

HEDGE WIZARDS, WISE WOMEN AND ADEPTS

An Alternate Magic System for ***SAVAGE WORLDS***®

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While ***Savage Worlds***® is definitely my favorite gaming system, it does have some shortcomings. One is the magic system, which is still too anchored to the system's miniature war-gaming roots. In particular, the spell durations are ridiculously short. Most spells, even when cast by a powerful wizard, can't be maintained for more than three minutes at most.

The system presented here seeks to remedy this issue, and allow players to create spellcasters whose power resembles that found in literature and other gaming systems.

HEDGE MAGIC

Also called Lesser Thaumaturgy, Hedge Magic is the most rudimentary method of spellcasting. It is purchased as per the Arcane Background (Magic) found on page 80 of the ***Savage Worlds***® book. The rules for using magic, however, are modified as follows:

EXTENDED DURATION

All spells with duration, i.e., all spells that are not listed as Instant, Permanent, or Special, have their durations changed to 1 hour. The initial casting cost remains the same, as does the maintenance cost, although it too is now in hours. For example, *Light* would have Duration: 1 hour (1/hour); whereas *Quickness* would have Duration: 1 hour (2/hour). Power Points begin recharging the moment they are spent.

CANNOT BE MAINTAINED

All the Power Points to sustain a spell **must** be spent at the time of the casting. If the spell caster needs it to last longer, he'll have to cast it again. On the upside, there are no maintenance penalties, nor chance for disruption, since all spells are "fire-and-forget." Thus, if a spellcaster wanted to have his *Armor* spell lasts for six

hours, he would have to spend 7 Power Points at the time of the casting [2 for the first hour, then 5 more for the remaining five hours].

Also, there are three costs that a spell caster must pay in order to cast a spell, as follows:

TIME

All spellcasting takes 1 round per Power Point in the spell, with a single Power Point being expended each round. Any interruption that results in the spellcaster being Shaken or Wounded will cause the spell to fail. In the event of such an interruption, only the Power Points already spent are lost.

MATERIALS

A spell requires \$10 worth of materials per Power Point invested in the spell. These materials are destroyed or rendered inert during the casting. Since tracking inventory isn't very FFF, spellcasters can just gather or purchase unspecified materials, recording only the total value. The use of materials involves making gestures with, and intonations over, the materials. Thus, spell casting can't be done if the caster is bound or gagged. 10 PP units of materials cost \$100 and weigh 1 pound.

POWER POINTS

Spells cost Power Points as per the basic rules. Also, a spellcaster's current Power Point pool total is the limit on how many Power Points he can spend on a single spell (seems self-evident, but it will be an important distinction).

So, what kind of magic system do these modifications produce? One that is slow, costly, and draining. Not much good in a fight, unless you know the fight is coming. However, the spells can actually have a



lasting effect. So now, when the village elder blesses the hero riding out to slay the dragon, the *Deflection* spell he cast will actually last long enough for the hero to reach the dragon. Or when the town wise woman curses a PC, her *Lower Trait* spell will actually cause the PC some consternation, instead of being just a momentary distraction.

TRUE MAGIC

The restrictions of this system definitely leave many spell casters hungering for a better way to perform magic. For such ambitious souls there is the path of Grand Thaumaturgy. This esoteric knowledge takes years to properly master. Such a practitioner is known as an *Initiated Adept*.

INITIATED ADEPT

Type: Professional Edge

Requirements: Novice; Arcane Background (Magic); Knowledge (Arcana) d8+; Spellcasting d6+.

Initiated Adepts are those spellcasters who have plumbed some of the hidden depths of magic. Whether through formal tutelage, years of research, or sudden illumination, the Initiated Adept has learned to disregard one of the three costs of spellcasting. There are three possible paths of initiation:

Path of the Mage: By studying which steps of spell casting are redundant and/or extraneous, Mages are able to cast their spells very quickly. Mages are not subject to the *Time* costs for casting spells; all their spells take but an action to cast.

Path of the Mystic: A mystic learn to use her own body as a lens to focus her arcane energies through; she may ignore the *Materials* cost on all of her spells. Also, a mystic's spells do not require any gestures or incantations.

Path of the Alchemist: Alchemists learn to cast spells through various tonics, balms, and solutions. These spells are powered by the materials that are used to create the concoction; alchemists do not pay the *Power Points* cost to cast their spells. Such concoctions spoil within a minute of their creation; thus, they must be used quickly.

The character must choose one of these paths at the time this edge is selected. This edge may only be selected once.

NEW EDGES

Although the magic system presented here allows for fairly powerful spellcasters, the following edges will allow experienced wizards to become truly powerful, easily rivaling those found in epic fantasy tales.

DWEOMERCRAFTING

Type: Power Edge

Requirements: Seasoned; Arcane Background (Magic); Knowledge (Arcana) d8+.

This edge deals with the creation of single-use or "one-shot" magic items such as charms, scrolls, and potions. Upon selecting this edge, the character acquires the understanding of how to make all of these items, but his skill at crafting them depends on his Knowledge skills.

Craft Charm

This is the art of enchanting amulets and other "blessed" objects. Any object may be so enchanted, provided it has never before been used in such a manner. The charm is empowered with a single spell effect. The spell effect occurs in response to a triggering event; this event must be determined at the time of crafting, and cannot be changed. Arrow charms are often crafted, for example; the triggering event would be set as "whenever the arrow strikes its target."

It takes one hour per PP invested to enchant the charm, along with a Knowledge (Charm Making) roll. A raise on this roll acts as a raise on the Spellcasting roll for purposes of the power's effectiveness.

Several spellcasters can reduce the crafting time by working in unison. Divide the time by the number of spellcasters participating. However, the spellcaster with the lowest Knowledge (Charm Making) skill must roll to see if the crafting was a success.

Scribe Scroll

This craft allows the caster to store a spell on a scroll. It takes 2 hours per Rank of the spell and a successful Knowledge (Calligraphy) roll to create a scroll. A raise on this roll reduces the time required by one half.

To activate a scroll, the user must have Arcane Background (Magic) and must make her own successful Spellcasting roll as if normally casting the spell. Scrolls contain the minimum PP needed to cast the spell; however, additional PP's may be provided by the user to extend the duration or increase effectiveness.

Brew Elixir

This craft allows the caster to imbue a potion with a spell effect. It takes a 1 hour per PP invested to brew a potion and a successful Knowledge (Alchemy) roll. A raise on this roll can reduce the time required by half or act as a raise on the Spellcasting roll for purposes of the power's effectiveness. Two raises generates both effects

The elixir remains potent until used. Some elixirs are imbibed; this requires no roll of any sort, the spell within the potion just takes effect. Other elixirs are used as magical "grenades," and require a successful Throwing roll to affect the target. A thrown flask has effective ranges of 5/10/20. On a miss, the spell effect still occurs, just not where the thrower intended.

HIGHER INITIATION

Type: Power Edge

Requirements: Veteran; Arcane Background (Magic); Knowledge (arcana) d10+; Spellcasting d8+.

This edge allows the character to ignore one of the three costs involved with spellcasting: *Time*, *Materials*, or *Power Points*. The cost to be ignored must be chosen when this edge is selected.

Higher Initiation may be selected more than once, but only once per Rank.

EYE OF THE MASTER

Type: Power Edge

Requirements: Legendary; Arcane Background (Magic); Knowledge (arcana) d12+; Spellcasting d12+; the spellcaster must be free from all of the costs of spellcasting.

This edge embodies the ultimate expression of mystical knowledge and power. When a spellcaster with this edge casts a spell, count all of the raises on the Spellcasting roll. Each subsequent raise adds the same effect as the initial raise. Spells that have no added effects on a raise are unaffected.

Example: Hieros the Arch-Mage has *Eye of the Master*. He casts *Armor* upon himself, scoring three raises. He gains 8 points of Armor until the spell ends. He then casts *Fear* on some approaching foes, netting four raises. Everyone within the area of effect must make a Guts check at -8! He then casts *Shape Change* and transforms into a dragon. Since *Shape Change* has no added effect for a raise, *Eye of the Master* does not come into play.

This system grew out of a conversation that occurred on the Great White Games/ Pinnacle Entertainment Group Forum. The original discussion is no longer available. I've incorporated several of the ideas from there, and owe all those involved my sincere thanks.

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