

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

ADDITIONAL

**Rules for Fantastic Medieval Wargames
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SUPPLEMENT

THE AGE OF CONAN

SECRETS OF ACHERON

BY

JASON VEY

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**THE AGE OF CONAN:
SECRETS OF
ACHERON**

A Black Grimoire for the Hyborian Age of Robert E. Howard

by Jason Vey

For use with

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

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This work is respectfully dedicated to the memories of Robert E. Howard, E. Gary Gygax, and Dave Arneson.

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INTRODUCTION

*When I was a fighting-man, the kettle-drums they beat,
Under the caverned pyramids great Set coils asleep;
When the world was young and men were weak, and the fiends of the
Night walked free;
I strove with Set by fire and steel and the juice of the upas-tree;
What do I know of cultured ways, the guilt, the craft and the lie?
-Robert E. Howard, "The Phoenix on the Sword"*

Welcome to Age of Conan: Secrets of Acheron. This book is a follow-up to the first Age of Conan "hack" for the original edition of Dungeons & Dragons. It is commonly thought that the Hyborian Age of Robert E. Howard is a "low fantasy" or "low magic" setting. This is patently untrue. Magic is part and parcel of the Hyborian Age, and it is everywhere. It just takes a very different form than that in what might be called "vanilla" or "bog standard" D&D games.

Magic in the Hyborian Age is alien, unnatural, and corrupting. It can be helpful, but is far more often harmful and inimical to human life. It comes from the Outer Dark, the home of the Nameless Old Ones who ruled the world thousands of years ago, before even the sorcerer-kings of Acheron held sway over the Hyborian peoples.

This book is largely about magic in the Hyborian Age. In it you will find new spells, new takes and tweaks on the sorcerer class, and information on books of magic and artifacts, and even a few magic items to boot. That being said, there are a few options in here that will be of use to non-magical characters as well, including Fate Points, Backgrounds, and the extended healing rules. Like all rules in D&D, the new systems herein should be considered 100% optional—the game belongs to you, not the rulebook.



CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS

Character backgrounds are nothing more than a bit of flavor to spice up character creation and give a tiny bit of mechanical differentiation to characters of the same class. Using this optional rule, a fighter whose father was a blacksmith has a different set of knowledge than one whose family grew up amongst nobility and knights.

Use of backgrounds is quite simple: any time a character can justify the use of a background in a given situation, the DM awards a bonus to relevant checks. This bonus is equivalent to +1 per three character levels, starting at level one. That is +1 at levels 1-3, +2 at levels 4-6, +3 at levels 7-9, etc. Characters may choose one or two backgrounds at character creation to define their character (either roll 1d6 with 1-3 granting one background and 4-6 granting two, or the DM can decide). Suggested backgrounds appropriate for player characters in a Hyborian Age setting are as follows:

- Blacksmith
- Bowyer
- Cook
- Farmer
- Fisher
- Forester
- Husbandry
- Jeweler
- Leather Worker
- Mason
- Merchant
- Miner
- Navigator
- Noble
- Rat Catcher
- Sailor
- Shipwright
- Tailor
- Teamster
- Thatcher
- Woodworker

This list is far from extensive—players should be encouraged to come up with their own, but the DM needs to take care not to allow a background to give too much of an in-game advantage; in no situation should a background give access to the class abilities of another character class, for example. These

are intended to provide some flavor to characters, while imparting a tiny game benefit on top.

Likewise, players should think outside the box when applying their backgrounds to their character histories. For example, just because a player has “Noble” as a background does not necessarily mean that their character grew up with a title and lands. A servant in the court palace has quite a bit of access to the nobility—plenty to know how the bureaucracy works, gain knowledge of heraldry and etiquette, etc.

FATE POINTS

The Hyborian Age is an age of high adventure, wherein mighty-thewed warriors perform great and heroic deeds (in the classical sense, not the “white knight” sense) in their constant struggle between barbarism and civilization. Throughout Howard’s tales, men perform feats that are sometimes superhuman in nature. By its core, D&D doesn’t include rules to reflect this—the rationalization for such is that all characters in D&D are above and beyond the norm, so just by virtue of being adventurers they are performing great deeds.

There’s certainly validity to this stance, but sometimes players like to have something in place to let them really feel like their characters have gone above and beyond, or even a means by which they can get out of a tight fix. To that end, a DM who desires to do so can implement Fate Points into her campaign.

Fate points are a character control/storytelling tool that have become very popular in the last decade or so, and let characters perform over-the-top feats of bravado, and mitigate the sheer randomness of the dice when things are just going really bad. They give the game an over-the-top, heroic and pulpy feel.

Like everything else in D&D, the implementation of Fate Points is neither required nor assumed. If the DM decides these are not for use in his game, then they shall not be incorporated. Just because they appear in this booklet does not make them anything more than an option the DM can incorporate if she so chooses.

AWARDING FATE POINTS

Characters begin play with 3 Fate Points each. Thereafter, at each level, every character gains $\frac{1}{2}$ level (round down) plus 1d6-1 Fate Points. If the DM wishes to remove the random element, he is free of course to simply give out $\frac{1}{2}$ level plus 3 Fate Points each level.

In addition, the DM will grant Fate Points (in lieu of or in addition to bonus experience points) as an in-game reward for ingenuity in play, exceptional role-playing, doing something to contribute to the group’s

enjoyment of the game, or for unfortunate (but unavoidable) turns of events in game. For example, who hasn't run a pre-written module that has a section essential to the module, but is unequivocally a railroad, and around which the DM can find no good path? In such a situation, the DM can apologize for the railroad, and give Fate Points to characters as a sort of "payoff" for going along with things.

Finally—and this is perhaps the most fun method of gaining Fate Points—players can declare unfortunate or even disastrous consequences to their own characters to gain Fate Points, at the DM's approval. If a player who is out of Fate Points (or even short on them) levels a mighty blow at a foe, for example, he can declare, "By Mitra, my sword has shattered!" and if the DM approves, gain a Fate Point for the loss. There are few limits to the kinds of misfortunes players can (and will) visit upon themselves if it means getting a few more Fate Points. DMs should encourage players to run wild with this method, while keeping in mind that handing out too many Fate Points can drastically change the nature of the game.

USING FATE POINTS

Characters spend one or more Fate Points to create minor in-game effects that are either directly beneficial to them, or help to offset something that has gone bad. They work as follows:

HEROIC FEAT

Characters can spend 1 Fate Point to add an extra die to their roll, keeping the normal amount (that is, if the character normally rolls 2d6 for an attack, they roll 3d6 and keep the best 2d6). Heroic Feat can be used for damage, if the player wishes. This use must be declared before the roll is made.

MITIGATE DISASTER

Characters can spend 1 Fate Point to reroll any die roll, but must keep the re-roll result.

LUCKY BREAK

One Fate Point also allows a PC to engage in "dramatic editing" to gain a small plot twist of their choice (subject to DM approval). For example, the PCs are alone, in a pitched battle with charging Picts in an ancient boneyard. The Bossonian archer runs out of arrows, and declares, "Good thing there's a quiver full of arrows on this skeleton, here!" He spends a Fate Point, and the DM allows him to recover a quiver of functional arrows from a desiccated corpse nearby.

Alternately, things go wrong and the thief fails to pick a lock at a critical moment, to escape a dungeon. He spends a fate point to declare, "look what I

found! Someone dropped a key!” The DM rules that since the door is the best way out, this is appropriate—the thief finds a key.

Note that the DM shouldn't force expenditure of Fate Points in a situation where the suggestion is entirely logical to begin with. If the PCs are defending a keep and there are a lot of archers handy, for example, gaining extra arrows should not require spending of a Fate Point.

THAT WAS TOO CLOSE

A character can spend two Fate Points to automatically make a saving throw or negate one attack against them.

IT'S A SCRATCH; NOTHING MORE!

A character who is low on hit points may spend any number of Fate Points. For each Fate Point spent, the hero recovers half of all damage remaining. Thus, if a character has taken 10 damage and spends 2 Fate Points, they regain 5, then 2, for a total of 7.

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

Finally, a character who reaches zero hit points or below can spend three Fate Points to avoid death, instead being stabilized and "left for dead." The character can then return at a suitably dramatic point in the adventure or campaign. Characters may "borrow against the bank" for this usage, going into a negative Fate Point total, if they do not have three Fate Points left, and are not already at negatives. This usage of Fate Points may only be used once per character level.

A FINAL NOTE

Always remember that the gaining and use of Fate Points is always at the discretion of the Dungeon Master. While the DM is encouraged not to be too heavy-handed adjudicating their use (otherwise, why include them at all?), the final say in whether a Fate Point may be spent at any given time, as with any and all rules in D&D, always resides with the DM. Remember, if the PCs have Fate Points, so may their enemies, and the DM may just have a good reason he wants that nimble thief to make it over the wall before you get a chance to shoot him in the back!

AMPING UP SORCERERS

Sorcerers in the Age of Conan rules for Dungeons & Dragons are doomed to a slow slide into evil and darkness. This is part and parcel of a grim swords-and-sorcery setting. Magic is inherently alien, inhuman, and corrupting. It's also addictive—sorcerers who gain power want more. Dungeons & Dragons is not a game wherein rules should be in place to

enforce an addiction to power; this is something that should simply be up to the player to express (and the player should be expected to do so). However, sorcerers, albeit very powerful when they reach higher levels, have a much more difficult time at low levels than do the other classes. This section provides optional methods for “amping up” your sorcerous characters at low levels to keep them in line with their more powerful companions, while maintaining the power level as they increase.

CORRUPTION

The easiest way to track how many failed saves a sorcerer has, is to measure it in terms of levels of corruption. Whenever a sorcerer fails a corruption save, his level of corruption increases by one, and every five points of corruption applies a penalty to all future saves and ostensibly a slide in alignment.

However, it is important to note that no matter what alignment with which a character begins play, the same number of failed saves are required to fall to the next level as would be required if she began play as good. Going from good to evil requires 15 failed saves—Five to go from good to unaligned, Five more from unaligned to balance, and Five more to go to evil. If a character begins play as unaligned, he still requires ten failed saves to go from unaligned to balance.

Why? Just because a character starts off with lower or different morals from a human standpoint does not mean he is corrupted by sorcery. Characters who start off as unaligned still have corruption zero. They are just less likely to note the effects sorcery is having upon them until they rack up more corruption than a good character would.

As in the first Age of Conan booklet, sorcerers begin to show physical (and metaphysical) effects of Corruption as they become more overwhelmed by the sorcery. For an excellent list of examples of Corruption effects, see Mongoose Publishing’s Conan Roleplaying Game.

BONUS SPELLS

Sorcerers have very few options at level one—especially considering they can’t wear any armor, and that precious one spell slot they have seems wasted



by the Shield spell (though they could cast this as a ritual, this takes ten minutes and would have to be repeated every twenty minutes—two turns—to maintain the effect). If you wish to give more options to your sorcerers at low levels, give bonus prepared spells for high intelligence scores. A score of 15 grants a bonus first level spell. A score of 16 grants two first level spells (not cumulative with the one from 15). A score of 17 grants two first level and one second level spell (not cumulative), and a score of 18 grants two first, one second, and one third level spell (again, not cumulative). These bonus spells are gained as soon as the wizard can cast spells of the appropriate level (that is to say, bonus second level spells are gained when the sorcerer reaches third level, and bonus third level spells when the sorcerer reaches fifth). This grants more options early on, while preserving the number of higher level spells the caster gains as she progresses.

SACRIFICE

Sacrifice of victims is one way to boost the power of a sorcerer, but doing so is dangerous as it carries a strong taint of corruption. There are two types of effective sacrifice—human and animal. Animal is less corrupting, but also less powerful. Still, only the most vile and inhuman sorcerers engage in blood sacrifice of human beings.

HUMAN SACRIFICE

Sorcerers can gain extra power from performing ritual sacrifices. However, there is a price to be paid—sorcerers who engage in ritual sacrifice are far more susceptible to corruption. Every time a sorcerer casts a spell using ritual sacrifice, he gains a bonus to spell casting (the exact bonus dependent upon the length and complexity of the ritual), but suffers penalties to all corruption saves for 24 hours following the sacrifice. This is true of any sacrifice, no matter how long a ritual the sorcerer performs.

These rituals take time; the sorcerer can gain some additional power from quickly bleeding a victim out, but the drawbacks don't equal the benefits. In general, if a sorcerer quickly kills a victim in the course of, say, a combat round, he can gain +1 to his next casting roll, but suffers -3 to his corruption saves for the next 24 hours.

For a ritual that takes 10 minutes, the sorcerer can gain either +3 to a single casting roll, or +1 to all casting rolls for the next 12 hours, but suffers -3 to his corruption saves for the next 24 hours.

For a ritual that takes 30 minutes (and generally involves torture and slow bleeding of the victim), the sorcerer gains +6 to a single casting roll, or +2 to all casting rolls for the next 12 hours, but suffers -4 to all corruption saves for the next 24 hours.

Finally, for a ritual that takes a full hour and involves severe torture and all manner of other horrific and unnatural acts and elements, the sorcerer gains +8 to a single casting roll, or +4 to all casting rolls for the next 12 hours, but suffers -6 to all corruption saves for the next 24 hours.

ANIMAL SACRIFICE

Animal sacrifice works much as human sacrifice, but all bonuses and penalties are halved, rounded down (minimum of 1). Thus, sacrificing a small animal in combat grants +1 to the next casting roll but imparts a -1 penalty to corruption saves for the next 24 hours. The full hour ritual grants +4/+2 and imparts -3 to corruption saves.

WHY SPELL PREPARATION?

One of the questions that arises when adapting the D&D magic system to a Conan-esque sorcery system is, “why do sorcerers still have to prepare a set number of spells, if casting is skill-based?” It’s a valid question, and one that does indeed have an answer beyond “game balance.”



In the Hyborian Age, magic is a laborious and draining process. There are NO spells that can be simply slung like D&D's Magic Missile. Even direct-damage spells in the Hyborian Age are the result of complex rituals. Preparing spells is what enables a caster to throw spells quickly. The wizard is not, as in a Vancian system, studying spells and committing them to memory each morning. Rather, he is performing the elaborate rituals that enable the spells to be cast, holding only the final step in reserve.

In order to save time, sorcerers will often combine the rituals for their various spells—many spells have common elements that are shared amongst rituals, and sorcerers tend to craft their own, individualized rituals for spells.

This enables them to save time each day by performing all of their rituals combined. Indeed, the very act of combining the rituals for all their spells is what enables the sorcerer to store within himself enough magical energy to repeatedly cast the spells every day.

However, the act of sleeping drains away the energy used; the sorcerer's body "bleeds off" the magical energy within, as it is anathema to living creatures and requires supreme force of will to hold it in check. Never forget: magic is an unnatural force of the Outer Dark that wants to be used. This is why sorcerers don't simply fail at casting spells; they fail to contain the energy, which turns back upon them, causing them to suffer spell backlash as outlined in The Age of Conan.

This is not to say sorcerers can simply avoid sleeping; as stated, holding the magic energies within oneself is a draining and exhausting process unto itself. Not only does it require willpower, but fortitude as well, and by the end of a typical adventuring day (or even a sedentary day in which the wizard has had the need to prepare spells) a sorcerer is generally completely exhausted. Many are wracked with nightmares from the alien energies they've held imprisoned in their bodies, and tortured by the black images that invade their subconscious. This is why so many sorcerers turn to the various types of Lotus drug, which enables them to turn these torturous images into ecstatic visions of rapture and even enlightenment.

It's just too bad the Lotus is so addictive.

In any case, this is why sorcerers must spend 30 minutes every morning per 3 spell levels they must prepare. Thus, if the sorcerer is preparing spells of levels 1-3, he requires 30 minutes to perform his rituals. If he is preparing levels 4-6, he requires 1 hour, and if preparing spells of levels 7-9, 1.5 hours.

These time requirements are flat, not on a per-spell basis. That is to say, if a sorcerer is preparing three first-level spells, two second, and a third, he still only requires a total of 30 minutes for preparation because all spells are levels 1-3.

SORCERERS, READ MAGIC AND DETECT MAGIC

Detect Magic should be removed from the spell list for Sorcerers in the Age of Conan booklet. This is because sorcerers are attuned to the energies of the Outer Dark by their very nature, and do not need a spell to detect mystic energies. Any sorcerer who meets another sorcerer, a demon in human guise, or other supernatural creature, will know immediately that the creature is infused with magic energy (though he may not know exactly what kind of energy—a demon in human guise looks the same as a sorcerer to this mystic sense) and how powerful the subject is, in comparison to the viewing sorcerer (i.e. "he is far more powerful than you / a bit more powerful / about the same power / weaker"). Likewise when a wizard encounters a magical artifact of any kind, he will sense the power within it.

SURVIVABILITY IN A HYBORIAN AGE GAME

Survivability can be an issue in a game set in the Hyborian Age. Careful readers will note that there are no healing spells on the list. While cause light wounds and cause serious wounds exist, their curing counterparts do not. This is in keeping with the flavor of the Hyborian Age.

The only truly magical (apparently) healing Conan ever partakes of is in a single short story (“Xuthal of the Dusk”) where he drinks a sweet, golden wine that rejuvenates him. While it is possible for the DM to make this wine available to player characters, and that option is made available in the magic items section, introducing healing magic into a Hyborian Age game severely alters the flavor of play, rendering it very similar to a standard D&D game. The main differences between Age of Conan games and standard D&D games are the alien, inhuman nature of magic, and the deadliness that comes from lack of magical healing, and the fortitude of characters that allows them to come back from grievous wounds rather quickly. Still, if a group of players went to Xuthal and came back with a sample of the wine for an alchemist to analyze and re-create, they might find themselves quite wealthy, and this could lead to an interesting adventure following in the footsteps of Conan himself.

Due to this, it's important for the heroic characters in this age to be more survivable than standard D&D characters. In a Hyborian Age campaign, characters do not die until they reach a number of hit points below zero equal to their level plus half their Constitution score. Thus, a fourth-level character with a Constitution of 12 will survive to -8 hit points. Characters who reach 0 hit points, however, are still dying, unconscious, and bleeding out, suffering 1 point of damage each round unless they succeed at a saving throw vs. Death, which stabilizes them for the round (and only for the round; a new save must be made each round). If another character takes a round to bind their wounds and stabilize them, or somehow delivers healing, they immediately stop losing hit points and will survive, but must thereafter heal naturally.

ENHANCED NATURAL HEALING

Instead of magical healing, it is suggested that DMs simply enhance the natural healing rules in the game. Simply by resting overnight a character recovers 3 hit points, plus his level, plus his constitution modifier (which can be substantial if using the optional ability check system in The Age of Conan). This is quite a huge bump from the 1 hit point recovery in the core rulebooks, but it is suitable to a Hyborian Age game.

THE POWER OF WINE

“Wine!” gasped the king from the couch where they had laid him. They put a goblet to his bloody lips and he drank like a man half dead of thirst.

“Good!” he grunted, falling back. “Slaying is cursed dry work.”

--Robert E. Howard, “The Phoenix on the Sword”

Wine—standard, normal, everyday wine—is also a powerful restorative in the Conan narratives. It warms the blood and gets warriors and adventurers back on their feet. Whenever a character is wounded, he can drink a flagon of wine, mead, or grog, and instantly recover 1d6 hit points per level of the character, per flagon or flask drunk. No character can benefit from this more than once in a 24-hour period, and if a character drinks more than two flagons (four for fighting-men), he may begin to suffer the effects of drunkenness, at the DM’s discretion.

MAGIC OF THE HYBORIAN AGE

In this section is included a complete spell list, with new spells fully detailed. In cases where spells have normal, greater, and master versions, the caster must learn lesser versions before a greater version is possible, as all greater versions build upon the ritual of the lesser. Thus, before a caster can learn Mass Warding, he must know both Warding and Greater Warding. The same goes for Psychometry, Evil Eye, and all other normal, Greater, and Master level spells.

SPELL CATEGORIES

Spells are now divided into categories, or schools of magic. While this has little direct effect on game play, it is reflective of the way sorcerers in the Hyborian Age view magic, and some sorcerers prefer to focus on one area of magic over others.

SPECIALIZED SORCERY

As an optional rule, if a sorcerer wishes to focus on one area of magic, he gains +1 to cast spells (and save from corruption) in spells of that school, but must choose one other school (a restricted school) which he cannot cast at all. The only exceptions to this is are Necromancy and Prestidigitation.

Specialized Necromancers gain +2 to cast necromantic spells, but do not gain a bonus to save against corruption. Necromancy may also never be taken as a restricted (unavailable) school, as the magic of the Outer Dark always calls to the sorcerer.

It is not possible to specialize in Prestidigitation—it is too general a field of study. However, choosing it as a restricted school increases the bonus in a specialized school to +2, both for casting and saving against corruption.

AVAILABILITY OF SPELLS

In general, the spells on the default spell list in The Age of Conan are available to most sorcerers in the Hyborian Age, though some may be more jealously guarded than others. At the DM's option, as a sorcerer advances in level, he may choose any spell from that list to add to his repertoire. Alternately, he may concoct some sort of roll or random determination if the spell is available to add to the sorcerer's spell book, or if it must be researched or purchased.

New spells in this section, however, represent ancient and lost knowledge, and may only be found through extensive research or the finding of ancient tomes. This gives sorcerers a reason to adventure, to find new books of ancient lore to add to their base of power.

BATTLE MAGIC

Sorcerers are perhaps the most feared of presences on a battlefield, and rightly so, for they can wreak utter havoc with enemy forces, from enshrouding them in impenetrable mists to summoning demons or poisoned miasmas to destroy foes en masse.

Battle magic, it may surprise some, is not much different than standard sorcery—the scale is entirely different and such spells take far longer to cast as a result. This section will explain how to wield magic in mass combat.

CASTING BATTLE MAGIC

Every aspect of a battle spell is larger, from the area of effect to the damage dealt, to the time it takes to cast the spell. In effect, a battle-version of a spell is a different spell than its man-scale version. Because of this, battle magic versions of spells must be prepared separately than the regular versions. Thus, just because a sorcerer has Sleep prepared for the day doesn't mean he can use the battle version of the spell to drop a large unit of soldiers unconscious.

At the DM's option, a sorcerer may be required to learn how to use battle magic, be it through learning specific battle magic spells, or being trained to adapt his existing spells for mass combat situations. This would make tomes of battle magic a coveted resource.

Of course, like all spells, magic wielded on the battlefield can only be cast upon targets within the sorcerer's line of sight. This is why many sorcerers covet scrying items, such as crystal balls and magic mirrors, as such

items allow sorcerers to ensorcel armies from safely within a stronghold or even miles away.

The act of casting a battle spell is identical to any other spell—the sorcerer rolls 2d6 against the target number for the spell’s difficulty (level) and either succeeds, fails, or suffers backlash.

THE SCALE OF BATTLE MAGIC

In mass combat (resolved using Chainmail), spell damage is as listed in the OD&D books, but is inflicted on a 1:20 scale (mass combat uses figures, each figure representing twenty men). Thus, if a battle mage kills three figures with a cloudkill spell, he has in fact taken out sixty of his enemies’ troops. If a Hero or other specialized fantasy creature is currently attached to a unit that is destroyed, then he, she, or it will only be killed if enough damage is rolled to inflict a kill. Otherwise, note the damage suffered on the character’s sheet or monster’s statistics and move on (the same logic should apply when dealing with heroes engaged in melee: rather than being killed if a hero suffers four hits, for example, he will suffer 4d6 damage and if this kills him then he is dead; otherwise, he continues on, though wounded). The hero now acts alone (given a figure representing 1:1 scale in this case only) unless he moves to another unit and attaches himself there.

In man combat, one inch on the table top is equivalent to ten feet of distance. In mass combat, one inch is equivalent to ten yards. In man combat, a round is one minute. In mass combat, time is measured in ten-minute turns, including the time it takes to cast a spell. This makes battle magic largely impractical for personal (man scale) use—it requires ten to twenty minutes (depending on the result of a casting roll) to complete a spell.

Spell ranges, areas of effect, and duration for standard D&D spells can be found in the D&D supplement Swords & Spells, pp. 12-15. For new spells listed in this book, the range is always line of sight unless otherwise specified, and duration if listed in minutes or rounds becomes turns, while if listed in turns or hours remains as listed. Spells with casting times already listed in turns, hours, or tens of minutes remain as listed; otherwise the casting time is one to two turns depending on the result of the casting check.

Battle magic is strengthened by sacrifices just as normal magic is, and carries all the same associated dangers of corruption.

SPELL LISTS BY SCHOOL

CURSES

Curses inflict karmic harm or retribution upon another, either through penalties to actions, or through the inflicting of a supernatural disease or other

tangible effect. Spells already on the list that fall into this category are **Prayer** (level three), **Feeblemind** (level five), and **Magic Jar** (level five)

Evil Eye (Complexity/Level 1) (Arcane Only)

This spell inflicts a single enemy with a penalty of -1 to all attack rolls, saving throws, damage rolls, and morale checks for one hour.

Evil Eye, Greater (Complexity/Level 3) (Arcane Only)

As Evil Eye, above, but imparts -4 to attack rolls, saving throws, damage rolls, and morale checks for one hour.

Breath of Yizil (Complexity/Level 5) (Clerical Only)

This spell is a death-curse, which can only be cast as a last resort by a sorcerer who is below zero hit points and dying. Even if he would normally be unconscious, he can use this spell as a final act. The spell imparts a penalty to all attacks and checks (including saves and spellcasting checks) equal to the number of hit points below zero the casting sorcerer is. It will combine with any other curse and affects a single target of the sorcerer's choosing, unless the target makes a saving throw vs. Death. The effect lasts for one month per point of penalty inflicted. One this spell is cast, the sorcerer who casts it dies immediately and irrevocably, his soul likely cast into some unmentionable Hell.

Evil Eye, Master (Complexity/Level 6) (Arcane Only)

As Evil Eye, but imparts 5 points of penalties divided among as many targets as the caster desires (be it -5 to one target, -1 to five targets, -2 to one and -3 to one, etc.)

Curse of the Werewolf (Complexity/Level 8)

This spell inflicts a single target who fails their save against Polymorph / Petrification with the curse of Lycanthropy.

Worse, the victim is under the thrall of the sorcerer, and over the course of the next month will gradually come to view the sorcerer as his master, at first obeying orders reluctantly, even attempting to rebel, but gradually coming around to view his master with devotion and/or fear (dependent upon how the sorcerer treats him). This spell cannot be cast or prepared on the fly; it requires a ritual lasting three days to cast,



must be cast during the full moon, and the sorcerer must have a small quantity of blood, a fingernail or toenail, and a lock of hair from the victim.

DIVINATION

Divination spells reveal things, be it through granting special vision, the ability to speak languages one does not already speak, or seeing / hearing distant, future, or past events. These are rare spells that are not inherently corrupting, but neither are they non-corrupting. Sorcerers saving against corruption when using Divination magic are at an additional +2 to corruption saves. Likewise, casters who fail at a Divination spell do not suffer spell backlash damage unless attempting to scry on another sorcerer. Sorcerers always get a saving throw against spells to sense when another is scrying upon them, at which point they can attempt a standard counterspell (see Chainmail, page 31) to cancel the effect and inflict spell backlash on the spying sorcerer.

Pre-existing divination spells include **Detect Snares and Pits** (level one), **Locate Animals** (level one), **Predict Weather** (level one), **Read Languages** (level one), **Detect Evil** (level two), **Detect Invisible** (level two), **ESP** (level two), **Find Traps** (level two), **Locate Object** (level two), **Locate Plants** (level two), **Speak with Animals** (level two), **Clairvoyance** (level three), **Clairaudience**, (level three) **Infravision** (level three), **Speak with Plants** (level four), **Wizard Eye** (level four), **Commune** (level five), **Contact Higher Plane** (level five), **Find the Path** (level six), **Legend Lore** (level six, though see below), **Speak with Monsters** (level six), and **Word of Recall** (level six).

Detect Magic and **Read Magic** should be removed from the spell list altogether, as these are now a special ability of the Sorcerer.

It Is Written (Complexity/Level 1)

This spell cannot be cast on the fly/prepared. It requires a 3-hour ritual to work. The caster performs a divination ritual, be it reading cards, casting bones, or simply interpreting the star-signs in play, at the end of which he gains (if the casting succeeds) +2 to a single die roll at some point in the next week. The DM will inform the sorcerer when the situation arises, before the sorcerer makes the die roll. The Caster cannot benefit from successive simultaneous castings of It Is Written—he may only cast the spell again after he uses his +2 bonus.

Psychometry (Complexity/Level 3)

By laying his hands on an object, the sorcerer gains insight into its history. He will see important events that have befallen the object in the past 24 hours, though the visions may be chaotic, traumatic, and difficult to interpret.

Psychometry, Improved (Complexity/Level 4)

As Psychometry, above, but information is gained up to a week before the object has been touched, and a sense of when the visions took place will be imparted.



They Speak in Dreams

(Complexity/Level 4)

The subject immediately falls into a deep slumber for twelve hours, wherein he experiences visions both beautiful and horrific, torturous and pleasurable, and entirely alien...but always prophetic. This spell may be cast upon oneself or upon another, though non-sorcerous types who receive this spell must make a saving throw against Death or suffer 1d6 points of Wisdom damage (which returns at 1 point per day) from the horrific dreams. The end result of the spell is that the recipient will automatically succeed on a single die roll sometime within the next week, and the player may choose the situation in which the successful

roll occurs (but must announce it before the dice are cast; the spell cannot be used to negate the effects of a failed die roll). No person can benefit from this spell more than once per month and it cannot be combined with *It Is Written*, though it should be treated as a Greater version of that spell for purposes of learning it.

Psychometry, Master (Complexity/Level 5)

As Psychometry, Improved, but grants visions up to a month past.

Legend Lore

If all three versions of Psychometry are known, Legend Lore can, in addition to its normal effects (see Supplement I), allow a caster to perform psychometry on an object years or even centuries into the past, at the DM's discretion.

DOMINATION

Domination spells control the will, mind, and emotions of others.

Sorcerers who are masters of this school are feared indeed, as they tend to be the true powers behind some of the most corrupt thrones in the Hyborian world. Spells already on the spell list that fit into this category are **Charm Person** (level one), **Sleep** (level one), **Hold Animal** (level two), **Hold Person** (level three), **Suggestion** (level three), **Charm Monster** (level four), **Confusion** (level four), **Fear** (level four), **Hold Monster** (level five), **Quest** (level five), **Mass Charm** (level eight), and **Mind Blank** (level eight)

Fascinate (Complexity/Level 1)

By making eye contact with a target and speaking soothingly, the sorcerer attempts to entrance the target into focusing solely on the sorcerer. So long as the sorcerer concentrates, the target will remain intent upon the sorcerer, unable to move or act in any fashion. The target gets a saving throw vs. spells to resist the effect, and the effect is cancelled if the target is attacked. The sorcerer must make eye contact at all times and may do nothing but move while maintaining this spell. Creatures of greater than 6 Hit Dice are not affected by this spell.

Dominate (Complexity/Level 3)

The sorcerer can control the actions of any creature upon whom she has already cast fascinate, providing the creature can understand her commands. Once this spell is cast, Fascinate ends, replaced by the effects of this spell. The creature gets an immediate saving throw vs. spells to resist, albeit at -2 as it is already fascinated. Likewise, additional saving throws are granted any time the sorcerer orders the target to perform any action against its nature or which places it into conflict, such as putting the subject in a position to harm friends or harm oneself. Common uses of this spell include removing memories, putting subjects to sleep, or using unwitting targets as messengers or on other errands. This spell lasts only as long as the sorcerer maintains concentration.

Enslave (Complexity/Level 7)

This spell turns a single victim into a willing and devoted slave for life, through sexual seduction. It cannot be cast on the fly, requiring a 1 hour ritual to perform. The sorcerer must have a magical link of some sort to the target, be it a nail clipping, lock of hair, or some object intensely personal to the victim. Once the spell is cast, the sorcerer must, within 24 hours, engage in consensual sexual intercourse with the victim, without the use of magical enchantments (i.e. the victim must be willing and in full possession of their own faculties), who will become a completely devoted and passionate servant of the sorcerer. The victim gets a saving throw to determine the lengths to which he or she will go for their new



master; a failed save means the victim will follow any order without question, even to murder or self-destructive acts, rationalizing anything they do as necessary to their master's well-being. A successful save means that the victim will obey the master out of deep love and respect, but will not perform self-destructive acts or acts against their nature.

ELEMENTAL

Elemental spells deal directly with one or more of the four base elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Elemental magicians have a great deal of control over their environment, from freshening spoiled food to rendering the very ground asunder and calling forth lightning from the sky. Spells on this list include **Purify Food and Water** (level one), **Create Water** (level two), **Heat Metal** (level two), **Produce Flame** (level two), **Warp Wood** (level two), **Call Lightning** (level three), **Lightning Bolt** (level three), **Plant Growth** (level three), **Water Breathing** (level three), **Control Temperature, 10' Radius** (level four), **Transmute Rock to Mud** (level five), **Lower Water** (level six), **Stone to Flesh** (level six), **Earthquake** (level seven), **Part Water** (level seven), **Animate Rock** (level seven), **Transmute Metal to Wood** (level seven), **Fire Storm** (level eight), and **Meteor Swarm** (level nine)

NECROMANCY

The most vile form of sorcery (barring, perhaps, the summoning of demons), Necromancy is the magical manipulation of the dead. It calls

directly upon the energies of the Outer Dark and performs feats of magic so unnatural and antithetical to existence that wizards using this school of magic suffer -2 to all Corruption saves. Other Necromancy spells already on the spell list are **Cause Light Wounds** (level one), **Speak with Dead** (level three), **Cause Serious Wounds** (level four), **Animate Dead** (level five), **Cause Disease** (level five), **Cloudkill** (level five), **Death Spell** (level six), **Power Word – Stun** (level seven), **Power Word – Blind** (level eight), and **Power Word – Kill** (level nine).

Note also that saves against necromantic magic are always against death, not spells, which means that even sorcerers have a



more difficult time saving against necromancy effects than against other spells.

Grave Torment (Complexity/Level 1)

The sorcerer points a finger at a target and, uttering a dark incantation that calls upon the black Ancient Ones of the Outer Dark, gives the victim a taste of what it is like to die in agony. If the victim fails a saving throw against death, he is wracked with horrific pain as his entire body locks up in rigor mortis, and he can take no action for 1d6 rounds. In addition, he suffers 1d6 points of non-lethal damage per round from the spell. If this damage causes his hit points to reach zero, the victim is unconscious and the spell ends. Victims get a new saving throw every round to immediately shake off further effects of the spell, and temporary damage returns at a rate of 1d6 per hour.

Agonizing Doom (Complexity/Level 5)

Tendrils of black energy—the dark stuff of the Outer Dark—seep forth from the sorcerer's outstretched hands and entangle an opponent, draining his life away in agonizing pain. The victim is half-paralyzed, suffering -4 on all attack rolls and moving at half his normal speed. In addition, the tendrils drain 2d6 hit points per round until the victim dies. The victim gets a saving throw against death immediately, and every round thereafter to fight off the effects, but each save after the first one suffers a cumulative -1 penalty as the black energies of the Outer Dark gain their sway.

Vampiric Touch

(Complexity/Level 6)

The wizard touches his foe, draining 4d6 hit points, which are immediately transferred to the sorcerer, healing any damage he has previously taken. The sorcerer cannot exceed his current base hit points using this spell; additional points are lost.

Your Heart is Mine!

(Complexity/Level 7)

This spell rips forth a victim's very heart from their chest, drawing it to the sorcerer's hand via telekinetic force. If the victim fails her saving throw vs. death, her heart bursts forth from her chest and flies to the sorcerer's hand,



killing her instantly. The sorcerer immediately takes the heart into himself (how this occurs varies from sorcerer to sorcerer; some place the heart within their own breast, some see it sizzle and burn to ash in their hand, others actually eat it); from that point on, for 24 hours, the sorcerer gains +4 to all spell casting checks. If the victim makes her saving throw, she suffers 4 dice of damage and is stunned for 1d6 turns as she suffers (and recovers from) a mild heart attack, during which time she can only move at half her base speed and cannot attack; thereafter she suffers -2 to all die rolls for 24 hours.

Animate Dead, Greater (Complexity/Level 7)

As Animate Dead, but the wizard can also create ghouls, shadows, wights, or wraiths—roll for the number of skeletons one would normally create; this determines the hit dice worth of undead the sorcerer can create. He may divide these hit dice amongst the type of undead created as he desires. Undead created in this manner are subservient to the sorcerer.

Vampiric Touch, Greater (Complexity/Level 8)

This spell functions exactly as Vampiric Touch, but the sorcerer can transfer the drained hit points to another person, to heal their wounds instead of his own. However, the subject must immediately make a saving throw vs. Death, or gain 1d6 points of corruption exactly as though she were a sorcerer, unless the subject is a fellow sorcerer, in which case she must make a standard corruption save as though she cast the spell herself, or gain a point of corruption.



Animate Dead, Master
(Complexity/Level 9)

As Animate Dead, Greater, but the sorcerer can now split hit dice amongst all types of undead, including Mummies and Vampires (but not liches). Any undead over 8 Hit Dice, however, get a saving throw against spells to retain their own will and not be subservient to the caster. Such canny undead may decide to work with the sorcerer on their own, until the time comes for their eventual betrayal. This spell cannot be prepared in advance; it requires a ritual lasting at least six hours to complete.

Awful Rite of the Sorcerer-Kings of Acheron (Complexity/Level 9)

This spell allows a sorcerer to live on beyond death as a creature called a lich, placing his or her soul (or what's left of it by this time) into a separate vessel, always a fist-sized gem, which becomes a magical artifact. So long as this vessel is intact, the sorcerer will always live on, though their appearance will continue to degrade as they grow ever more ancient, appearing more and more gaunt, desiccated, dry, and mummified as the centuries pass. Illusion magic is often used to cover this unfortunate side-effect.

To use this spell, the sorcerer must have a minimum of fifteen points of corruption and a fist-sized gem in which to place his soul. Upon completion of the spell, the sorcerer collapses, dead to all appearances and examination. The vessel in which his soul is kept must then be placed upon his chest and the ritual completed, usually by a trusted assistant or acolyte, at which point the lich awakens. Few liches keep their soul-vessel with them, as anyone who gains access to the bauble can exercise control over the lich, who will be terrified of death at the hands of the one who holds its soul. The lich, however, will always plot to get its soul-vessel back, and should it do so woe betide the one who sought to control such an ancient evil.

A lich can only be destroyed by one who holds its soul-vessel. Any other attempts to destroy it will result only in temporary defeat; the lich will, if killed, rise again (even if it needs to re-form) within one week. If one who holds the bauble kills the creature, however, it will remain dead unless a new resurrection ritual is performed.

For more on soul-vessels, see the section on magic and artifacts.

PRESTIDIGITATION

Prestidigitation spells form the bulk of the effects available to a sorcerer.

These are spells that affect the physical world, by

creating something out of thin air or altering the physical properties of something existing in some way. Illusion spells also fall into this category. Spells on the list that fit into this category are **Light** (level one),



Ventriloquism (level one), **Darkness 5' Radius** (level two), **Invisibility** (level two), **Knock** (level two), **Magic Mouth** (level two), **Mirror Image** (level two), **Obscurement** (level two), **Phantasmal Forces** (level two), **Silence 15' Radius** (level two), **Strength** (level two), **Web** (level two), **Polymorph Self** (level four), **Turn Sticks to Snakes** (level four), **Telekinesis** (level five), **Animate Objects** (level six), **Projected Image** (level six), **Holy Word** (level seven), **Phase Door** (level seven), **Polymorph Others** (level seven), **Simulacrum** (level seven), **Clone** (level eight), **Polymorph Any Object** (level eight), **Shape-Change** (level nine), **Wish** (level nine).

Taint Mask (Complexity/Level 3)

The sorcerer can mask the effects of corruption; upon a successful casting, other sorcerers will not sense any levels of corruption he possesses, unless they succeed at a successful save vs. Death magic. This spell lasts for one hour per level of the caster.

Mundane Guise (Complexity/Level 4)

This spell masks the sorcerer's magical nature entirely; sorcerers who fail a Wands save will not sense the power within her and she will appear to all mystical senses as a completely mundane human. Note that any physical effects of Corruption are not disguised by this spell. The spell lasts for one hour per level of the caster.

Taint Mask, Greater (Complexity/Level 5)

As Taint Mask, but the sorcerer can cast the spell upon others, or conceal the physical effects of corruption upon himself.

Mundane Guise, Greater (Complexity/Level 6)

As Mundane Guise, but the sorcerer can cast it upon others.

Taint Mask, Master

(Complexity/Level 8)

The sorcerer can project his own corruption onto others—he will sense to other sorcerers as completely mundane, while another target of his choice will appear to mystical senses as having the caster's levels of corruption. Thus, a caster with six levels of corruption wishes to set up a ruler for a nasty fall. When another sorcerer enters the court, the corrupted sorcerer casts this spell, choosing to temporarily transfer (in an illusory sense) his corruption to the king. To



the visiting magician, the Taint Masked sorcerer will sense as completely uncorrupted, while the king will sense as having six levels of corruption.

SUMMONING

Summoned creatures do not appear out of thin air. Rather, they enter the scene from elsewhere—if in the forest, they run out of the trees. If in a room, they enter through a door. If in a wide open area, with no visible features, they appear to step out from behind the sorcerer. When a summoning spell ends, the summoned creature does not vanish into thin air; rather, it simply runs away, its normal proclivities for self-preservation kicking in. Most creatures will not attack the sorcerer who summoned them without reason, excepting those with higher than animal intelligence, who have their own will and may decide to turn on their former master out of being insulted, rather than simply leave.

In addition, at the DM's option, exceptionally intelligent creatures such as demons may immediately engage in a test of wills with the sorcerer to avoid being bound by the spell; the creature must make a saving throw against petrification/polymorph with a penalty equal to the difference between the minimum result required for the sorcerer to cast the spell (delayed), and the sorcerer's actual casting roll (thus, if the sorcerer needed a 6 to cast a spell, and rolled a 10, the creature would save at -4). If the creature succeeds, it is not bound and may act freely (and even leave, if it so chooses). Some creatures will immediately attack the sorcerer; others will offer a bargain.

Conjured creatures, on the other hand, appear out of thin air when summoned, and vanish when the spell ends. This is the key difference between summoning and conjuration. If a spell doesn't include "Summon" in the title, assume the creature is conjured.

Naturally, any spell with the word "Summon" in the title falls under this category, as **Monster Summoning I** (level three), **II** (four), **III** (five), **IV** (six), **V** (seven), **VI** (eight), and **VII** (nine). Other spells included are **Locate Animals** (level one), **Insect Plague** (level four), **Conjure Elemental** (level five), **Conjure Animals** (level six), **Invisible Stalker** (level six), and **Aerial Servant** (level seven).

Summon Vermin (Complexity/Level 1)

This spell summons a small swarm of spiders, scorpions, centipedes, or other ghastly miniscule creatures (always arachnids, insects, or similar) to swarm over the caster's foes. The spell summons 1d6 x 5 creatures per level of the caster; these creatures distract and can even kill opponents. Every five creatures summoned imposes a -2 penalty to attack rolls by a single target. Every ten creatures summoned counts as a 1 HD monster for purposes of attacking. Thus, up to 10 bugs is a 1 HD creature; 20 bugs is a 2 HD creature or two 1 HD creatures (should the caster choose to split them amongst multiple targets), etc. The creatures have a poison attack; if they succeed in

damaging an opponent, the opponent suffers no physical damage, but must make an immediate saving throw against poison or die. The victim can automatically kill 1d6 x 5 creatures every round by forgoing their normal attack, by swatting, stomping, or otherwise smashing them. The spell lasts for 1d6 rounds or until all summoned vermin are killed. The caster may not re-cast this spell until it expires.

Vile Weapon (Complexity/Level 1)

The caster can pluck scorpions, snakes, and other such creatures off the ground and use them as weapons. The sorcerer is automatically proficient in using the creature as a weapon; such creatures deal very little damage (1d3 as opposed to the standard 1d6) and against creatures wearing any sort of armor the caster suffers -2 to hit with the creature (using the “dagger” entry on the combat tables), but if successful, the creature injects its poison into the opponent, requiring the opponent to save vs. poison or suffer the effects of the toxin (usually death). The spell lasts for 1d6 rounds or until the spell which summoned the creature expires, after which time the sorcerer may suffer an attack from the held creature unless he drops it, kills it (automatic success) or re-casts this spell.

Banishment (Complexity/Level 2)

This spell requires any devil, demon, or creature from the Outer Dark to make an immediate saving throw against Petrification/Polymorph, or immediately be banished to its shadowy realm of origin and trapped there for 1d6 x 10 months. Following such banishments, the creature often seeks to return and exact vengeance for having been banished. This spell can only be used against creatures of up to 4 HD.

Banishment, Greater (Complexity/Level 5)

As Banishment, above, but the difference between the sorcerer’s casting roll and his required roll to activate the spell (Delayed result) becomes a penalty to the demon’s saving throw. Likewise, this spell can be used against creatures of up to 6 HD and the duration is extended to 1d6 years.

Banishment, Master (Complexity/Level 8)

As Banishment, Greater, but can be used on any creature, no matter its Hit Dice, and the duration is extended to 1d6 x 5 years.

TRAVEL

Travel spells control the sorcerer’s means of getting from one place to another, or the time it takes to get there, be it spiritually or physically. These sorcerers can enter the astral plane, walk through magical gateways to transport from one place to another, and even levitate off the ground. Spells in this school include **Levitate** (level two), **Haste** (level three), **Rope Trick** (level three), **Slow** (level three), **Pass-Wall** (level five), **Astral Spell** (level seven), **Wind Walk** (level seven), **Gate** (level nine), **Maze** (level nine), and **Time Stop** (level nine).

WARDS

Put simply, wards are spells of protection. Any spell that protects the caster or a subject in some way falls into this category. Spells already on the list that should be included under Wards are **Hold Portal** (level one), **Protection from Evil/Good** (level one), **Shield** (level one), **Bless** (level two), **Wizard Lock** (level two), **Dispel Magic** (level three), **Exploding Runes** (level three), **Protection from Fire** (level three), **Protection from Normal Missiles** (level three), **Remove Curse** (level three), **Neutralize Poison** (level four), **Protection from Lightning** (level four), **Anti-Animal Shell** (level six), **Anti-Magic Shell** (level six), **Repulsion** (level six), and **Symbol** (level eight)

Warding (Complexity/Level: 1)

This spell goes above and beyond the normal sorcerer's ability to counter the spell of another caster (see [Chainmail](#), page 31, "Spells"). This ability surrounds the caster with a field of magical energy that cancels the ability of other casters to affect the sorcerer with magic energies. When the sorcerer successfully casts this spell, her spell casting roll replaces the target number for another sorcerer to affect her with spells. Thus, if a sorcerer used warding and rolled a 12, another sorcerer would need a 12 or better on their casting roll for their spell to affect the warded sorcerer. This spell will negate a number of magic attacks equal to one half the sorcerer's level before expiring (round down, but with a minimum of 1). The sorcerer may not use Warding to protect others; it functions only on herself. Note that if the attacking sorcerer fails to affect the target, but would otherwise normally successfully cast the spell, he does not suffer the effects of spell failure (losing access to the spell, backlash, etc).

Greater Warding (Complexity/Level: 3)

This spell functions identically to Warding, but can be cast on others and not just the sorcerer herself.

Master Warding (Complexity/Level: 6)

This spell functions similarly to Greater Warding, but the Sorcerer splits her sorcery roll amongst multiple targets; instead of the roll replacing the target number for another Sorcerer to affect the targets, the fraction of the roll applied becomes a penalty to sorcerers casting spells against protected targets. Protection can be split amongst as many targets as the sorcerer likes, but must be divided evenly. Thus, if a sorcerer rolls 12 on Master Warding and chooses to protect six targets, each target gains 2 points of protection; any sorcerer attempting to cast a spell at the target suffers -2 to their casting check. Fractions are lost. Thus, if the sorcerer above chooses to protect seven targets, each target gains 1 point of protection; the remaining 5 points are lost, as there are not enough to circulate a second time. As with Greater Warding,

protection lasts for a number of spell attacks equal to half the caster's level, rounded down, minimum of 1.



SPELLS TABLE BY LEVEL

¹Located in Supplement I: Greyhawk

²Located in Supplement III: Eldritch Wizardry

³Located in this work—only found in specialized ancient tomes (may not be taken as a normal level-advancement spell)

All other spells found in D&D Volume One: Men and Magic

*Affects only a single target

**As Cure spells, but deals damage instead of curing

LEVEL ONE

1. Cause Light Wounds**
2. Charm Person
3. Detect Snares & Pits²
4. Evil Eye³
5. Fascinate³
6. Grave Torment³
7. Hold Portal
8. It Is Written³
9. Light
10. Locate Animals²
11. Predict Weather²
12. Protection from Evil/Good
13. Purify Food & Water
14. Read Languages
15. Shield¹
16. Sleep
17. Summon Vermin³
18. Vile Weapon³
19. Ventriloquism¹
20. Warding³

LEVEL TWO

1. Banishment³
2. Bless¹ (Clerical Only)
3. Create Water
4. Darkness 5' Radius¹
5. Detect Evil
6. Detect Invisible
7. E.S.P.
8. Find Traps
9. Heat Metal²
10. Hold Animal²
11. Invisibility

12. Knock
13. Levitate
14. Locate Object
15. Locate Plants²
16. Magic Mouth¹
17. Mirror Image¹
18. Obscurement²
19. Phantasmal Forces
20. Produce Flame²
21. Silence 15' Radius
22. Speak with Animals
23. Strength¹
24. Warp Wood²
25. Web¹
26. Wizard Lock

LEVEL THREE

1. Call Lightning²
2. Clairaudience
3. Clairvoyance
4. Dispel Magic
5. Dominate³
6. Explosive Runes¹
7. Evil Eye, Greater³
8. Haste
9. Hold Person
10. Infravision
11. Lightning Bolt* (Arcane Only)
12. Monster Summoning I¹
13. Plant Growth
14. Prayer (Clerical Only)¹
15. Protection from Fire²
16. Protection from Normal Missiles

17. Psychometry³
18. Remove Curse (Clerical Only)
19. Rope Trick¹
20. Slow
21. Speak with Dead
22. Suggestion¹
23. Taint Mask³
24. Warding, Greater³
25. Water Breathing

LEVEL FOUR

1. Cause Serious Wounds**
2. Charm Monster
3. Confusion
4. Control Temperature, 10' Radius²
5. Fear¹
6. Insect Plague²
7. Monster Summoning II¹
8. Mundane Guise³
9. Neutralize Poison
10. Polymorph Self
11. Protection from Lightning²
12. Psychometry, Improved³
13. Speak with Plants²
14. They Speak in Dreams³
15. Turn Sticks to Snakes
16. Wizard Eye

LEVEL FIVE

1. Agonizing Doom³
2. Animate Dead
3. Banishment, Greater³
4. Breath of Yizil³
5. Cause Disease**
6. Cloudkill (Arcane Only)
7. Commune (Clerical Only)
8. Conjure Elemental (Arcane Only)
9. Contact Higher Plane (Clerical Only)
10. Feeblemind
11. Hold Monster

12. Magic Jar
13. Monster Summoning III¹
14. Pass-Wall
15. Psychometry, Master³
16. Quest
17. Taint Mask, Greater³
18. Telekinesis
19. Transmute Rock-Mud

LEVEL SIX

1. Animate Objects¹
2. Anti-Animal Shell²
3. Anti-magic Shell
4. Conjure Animals¹
5. Death Spell
6. Evil Eye, Master³
7. Find the Path¹
8. Invisible Stalker
9. Legend Lore^{1,3}
10. Lower Water
11. Monster Summoning IV¹
12. Mundane Guise, Greater³
13. Projected Image
14. Repulsion¹
15. Speak with Monsters¹
16. Stone to Flesh
17. Vampiric Touch³
18. Warding, Master³
19. Word of Recall¹

LEVEL SEVEN

1. Aerial Servant²
2. Animate Dead, Greater³
3. Astral Spell²
4. Earthquake²
5. Enslave³
6. Holy Word (Clerical Only)¹
7. Monster Summoning V¹
8. Phase Door¹ (Arcane Only)
9. Polymorph Others¹
10. Power Word – Stun
11. Simulacrum (Arcane Only)¹
12. Wind Walk¹
13. Part Water¹

14. Animate Rock²
15. Transmute Metal to Wood²
16. Your Heart Is Mine!³

LEVEL EIGHT

1. Banishment, Master³
2. Clone¹
3. Curse of the Werewolf³
4. Fire Storm²
5. Mass Charm¹
6. Mind Blank¹
7. Monster Summoning VI¹
8. Polymorph Any Object¹
9. Power Word – Blind¹
10. Symbol¹

11. Taint Mask, Master³
12. Vampiric Touch, Greater³

LEVEL NINE

1. Animate Dead, Master³
2. Awful Rite of the Sorcerer-King³
3. Gate¹
4. Maze¹
5. Meteor Swarm¹
6. Monster Summoning VII¹
7. Power Word-Kill¹
8. Shape Change¹
9. Time Stop¹
10. Wish¹



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

BOOKS OF ARCANE LORE

Of greatest value to any sorcerer is a genuine, ancient tome of magic lore. Scholars have pored through the tombs of Stygia and in the wilds of Aquilonia, Nemedra, and Zingara for relics of the ancient days, of Acheron and the ancient Stygian priest-kings. Perhaps the most famous of these tomes, and the one that survives in some form in the current era, is the Book of Skelos, but there are others out there, if one has the fortitude to look...

APPEARANCE OF MAGICAL TOMES

Books of magic are always written upon pages of thin leather formed from the skin of creatures—preferably human skin, and inked in blood. It is believed that only such ghastly materials can hold the power of the arcane writings inscribed upon them. Normal paper, had it the detailed and powerful instructions for magic rituals placed on its pages, would disintegrate, burst into flame, or otherwise be consumed. Some sorcerers use animal skin to page their books and scrolls, but even animal skins tend to decay after a few decades, the secrets recorded within lost forever. This leaves the sorcerer who endeavors to resist magic's corrupting influence in a difficult position; only human skin and blood will indefinitely hold magical secrets, for whatever reason this may be.

CONTENTS OF MAGICAL TOMES

Every magical tome has an area of focus, usually one or two schools in which the author was expert. Fragments found will contain 1d6 spells from each of the included schools of magic (including those commonly known). A complete copy would have all spells available from any included schools.



SPECIFIC TOMES OF MAGIC THE BOOKS OF SKELOS

Skelos was an Acheronian sorcerer who wrote a seminal treatise on magic and the mystic arts many thousands of years ago, long before the sinking of Atlantis, when the Purple Empire of Acheron ruled the world with demonic

fire. The Book of Skelos commonly found in varying forms in the libraries of the world is far from complete; indeed, these copies are translations of translations of translations going back a thousand years or more, and often deliberately obfuscated to make deciphering their contents difficult. Every sorcerous library worth its salt has a copy of this book, which contains every spell commonly known...if the reader can decipher it.

However, there are out there, buried deep within Acheronian tombs, copies of Skelos' original scrolls. None have been discovered for hundreds of years, but if copies were discovered, they would contain spells never before seen from all categories, such as those listed in this book. Original copies of the Scrolls of Skelos would be one of the greatest scholarly treasures one could possibly find.

THE BOOK OF EIBON

Written by a Hyperborean sorcerer named Eibon thousands of years ago, the Book of Eibon is a treatise on Curses and Domination, dealing with the black and ancient demon-gods of that awful witch-cult. Written in the Ancient Tongue of Hyperborea.

THE SCROLLS OF PNOM

Another ancient Hyperborean tome written by Pnom, a sorcerer thought to be a contemporary of Eibon, which focuses on Travel magic and Warding, and containing a treatise on the Ancient Ones who hail from the Outer Dark. Written in the Ancient Tongue of Hyperborea.

THE BOOK OF IOO

This ancient Stygian tome was written by the sorcerer Klut-Nah and is said to be a black guide to the underworld and the realms beyond death, the ultimate treatise on Necromancy and Summoning, second only to the Scrolls of Skelos themselves. The book is written in the ancient alphabet of Stygia.



THE PNAKOTIC MANUSCRIPT

A treatise on Divination and Travel, author unknown. It is written in strange pictographs of alien nature, and its secrets are difficult to unlock, at best.

THE SEVEN CRYPTICAL BOOKS OF HSAN

These books were written by a Lemurian scholar named Hsan in the days of Atlantis and Valusia, and are said to be hidden somewhere in Khitai. They contain the secrets of Divination, Travel, and Elemental Magic, and are thought to be related to the Pnakotic Manuscripts. It is said that only through possessing all seven books can their secrets be unlocked—fragments do one no good, except as a valuable curio.

OTHER MAGIC ARTIFACTS

THE NATURE OF MAGIC ITEMS

There are no “common” magic items in the Hyborian Age. Every item is constructed with a specific purpose in mind; once it has fulfilled that purpose, it generally becomes a valuable curiosity, but its magical power fades or the magic, while still there, is useless, as the purpose of the item has been fulfilled.



At very least, the item will function only for a specific purpose for any given individual. For example, Conan was lent a girdle (the Golden Serpent Belt) by a sorcerer in “The People of the Black Circle,” which enabled him to resist the spell-attacks of the Black Seers. Once it had done its job, the girdle was of no further use to Conan, since it had performed the purpose for which he needed it. He could not keep it to give him resistance against magic for the rest of his career. In [The Return of Conan](#), by Björn Nyberg, Conan is loaned a magic

ring, the Ring of Rakhman, which performs the same purpose as his earlier girdle, plus allows him to defeat powerful monsters with his bare hands. This ring aids him several times in his quest to rescue his queen, Zenobia, but once the queen is rescued, Conan knows he must return the ring to its previous keeper; it will be of no further use to him.

Similarly, the Phoenix inscribed upon his sword by Epemitreus the Sage granted Conan the ability to defeat a single demonic enemy; it did not make his sword indestructible (indeed, the sword was broken when Conan ran the monster through with it), nor give it a permanent enhancement bonus. Magic items are almost alive in that sense, as they know what they are for—specifically what they are for—and do not yield to the greed of their users.

The only exception to this rule is that of a soul-vessel or other magic item which binds itself to the life force of a sorcerer, and these items always carry terrible consequences. For example, Thoth-Amon's ring, The Serpent Ring of Set, renders him a 20th-level Sorcerer whenever he wears it, but he is drained of all spellcasting power when it is removed. Whether Thoth-Amon's ring would have any effect upon a sorcerer who is not Thoth-Amon is entirely at the discretion of the DM, but it is suggested that either the ring's use be as temporary as any other magic item in the Hyborian Age, or that the wearer immediately gains 10 points of Corruption, permanently, and/or becomes a devoted disciple of Set the Old Serpent.

Examples of specific items are listed below.

The Chest of Zorathus, the Star of Khorala, the Purple Lotus, Orichalcum, Dragon Ships, the Golden Serpent Belt, Claw of Nergal, Cobra Crown, Yara's Gem, Black Lotus, Dread Sceptre of Munthassem Khan, Heart of Tammuz, Pictish Bag of Demons, Purple Lotus, Mirror of Lazbekri, Ring of Rakhaman, and Yellow Lotus are all found in Supplement IV, pp. 46-51 (the entire "Robert E. Howard's Hyborea" [sic] section is found on pp. 45-52).

BANE-WEAPONS

Bane-weapons are those weapons crafted to combat a specific foe. Even those weapons dedicated to slaying a type of creature—arrows that are the bane of werewolves, for example—will only work against one specific creature (the servant of Thoth-Amon's ring, for example), the first creature they attack, or against a specific subset (the lycanthropes that reside in the ruins on the lost isle of Losotros, for example). After their purpose is served, their magic fades, and they are normal weapons. Bane-weapons deal three dice of damage on every hit against their specified foe, rather than one, and always treat the foe's AC as one less than it truly is (9 being the minimum).

THE GOLDEN WINE OF XUTHAL

"no man of Xuthal has visited it for three generations, much less made any attempt to explore the fertile grasslands which the maps show lying another day's march beyond it. They are a fast-fading race, drowned in lotus dreams, stimulating their waking hours by means of the golden wine which heals wounds, prolongs life, and invigorates the most sated debauchee."

--Robert E. Howard, "Xuthal of the Dusk"

This peculiar, sweet-tasting golden draught is found only in the degenerate, dreaming city of Xuthal. Drinking a goblet will, in 1d6 rounds, heal all wounds, eliminate the effects of poison and disease, cure ability damage or loss, and remove any fatigue. In addition, it adds 3d6 years to the life of the drinker by slowing the process of aging.

GOLDEN LOTUS JUICE

Properly prepared, the juice of the golden lotus removes the effects of fatigue and restores 1d6 points of ability drain or loss, as well as being a universal antidote for poisons and drugs, including that of the other lotus varieties. It will remove paralysis or slumber caused by magical or drug / poison effects, including the scratch from a ghoul, but will not cure other kinds of diseases. Still, preparing it is neither easy nor cheap, and thus it is a rare commodity when found.

THE PHOENIX ON THE SWORD

"Mitra guard us against the powers of darkness!" he gasped. "The king has indeed talked with Epemitreus this night! There on the sword—it is the secret sign none might make but him—the emblem of the immortal phoenix which broods for ever over his tomb! A candle, quick! Look again at the spot where the king said the goblin died!"

--Robert E. Howard, "The Phoenix on the Sword"

A special kind of bane-weapon, the Phoenix on the Sword is granted by the long-dead Epemitreus the Sage, champion of light in Aquilonia and a priest of Mitra who stood against the evil cult of Set. Epemitreus contacts champions of his choosing in their dreams, giving them advice and aid, and sometimes, in times of true need, will inscribe the mark of the Phoenix on their blade. A blade inscribed with this mark will deal 24 points of damage on a single stroke against the enemy for whom it was intended (always a demonic creature); on the next stroke it will deal 12 points of damage, and on the third 6 points of damage. Thereafter the magic fades and the item is a normal weapon, save that it will still harm its chosen enemy even if it can only be harmed by magic. Epemitreus will grant this boon to a champion but once in their lifetime at most, and the phoenix will forever remain on the blade as a reminder of the wielder's encounter with the ancient sage.



The Phoenix.

RAIMENT OF BEL

Bel is the Zamoran god of thieves, and it is said this raiment was crafted centuries ago by his most devoted disciple, who intended to use it to rob the very King of Zamora of the crown jewels of that nation. Unfortunately, the priest had done something to lose Bel's favor (his exact crime is lost to the mists of time) and in climbing the wall of the castle lost a single glove from the raiment. When the glove fell from his hand, the raiment lost all its power and he was left exposed on the outer wall of the palace. He was beheaded the following day and buried wearing the garb he wore in his ill-fated misadventure. Unfortunately, his tomb was washed away in a great flood and the body disappeared, the raiment with it.



The raiment of Bel consists of a dusky-hued cloak, gloves, and boots, all inscribed with the symbol of the god, and all pieces must be worn for the raiment to work. When worn by a favored of Bel, the raiment increases the wearer's thieving abilities by ten levels. However, the phrase "there is no honor amongst thieves" is untrue in Zamora, and Bel expects the raiment to be lost again after a single job, that someone new might find it when needed in the future. Otherwise, great misfortune may befall the greedy thief who chooses to keep the raiment for his own use...

THE SERPENT RING OF SET

He triumphantly lifted a ring of curious make. It was of a metal like copper, and was made in the form of a scaled serpent, coiled in three loops, with its tail in its mouth. Its eyes were yellow gems which glittered balefully. Thoth-amon cried out as if he had been struck, and Dion wheeled and gaped, his face suddenly bloodless.

--Robert E. Howard, "The Phoenix on the Sword."

This ring replaces the Ring of Thoth-Amon listed in Supplement IV. The



Serpent Ring of Set, when worn by one who has the natural capacity for magic (a Sorcerer), immediately grants the wearer ten levels of Sorcery, to a maximum of 20th level of experience. In addition, the ring's bearer can summon and send forth to do his bidding, the Servant of the Ring, a powerful Type VI demon with 12 Hit Dice which resembles a cross between a baboon and a hound, with a passing resemblance in features to the ring's wearer.

If worn by a bearer who is not already a sorcerer, the ring imparts third level sorcery abilities immediately, with an appropriate complement of spells (Necromancy only) at the DM's discretion, and the character must advance as a sorcerer from this point forward, but see the drawbacks, below. In all respects save experience points, the character is treated as multi-class; that is to say, a third-level fighting man who dons the ring sees his XP total adjusted to that of a third-level sorcerer, but maintains the fighting ability of a third-level fighting man until his sorcerous abilities outstrip that. Likewise, his saving throw and other applicable abilities and bonuses (if any) are adjudicated using the better of his fighting man or sorcerer abilities.

The ring is not all beneficial; its bearer also suffers 10 points of Corruption immediately (no save) and becomes a devoted disciple of Set. Worse, the user's soul becomes tied to it; former abilities are permanently frozen at their pre-ring levels. This means that the player should note the XP tally his character had when the ring was gained; should the ring ever be lost, the former owner loses all experience gained while wearing the ring, and can never again gain experience as a sorcerer or learn spells without the ring. If the ring was claimed by a non-sorcerous character with the intent of becoming a sorcerer, and the ring is lost, the character loses all sorcery powers and spell knowledge, being reverted thereafter to his previous class only. The corruption levels granted by the ring, however, remain even if the ring is lost.

Depending upon the era of the game, the Serpent Ring of Set will either be in the possession of the great wizard Thoth-Amon, head of the Cult of Set, or if after the events of the Ace paperback Conan of Aquilonia, will be lost.

THE HEART OF AHRIMAN

He leaned forward, and, without touching the thing with his hand, laid on the breast of the mummy the blazing jewel. Then he drew back and watched with fierce intensity, his lips moving in soundless invocation.

It was as if a globe of living fire nickered and burned on the dead, withered bosom. And breath sucked in, hissing, through the clenched teeth of the watchers. For as they watched, an awful transmutation became apparent. The withered shape in the sarcophagus was expanding, was growing, lengthening. The bandages burst and fell into brown dust. The shiveled limbs swelled, straightened. Their dusky hue began to fade.

--Robert E. Howard, The Hour of the Dragon

This version of the Heart of Ahriman should replace that in Supplement IV. The Heart of Ahriman is a soul-vessel for the ancient Acheronian witching Xaltotun. It is a fist-sized gem shaped like a heart, blood red in color, which glows with orange fire when active. When placed upon the breast of



Xaltotun's corpse, or, in the case the body is decayed or otherwise destroyed, placed upon the remains, and the proper incantation recited, it will restore hideous, unnatural life to its horrific owner. It is utterly indestructible. Any who hold the gem gain +5 to hit Xaltotun and inflict maximum damage on any successful strike against Xaltotun; sorcerers who wield it gain ten levels when facing Xaltotun in magical contests, and Xaltotun suffers -8 to save against their spells. Xaltotun speaks of a situation in which

barbarians stole his gem, enabling his enemies to poison him. Whether this was the result of a ritual performed by a barbarian shaman, a simple change in possession, or a factor of the gem being moved too far from Xaltotun's body (resulting in common mortality) is left to the discretion of the DM.

Other soul-vessels may exist, which function identically to the Heart of Ahriman but for other specific sorcerers.



APPENDIX: WITHOUT OD&D

A number of folks have sent messages since the original posting of these rules, lamenting the fact that they do not have the original D&D rules with which to use them. Fear not! There are several options on the market that will enable you to use these two supplements (and any that may follow in the future) with little to no conversion work.

To the mind of the author, the best of these is Labyrinth Lord. This clone of Moldvay/Cook/Marsh's B/X rules set will allow the use of Age of Conan with few modifications, particularly if one also purchases the Original Edition Characters booklet, which turns LL into a very faithful original D&D clone. Last I knew, the author was offering free downloadable versions of LL with no artwork.

Another option is my own Spellcraft & Swordplay game, which can even be used in conjunction with Labyrinth Lord to provide the basic Chainmail-inspired combat rules. A free version of S&S is available that takes characters to level three, but more importantly includes the full combat rules.

For those who don't mind switching out their combat rules with the traditional d20-based combat, options abound, from OSRIC (the Old School Reference and Index Compilation), a retro-clone of AD&D, to Swords & Wizardry, a nostalgia game that seeks to emulate the feel of OD&D, to Castles & Crusades by Troll Lord Games. There are even a number of free D&D-style clones online that can be turned up with a bit of searching.

If something more along the lines of the original game is your schtick, the original Advanced Dungeons & Dragons rules are still quite easy to come by at very reasonable prices at many used book stores or online retailers such as ebay or Amazon.

It's not in the scope of these rules to provide detailed conversions, but the beauty of old-school play is how fast, loose, and open it is. In general, simply swap out the appropriate races and character classes with those contained herein, switch out the magic system and spells, and you should be good to go!

NOTES

NOTES



Khitai Enchantress