Background (Psionic).

Sacred Power Item (p. 7): Requires Power Investiture 1+ (any).

Scholarly Power Item (p. 8): Requires Book-Learned Wisdom 1+ and Wild Talent 1+ (No Advantage Requirements), plus GM’s permission.

Regardless of how many such items an adventurer possesses, they’re collectively subject to a few important rules.

One Object, One Reserve

No object can serve as two or more of the above item types at the same time! A delver who desires power items for two kinds of spellcasting *and* psi abilities, *and* an endurance item, needs four distinct pieces of gear.

This rule prevents multitiered adventurers – who can avoid the problems associated with particular abilities (no-mana zones for wizardly spells, monsters for psi, and so on) by turning to other gifts, and who tend to invade their allies’ niches – from growing even more unstoppable and invasive whenever they acquire an expensive piece of gear. On the flipside, it keeps loss of a single item from upsetting the campaign’s balance of power in the other direction. And babble about “interference between occult energies” adds nice color.

The GM *might* make exceptions for unique artifacts. Such an item’s only remarkable property may be that it can fill several roles at once. The GM decides whether it gives a single reserve useful for everything (which could be a *curse* if that’s 1 FP and counts as the owner’s only allowed power item in every category!) or lets the owner designate separate reserves (which can be ultra-powerful if the capacity is large).

Two remarkable properties are always exceptions. Power reserves (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables*, pp. 47-48), though recharged just like power items, aren’t considered to be such for the owner; an object can *have* a power reserve and *be* a power item simultaneously. Likewise, while weapons enchanted with Blood Drinker (*Treasure Tables*, p. 49) resemble endurance items, they aren’t – an object bearing this magic can be an endurance or power item at the same time, by logic similar to that which excludes the enchantment’s \$50,000 price tag from power item value.

No Substitutions

The FP stored in a power or endurance item are restricted to the particular purposes noted for that item. For instance, a cleric-wizard cannot divert energy from his magical power item to his clerical spells or Holy Might abilities, nor can he tap his sacred power item to cast wizardly spells or activate his Secret Teleportation Spell power-up.

There are no exceptions here except in the rare case where a unique artifact counts as the owner’s allowed power item in every category.

One Feat, One Source

Rarely, a single action could logically use FP from more than one power item. In that case, the user must specify a *single* source for the feat – energy cannot be drawn from two or more such reserves. For instance, someone with Book-Learned Wisdom, Magery, and Wild Talent (No Advantage Requirements) could designate magical *and* scholarly power items; if she were to cast a wizardly spell acquired via Book-Learned Wisdom, she could draw on one or the other, but not both.

USING POWER ITEMS

So now you have a big, shiny power item worth \$1 million. How does it work? Here’s the owner’s manual.

SPENDING ENERGY

You must be either *carrying* or *touching* your power item to spend the FP stored in it. If you are, drawing energy from it is automatic, instantaneous, and undetectable. Just tell the GM “I’m using my power item” when you invoke the ability that’s going to consume the FP. Physical separation is the only way to prevent someone from using a power item.

In particular:

- *The power item needn’t be in contact with bare skin.* A sword in a gloved hand counts, and so does a metal helm over a cloth arming cap or even a fancy crest atop that helm.

Anything that adds to its owner’s encumbrance – or would, if it had more than negligible weight – automatically qualifies as carried or touched.

- *The power item needn’t be wielded.* It can be slung, stuffed in a pocket, or thrust through a belt. It can be in a pouch, sheath, pack, or similar container provided that the owner is carrying the container. However, it *cannot* supply FP partway through being decorated (*Adding Value*, p. 6), enhanced into an endurance item (p. 8) or item of power (p. 13), enchanted, or otherwise improved – not even if the owner is doing the work and has the thing on him.

- *The power item needn’t be mobile.* If you truly *want* your power item to be your \$25,000 townhouse so you have an extra 35 FP when working at home, go ahead – standing on the floor or leaning on the wall counts as touching.

However, a static power item costs twice as much to recharge because it requires a house call.

Once FP from a power item are spent, they're gone until the conditions under *Recharging* (below) are met.

RECHARGING

When a new adventurer enters the campaign, any gear purchased with starting money and designated as a power item is fully charged. After its FP are spent – and whenever someone bonds to a new power item (*Replacements and Upgrades*, below) – the item will need recharging. Power items fall into two categories for this purpose. This is inherent in the type of item, not a choice on the owner's part.

Active Recharging

To recharge any *caster* power item or an *endurance* item, the owner must bring the object to a suitable institution. This is normally a holy place (e.g., temple) for sacred power items, the Wizards' Guild for magical ones, or somewhere considerably creepier for demonological or necromantic ones. For endurance items, it's the local chapter of whoever manufactures such things. The GM decides whether a given settlement has the necessary facilities, but any good-sized town should do unless "recharges aren't for sale" is part of the current adventure – though tiny communities may have hard limits on how many FP they can recharge per day!

The recharging process takes an hour and requires the owner to be physically present. It costs \$5 per FP restored. Double cost if those doing the recharging must make a "house call" (only in town!), or if the item benefits from Better Power Items (p. 12); if *both* apply, that's \$20/FP. Fees are customarily treated as donations for sacred power items, straight-up commercial transactions for magical ones and endurance items, and shady deals for necromantic and demonological items.

Recharges can be full or partial, and of old or newly designated power items – this doesn't change the price per FP or the time requirement.

Supercharging?

Players who read *How Much?* (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, p. 29) will ask about "rituals that charge power items far beyond their usual limits for an exorbitant fee." A suggested rule: Any actively recharged (above) power item can be temporarily filled to up to two times its normal capacity using a rare process known only in a few cities. Cost is \$70 per FP past the usual maximum, doubled as usual for "house calls" or Better Power Items; e.g., an item that holds 4 FP could be fully charged for \$20 and then supercharged to 5, 6, 7, or 8 FP for *another* \$70, \$140, \$210, or \$280, respectively. This is just over twice as expensive as drinking paut to restore FP – but possibly worth it, since while both are one-shot benefits, supercharged FP are available in an up-front chunk.

Passive Recharging

A *heroic*, *psionic*, or *scholarly* power item – or a *caster* item specially designated by someone with the *Passively*

Rechargeable Caster Items perk (p. 12) – cannot be ritually recharged. It regenerates 1 FP per day (24-hour period, for rules lawyers visiting weird realms) while specific conditions are met:

- A heroic power item regains 1 FP on any day the warrior spends equipped with it. A weapon or a shield can be wielded, scabbarded, sheathed, or slung, as applicable; armor must be *worn*. Those with Chi Mastery or Ninja Training need only bear the item for the 1d hours they spend maintaining their powers daily. Everyone else must schlep it around for 16 hours a day, meaning that in locales where carrying it is forbidden, the owner is out of luck.

- A psionic power item regains 1 FP on any day when the psi sleeps for at least two hours with it touching him or within arm's reach. If he can't sleep that day, too bad.

- A scholarly power item regains 1 FP on any day when the scholar spends at least two hours reading or writing. Memorizing knowledge with Book-Learned Wisdom counts.

- A *caster* power item made passively rechargeable via a perk regains 1 FP per day spent in an area where spells of the associated variety can be cast.

There's no known way to accelerate this. A week resting in town sees such a power item recover 7 FP, while casters can normally spend cash to replenish the largest reserves in an hour. On the other hand, items that recharge passively do so for free – even in the field!

REPLACEMENTS AND UPGRADES

One of the joys of killing monsters is *loot*, and valuables are the ticket to ever-larger power items. Upgrades aren't automatic, however.

You can designate a new power item wherever and whenever you want, regardless of whether you currently have one of that kind. To do so, you must make direct contact with the desired object, such as by laying *bare* hands on it. If it's currently somebody else's portable possession (power item or not), you must either physically separate it from him or get his permission to take it over. If it's static, like a castle, you'll need his permanent demise (death for mortals, destruction for lich lords, and so on) or a formal title transfer. There's no known way to circumvent these conditions if somebody doesn't want you to bond with his property!

Each attempt at the bonding process requires one hour of constant contact and a Will roll. For a *caster* item, you may add your level with the relevant casting advantage (e.g., *Magery*, for a magical power item). For an item that can energize a power, you may add your power Talent level (Chi or Ninja Talent for a heroic power item, Psi Talent for a psionic one, and so on). Any success bonds you with the item while any failure doesn't; critical success or failure has no special effect. Repeated attempts waste time but incur no penalties.

Successfully bonding with a new power item of a given type causes following things to happen:

- Your *former* power item (if any) of that type ceases to be a power item, regardless of its location: your pack, town, enemy hands, another dimension, wherever.

Any stored FP drain away. You or someone else can later (re-)bond with it as the same or a different kind of power item – a separate process that requires its own time and Will roll(s).

- Your *new* power item immediately loses any status it might have had as your power item of another kind or as someone else's power item of any type (regardless of where *he* is). Any FP held in that capacity drain away.

- You can now charge your *new* power item. It starts at 0 FP and can be filled to the capacity its value prescribes, in the usual manner (*Recharging*, p. 10).

There's no known way to transfer FP between power items. Bonding *always* empties any old item of that kind and yields an empty new one, regardless of the kinds of items involved or who owned them. Don't switch items if you have no time to hit town or rest (as the case may be) – that is, unless bonding with a purloined enemy item to drain it would be of tactical value!

Unlinking

If for some strange reason (probably involving gods or bizarre foreign laws) you want to disconnect from a power item without replacing it with another, you can. The object needn't be present. Otherwise, follow the rules for bonding: take an hour and roll against Will. Any success breaks your bond with the power item, which is immediately drained of FP.

Memory

Objects have no "memory" of their history as power items. If someone bonds with a new item and wants to return to an old one, he must go through the bonding process all over again – and afterward, that item will start with 0 FP, not the FP it stored when he was last bonded with it.

Past designations have no impact on current ones. If something used as a psionic power item is repurposed as a magical

power item, it will use active rather than passive recharging, and any FP recharged will be useful for magic, not psi.

Abilities such as Better Power Items (p. 12) and Passively Rechargeable Caster Items (p. 12) go with the owner, not the item. Only the traits of the individual *currently* bonded with the object matter.

Exception: Once the premium is paid to enhance something as an endurance item (p. 8) or an item of power (p. 13), the object "remembers" no matter how often it's later bonded as a power item. These properties work upon bonding – there's no need to pay the fees anew! To learn whether an article has such capabilities, use Artifact Lore (see *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*).

Lending, Borrowing, and Stealing

It's impossible to spend FP from somebody else's power item or to act as his proxy for recharging, even if he grants permission. The energy resides in that individual's bond with his possession – not literally "inside" the object. All taking another person's item does is prevent him from using the energy and give others an opportunity to bond with it. If the owner gets it back, it will contain exactly as many FP as it stored when he lost it, unless someone else bonded with it or he bonded with a replacement.

The bond between a power item and its owner cannot be "fooled" to circumvent these rules. A doppelgänger, however flawless, has no link with the power item of the original person. Likewise, the supernatural ties persist if someone is transformed, swaps bodies, or returns from the dead, however different the new form; e.g., a druid would retain her bond with her power item while using Alternate Form, or even after dying and returning in a new body via the Reincarnation ability from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*. Changes to the mind – even drops to animal-level intelligence and about-faces in personality due to curses – are equally irrelevant.

POWER ITEM POWER-UPS

Power-hungry delvers are always looking for ways to stash more energy. Increasing personal FP or buying an Energy Reserve works but costs 3 points/level. That underlines what makes power items so attractive: equipment rarely costs points, and even when it's acquired via Wealth, Signature Gear, or trading points for money, designating it a power item adds no *extra* point cost. Power items provide a handy boost that's initially free but comes with conditions attached.

But what if an adventurer is willing to spend points to work around those conditions? Here are some possibilities. More than most traits, these require GM judgment, as they enable many *other* abilities to be used more often or for more-impressive feats.

Extra Power Items

You've learned a major ritual that empowers you to bond with more than one power item of a particular kind. You must specialize by type. This is most often

Variable



some variety of caster power item – e.g., Extra Power Items (Magical) or Extra Power Items (Sacred) – but nothing prohibits Extra Endurance Items, Extra Power Items (Heroic), Extra Power Items (Psionic), and so on.

The cost is 15 points per extra power item: 15 points for a total of two of one kind, 30 points for three, 45 points for four, and so on. You must

disconnect from an existing item only if you exceed your maximum number of power items, in which case it's your choice which link you break. If you also have Better Power Items (p. 12) and/or Passively Rechargeable Caster Items (p. 12) for this type of item, you may specify which ones are affected by your perk(s).

If Recharger (below) is available to PCs, this ability is subject to diminishing returns. At the GM's option, paying 50 points lets you have any number of power items of this kind – that is, the progression ends at 50 points for a total of five or more power items. This is *not* balanced if Recharger isn't an option!

Power Item Perks

These count as Magic Perks; see *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*, pp. 14-15. The † means specialization by specific type of caster power item is required.

Better Power Items†

1 point

Add 50% to the final value worked out under *Determining Power Item Value* (pp. 4-7) when looking up an object's value on the *Power Items Table* (p. 6). For example, with Better Power Items (Magical), a \$2,000 jewel – normally limited to 11 FP – functions as a \$3,000 one that stores 14 FP when designated as a magical power item. Such items are harder to recharge, however: double cost to \$10/FP (\$20/FP for “house calls”).

You must declare whether a power item will take advantage of this perk when you bond with it. If you have Extra Power Items (pp. 11-12), you may decide separately for each one. Once the decision is made, switching to the other option requires you to unlink (p. 11) from the object and then re-bond with it as though it were a new power item.

If you have Passively Rechargeable Caster Items (below), any object affected by both perks uses its *normal* value (not 50% more or less) to find FP but recharges at *half* the usual rate (1 FP every two days).

Dark ones have a special racial version of this perk that *doesn't* require specialization – it boosts all their caster power items. See *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*, p. 6.

Passively Rechargeable Caster Items†

1 point

You know a minor ritual that allows you to designate your caster power item as passively rechargeable. Such an object has a capacity that corresponds to only *half* of the final value worked out in *Determining Power Item Value* (pp. 4-7) but automatically recharges 1 FP/day in any area where you could cast spells that draw on its energy (see *Passive Recharging*, p. 10). It cannot be actively recharged in town or using Recharger (below).

Example: A \$5,500 piece of jewelry would be treated as a \$2,750 item, and thus hold 13 FP instead of 18 FP if designated “rechargeable.” However, it would regain 1 FP/day without active recharging. If you're a wizard, recharging would happen only where mana is present.

You must declare a power item as either actively or passively rechargeable when you bond with it. If you have Extra Power Items (pp. 11-12), you may decide separately for each one. Once you set this property on an item, though, it will *only* work that way until you unlink (p. 11) from it and then re-bond with it as though it were a new power item.

Recharger

75 points

Prerequisite: Recover Energy spell at 20+.

You know the jealously guarded ritual that temples, the Wizards' Guild, and so on use to recharge caster power items! You can help friends, but be warned that collecting a fee for this service means running afoul of a powerful cartel of priests and magicians. Challenging their monopoly brings stiff consequences. At a minimum, your group will be shunned in town, meaning you'll be unable to buy or sell magical or sacred goods and services (blessing, enchantment, healing, etc.) – and denied quests by organizations that trade in such things – until you make (costly) amends. Repeat offenders may be banned from town, sought by bounty hunters, or *cursed*.

This ritual isn't specialized by type but can only recharge a power item associated with a spellcasting Talent you possess; e.g., to restore a druid's power item, *you* must have Power Investiture (Druidic). It cannot affect passively recharged power items of any kind. To use it, take one hour, expend *five times* the FP you want to restore (which can come from any source, including personal FP, an Energy Reserve, or a power item), and roll against IQ plus your level with the relevant Talent. Success charges the item, failure wastes the time and energy, and critical failure taints the object permanently, making it forever worthless as *any* kind of power item.

This power-up is worthwhile only to spellcasters who possess large amounts of FP and ER (preferably as much as the campaign permits!) – and only if they have access to valuable goods, are routinely away from town for extended periods, and either know spells that need large doses of energy or have associates who do.

POWER ITEM CONTROL

If the GM feels power items are being abused, or plans to introduce optional rules that increase their potency, there are ways to maintain balance.

Restricted Item Types

Just as heroic power items must be martial gear and scholarly ones are restricted to academic paraphernalia, the GM can impose conditions on other types. Sacred examples may need to serve some ceremonial purpose or be blessed, and might even have to be holy symbols; magical ones could be

limited to spellbooks, wands, and staffs (and maybe robes and pointy hats), though bards should always be able to use musical instruments; psionic power items may have to be headgear; and so on.

Materials might also play a role. For instance, caster power items can't be meteoric iron, but perhaps divine mandate renders orichalcum no good for *anyone*, despite its high value. Alternatively, maybe only jewels and precious metals work – no using plate corselets and fine rapiers just because they're expensive, though value added by making gear mirrored, ornate, or silver-plated always counts.

Forbidding some or all *Special Cases* (pp. 4-5) is also effective. If no holy symbol is any better than the basic \$50 model, enchantment-like effects are discounted regardless of origin, and even cosmic artifacts count as only basic gear of their kind, a lot of big-ticket items are off the table. The GM can introduce such goodies as treasure without worrying about unintended consequences. This can be a blanket rule or adjudicated on an item-by-item basis, effectively applying *Priceless Artifacts* (p. 5) to all special gear.

Ruling out large, stationary power items is yet another possibility. This may seem a trivial inconvenience for errant adventurers, but doing so prevents them from clearing the vampire lord's high-priced condo, moving in, and using it to pay for overpowered magic.

Born This Way

Prohibiting *Adding Value* (p. 6) is a simple-but-effective way of preventing wealthy delvers from going nuts with power items. If slathering something with gems and gilding after the fact doesn't make it a higher-capacity power item, heroes will require more resources and have to lug more gear to get upgrades.

Example: Finding a \$3,000 gem, adding it to a fine rapier (\$2,000), and boosting the blade's capacity from 11 to 18 FP involves \$5,000 of resources and 2.75 lbs. of weight. If that isn't allowed, an adventurer who wants an 18-FP power item would have to find something worth more than \$4,900 its own right, which is almost by definition rarer than a \$3,000 gem – and carrying that *and* the rapier would commit over \$6,900 of resources. And if the found object were a flimsy-but-ornate rapier worth \$5,000, keeping that as a power item *and* the fine weapon for fighting would not only tie up \$7,000 in resources but also entail 5.5 lbs. of encumbrance.

Ceiling to Floor

Reading the "Value" column of the *Power Items Table* (p. 6) as having "At least" in front of each cost – so that gear must be worth at least \$50 to hold 1 FP, \$120 to store 2 FP, and so on – can afford a modicum of control at the start of the campaign, when every \$ and FP counts.

There Can Be Only One!

Limiting each adventurer to a single power item of *any* kind – not one per type – can be an effective control on higher-powered heroes. It forces psionic cleric-wizards who get Trained by a Master to decide whether being a cleric, a martial artist, a mentalist, or a wizard matters most. Extra Power Items (pp. 11-12) should be off-limits when enforcing this control.

Ritual Conditions

More stringent conditions for *Spending Energy* (pp. 9-10) are effective controls. The most logical option is to require

users to *wield* power items and/or touch them with bare skin. The downsides of holding a fragile bejeweled dagger in an ungloved hand during a raging melee are obvious!

Harder Recharging

The \$5/FP for active recharging (p. 10) and 1 FP/day for passive recharging (p. 10) ensure that all but the poorest delvers start every adventure fully topped-up. If the local monopoly wants two or even 20 times as much to charge caster items – or if adventurers with heroic, psionic, or scholarly items can't meet their recharge conditions in a given area – FP rationing is likely. The GM most likely won't want to allow Recharger (p. 12) in that situation, and might also rule out Passively Rechargeable Caster Items (p. 12).

POWER ITEMS . . . OF POWER

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables, p. 42 introduces the "wizard's staff of power" and "wizard's wand of power." These are ornate objects that, when used as power items, can be deliberately broken by their owner (roll vs. ST) to release twice their full FP capacity for one final feat – usually a spell. Doing so completely consumes the item.

No price is given for this property, but \$500 works. This makes the wizard's staff of power, at \$4,040, a fancy \$3,510 (15-FP) item with the Staff spell (\$30) and this capability. The wizard's wand of power, at \$2,550, is a snazzy \$2,020 (12-FP) object with those two additions. The extra \$500 matters when trading such a thing, but not when evaluating it as a power item of any kind.

The GM decides how common wizardly items of power are and whether there are also sacred, heroic, psionic, and other items of power. A trade secret that demands a quest to discover is fun. Such items might be sold "as is" (add \$500 to the usual price), but it may be possible to modify an existing power item for \$500, which takes 2d days.

'Til Death Do Us Part

An extreme limitation on power items is to forbid replacing them (*Replacements and Upgrades*, pp. 10-11) until they're destroyed. Melting down an item made of precious metals lets the owner recoup the cash value, but destroying most things – weapons, armor, tools, books, etc. – ruins them along with any supernatural properties they had. And if someone steals a power item and keeps it intact, its rightful owner is out of luck until he recovers it.

With this rule in effect, it's a good idea to buy power items as Signature Gear. *Power Items . . . of Power* (above) also becomes more attractive, and the GM may even rule that *all* power items work that way for free!

Lesser versions of this restriction may merely make bonding with new items onerous. It might take days, weeks, or *months* instead of an hour. It could involve a ritual performed by some specialist in town who charges anywhere from \$20 per FP in the new item to the value next to that FP capacity on the *Power Items Table* (p. 6). It may only be possible under specific conditions: at supernaturally significant locales, on particular dates (e.g., equinoxes), during rare events (say, at the coronation of a monarch), or with special materials ("Take the blood of a demon lord . . .").

INDEX

- Better Power Items power-up, 12.
 Blessed equipment, *value of*, 4.
 Bonding process, 10-11.
 Borrowing, 11.
 Caster power items, 7.
 Consumable power items, 5.
 Controlling power items, 12-13; *forbidding replacements*, 13; *found items only*, 13; *harder recharging*, 13; *limiting quantity*, 13; *minimum item value*, 13; *restricted item types*, 12-13; *ritual conditions*, 13.
 Cosmic artifacts, *value of*, 5.
 Definition of power item, 5.
 Demonological power items, 7, 9.
 Elder weirdness, *value of*, 5.
 Enchantment-like effects, *value of*, 5.
 Endurance items, 8, 9.
 Energy, *see* *Fatigue Points*.
 Extra Power Items power-ups, 11-12.
 Extraordinary craftsmanship, *value of*, 5.
 Fatigue Points (FP), *changes in capacity*, 6, 10-11; *detailed costs and*, 7; *determining capacity*, 6; *items of power and*, 13; *restrictions on*, 9, 11; *source of*, 9; *spending*, 9-10, 13; *see also* *Recharging*.
GURPS Dungeon Fantasy, 3, 7; *Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, 3, 4, 6; *Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, 8, 10; *Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*, 7, 12; *Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages*, 4, 6; *Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies*, 5; *Dungeon Fantasy 6: 40 Artifacts*, 5; *Dungeon Fantasy 7: Clerics*, 5; *Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables*, 4, 8, 9, 13; *Dungeon Fantasy 9: Summoners*, 7; *Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*, 7, 11, 12; *Dungeon Fantasy 14: Psi*, 5, 7; *Magic*, 7.
 Heroic power items, 8, 9.
 Immovable power items, *see* *Static Power Items*.
 Insubstantial power items, 5.
 Items of power, 13.
 Lending, 11.
 Magical power items, 7, 9.
 Necromantic power items, 7, 9.
 Passively Rechargeable Caster Items perk, 12.
 Perks, 12.
 Power-ups, 11-12.
 Professions, *power items for other*, 8.
 Psionic power items, 7, 9.
 Recharger power-up, 12.
 Recharging, 10; *active*, 10; *harder*, 13; *house calls*, 10; *passive*, 10; *power-up*, 12; *static items*, 10; *supercharging*, 10.
 Replacements, 10-11; *forbidding*, 13.
 Sacred power items, 7, 9.
 Scholarly power items, 8, 9.
 Sets as power items, 5.
 Spending energy, 9-10, 13.
 Static power items, 9-10; *gaining control of*, 10; *recharging*, 10; *supercharging*, 10.
 Stealing, 11.
 Table, *power items*, 6.
 Treasure as power item, 5.
 Types, 7-9; *multiple items of different kinds*, 8-9, 13; *new*, 8; *restricted item types*, 12-13.
 Unlinking, 11.
 Upgrades, 10-11.
 Using power items, 9.
 Value, *adding*, 6, 13; *changes in*, 6; *contributing properties*, 4; *detailed costs*, 7; *determining*, 4-7; *extraordinary properties*, 4-5; *FP capacity determined by*, 6; *losses*, 6; *minimum*, 13; *noncontributing properties*, 4; *priceless artifacts and*, 5; *restrictions based on table*, 13; *swaps*, 6; *table*, 6.

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